

Information Law by Professor Raymond T. Nimmer
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Raymond Nimmer, Leonard Childs Professor of Law at the University of Houston Law Center, is a well known scholar in computer law and commercial transactions. Accordingly, he is well-versed in the underlying plethora of legal issues pertaining to the information industry. Central to Professor Nimmer's presentation is that information has become an invaluable worldwide intangible asset associated with inherent rights and liabilities: there is a clear movement from a world culture dominated by tangible atomic particles to intangible information bits.

After exploring the nature of information law, the author divides the book into three compartments: information rights; regulations and government issues; and transactions and liability. Information rights are discussed in the context of modern multifaceted information that permeates Cyberspace. Since a typical traveler in Cyberspace is bathed with multimedia information, the author describes how such multimedia information may contain a combination of copyrighted material and factual material. In the context of databases, the protectability of compilations of factual materials is examined. The innate "copying" that inheres with Internet travel is put in perspective from legal and international vantage points. A separate chapter is dedicated to trade secret law as a means for safeguarding rights in information.

The book considers the attempts by the government to regulate communications and information industries through such measures as the Telecommunications Reform Act of 1996 and then thoroughly explores the fascinating panoply of privacy and data protection issues that are crucial to modern commerce. Walking through virtually every aspect of the information industry from communications privacy, fair credit reporting, educational and financial record-keeping, and E-mail, Professor Nimmer demonstrates how the many intertwined issues are causing significant modifications in conventional commercial transaction paradigms, with concomitant impact upon the federal and state criminal statutes.

The latter chapters deal with liability associated with the propagation of false information or disinformation, with the adventures and pitfalls associated with licensing proprietary information, and with the various legal issues and barriers associated with contracting for electronic-based information. The author's strong background in both commercial transactions (Reporter for Article 2B of the UCC) and computer law (author of the Law of Computer Technology) are evident from his thorough and insightful discussion of the convergence of business and technology on the contemporary landscape. This book provides an essential Rosetta Stone for law practitioners attempting to navigate through and among the information industry's myriad intangible peaks and valleys.