BBC iWonder

To regulate or not to regulate?
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The internet has come a long way. First, used solely within the American military establishment, then it spread out to universities before going global and at last count, being accessed by around 3.2 billion people. It's genius founders dreamed of it being a libertarian paradise where any view could be expressed openly, but since then… things have got complicated.

Many voices are now pushing for tighter restrictions on the net, claiming that essentially it's just another communications network and like radio or TV, the content should be regulated. Others argue that unlike traditional media, which is 'pushed' towards the consumer, the internet is a 'pull' network in which the user decides what content they want to consume by surfing the web and that there should be total freedom to do this.

Of course the range of content on the net causes problems here, not to mention who is viewing it and sharing it. Illegal content like child abuse images, offensive content like hate speech, plus a whole range of criminal activity such as money laundering and identity theft are rife online.