

Committee on the Judiciary
US House of Representatives

Sub-committee on Courts, the Internet and Intellectual Property
“Hearing on Innovation in America: The Role of Technology”

August 1, 2013

Prepared Statement Of

Rakesh Agrawal
Founder, CEO
SnapStream Media, Inc.
713-446-7725 (mobile)
rakesh@snapstream.com

SnapStream Media, Inc.
601 Sawyer, #700
Houston, Texas 77007
713-644-6240

My name is Rakesh Agrawal. I'm the founder and CEO of SnapStream. At SnapStream, we make television search software -- we enable organizations to record LOTS of television and then search inside those TV shows. As one example, SnapStream's TV search is how the Daily Show with Jon Stewart finds their TV clips. More on that in a moment.

As some background, I'm a Texan -- I've lived in Houston all my life, except for short stints here in Washington DC and New Delhi, India. I founded SnapStream with a friend shortly after graduating from Rice University in Houston. We employ 27 people -- super talented software engineers, software testers, sales engineers, technical support staff and other "knowledge workers" -- 25 at our office in Houston, 1 in Austin, Texas and 1 in Ohio.

Let me start by explaining what SnapStream is and how it works. We're a cross between a DVR and a search engine. The SnapStream TV search appliance is a physical box that our customers buy from us, install at their premises, and use to record television-- up to 10 TV shows at a time on a single SnapStream TV search appliance. Then we index all the recordings and make them searchable using the closed captioning and some metadata that we license about the TV shows. TV shows can be recorded in standard definition or high definition and they can be searched in real-time -- as they are being recorded -- for any keyword.

Search results are much like those you get from a web search engine except they are TV search results. Each search result is a TV show with an air date and the exact time of the mention found. And the excerpt shown is a transcript of the TV show with the matching keywords highlighted. Using SnapStream's TV search technology, our customers are able to pinpoint things being said on television -- to find a "needle in a haystack" on television. Once they've found what they are looking for, they can create a clip and then do a variety of things with that clip -- import it into a video editor, share it via email, or share it via a private link online.

We enable our customers to not only save time, but to accomplish creative feats that weren't possible with the old method of recording television. The old method was basically buying a bank of VCRs or DVRs, using them to manually record a bunch of television and then manually scanning through the recordings to find clips (often using interns!). One of our customers is The Soup on E! Entertainment. I want to play a TV clip for you all now to demonstrate the kind of creativity that SnapStream enables (my apologies for the poor quality of the clip!).

<http://bcove.me/rbdsbiwv>

This clip shows you an example of the kind of creativity that SnapStream enables by letting media commentators find a needle in a haystack on television.

So, what are some of the other ways in which our TV search technology is used?

We have customers like the Daily Show with Jon Stewart and the Colbert Report. So if you've ever wondered how The Daily Show finds all those great TV clips for their show, that's us. That's SnapStream.

Another creative use of our search technology: many local TV stations use us for competitive intelligence -- because our TV search technology is "real-time", they can track the phrase "breaking news" on their competitor's channels so they're notified by email the moment their competition is beginning coverage of breaking news.

SnapStream is also used quite a bit here in Washington DC, possibly by some of your offices. Organizations that are SnapStream customers include the White House, the Senate, a number of individual Congressional offices, and the Majority and Minority Whip offices. We're also used by the RNC and the DNC and various media watchdog organizations.

State, county and city governments use SnapStream -- like Mayor Bloomberg's office in New York and Mayor Annise Parker's office in Houston.

SnapStream is used by journalism and media studies departments around the country so academics can study the ebb and flow of different terms on television and so academics can efficiently compare news coverage across TV channels. For example, they might use SnapStream to compare how Fox News' coverage of a story compared to that of CNN.

Outside the US, SnapStream is used a great deal in Canada, where many government agencies have standardized on using SnapStream. We have also recently begun to sell our TV search technology in the United Kingdom and Australia.

From the standpoint of copyright, SnapStream is no different than a VCR or a DVR. Our customers make recordings at their premises on hardware (running SnapStream software) they purchased from us. Being able to make recordings of television is vital to our business and to many other businesses in our industry. Fair use is also vital to how must our customers' use TV recordings and clips made with SnapStream. Without fair use and the ability to make recordings, it wouldn't be possible for government agencies to monitor television and quickly and efficiently respond to TV coverage and to hold TV content creators accountable. Without fair use and the ability to make recordings, the creative satire and comedy of programs like the Daily Show, and, in many cases, the public awareness and spirited public debates they create would not be possible. And these things are not only important to us, but to others in our industry which consists of approximately 50 to 100 clipping services that provide national or regional TV clipping as a service. These things are also important to non-profit public and private TV archives such as the Vanderbilt TV News Archive, the Internet Archive, and UCLA's recently launched NewsGate TV News Archive.

To summarize, SnapStream's TV search technology brings the power of search and sharing, things that are a standard part of "new" media, to the "old" media of broadcast

television. That's really at the root of our product's innovation and the reason we have hundreds of customers. Consumer viewing behaviors and paradigms have changed and we allow organizations to harness the power of those new paradigms to traditional TV.