Computational Law

A Department of the MIT Media Lab

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Vision

How can technology inform a better modern legal system?

Precedents

Law & Economics/University of Chicago (Coase theorem) … widely adopted by Federal Courts

Uniform Laws authored by National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws

How

Create technology enabled Model Platform, run by MIT Media Lab, that replicates a sovereign legal entity (city, state, country)

Model Platform can be used to model the impact of laws & regulations on society

Run it like a gaming platform ("SimCity")

The Model Platform

Steering/Advisory Group

- Cross-disciplinary body of technologists, lawyers, economists, statisticians, ethicists
- Advise MIT Media Lab students on domain areas
- Responsible for adopting "Magna Carta"

Operations

- Run by MIT Media Lab students

Magna Carta

Kernel of how to operate platform; illustrative principles:

- *Sovereign identify* ... Individuals own their identity/data
- *Rule utilitarian approach* ... "Greatest good for the greatest number")
- *Establish definition* of the greatest good (economics+?)

How the platform generates data

- Users interacting on platform
- Participating sponsors ... E.g., city makes real traffic data available to model impact of change in speed limit

Why the platform is valuable

- ✓ Gives legislators/regulators/companies ability to **model social impact** of new rules
- ✓ Grounded in principle of **dynamic rule making** ... rules need to be continuously evaluated for ongoing effectiveness/adjustments
- ✓ **De-risks new legislation**; model unintended consequences, etc.
- ✓ Mitigates first mover disadvantage

Platform Example

Case: New TechCity would like to model impact of new property tax regime to incent economic activity in low-income neighborhoods by lowering sales tax in these neighborhoods

Process

New TechCity sets up X-Prize in platform to test tax proposal

New TechCity loads anonymized demographic and socioeconomic data into Platform

Users are incented to participate/play by X-Prize

Evaluate socioeconomic impact

Platform initially would be focused on areas that generate publicity/marketability

Illustrative Rollout Plan

Timeline	*Deliverable*
[date]	**Assemble Advisory Group, schedule immediate kickoff**
[date]	**Set up administrative office within Media Lab, recruit students**
[date]	**Complete technology feasibility study and determine budget**
[date]	**Develop kernel/philosophy**
[date]	**Develop technology platform**
[date]	**Approach city to be first model client/X-Prize … no fee, but will have to provide data**
[date]	**Announce new Media Lab department and launch project**
[date]	**Use credibility of city X-Prize to sign up participating sponsors/cities, etc.**