"Intellectual Property Protection and the Crossover Point"

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Policymakers and businesses in emerging and developing economies look forward to a crossover point at which the standards of their countries would catch up with those of the developed world. The entertainment industry was, and is still, worried about the development of a critical mass of cyber anarchists that would upset the status quo. Malcolm Gladwell and others write about the "tipping point" at which change happens quickly and unexpectedly. Belgium and the Netherlands shifted from countries that offered no patent protection whatsoever to ones that provide EU-wide protection. And "change" has been the buzzword in the past couple of years! This paper explores the crossover points at which countries are transformed from pirating nations to ones that champion the protection of intellectual property rights. It then explores four different challenges that militate against an accurate forecast of when crossovers would take place. The paper also sheds light on similar crossover points at which netizens change from unauthorized copycats to strong supporters of protection for authors and creative artists.