

Effortless English

Cyber: adj. related to computers or machines; relating to the internet

Amnesty: n. pardon, forgiveness

authorities: n. government people

controversial: adj. causing argument, at issue

blog: n. web log, internet diary or journal

ensorship: n. banning (of information), preventing information from being published

servers: n. big computers that host software, accounts, etc.

censored: v. banned, deleted

globally: adj. world-wide, all over the world.

criticism: n. disapproval

implemented: v. used, done

to ensure: v. to promise, to guarantee

legal: adj. related to the law,

access: n. entry, admission

filters: v. separate, screen

politically sensitive terms: n. words that make the government angry

displaying: v. showing

AI: n. Amnesty International

produced: v. created, made

Falun Gong: n. a spiritual (religious) group- that is often attacked by the Chinese government

massacre: n. killing (of many innocent, peaceful, or weak people)

admitted: v. confessed, agreed

directions: n. orders, commands

restricting: v. limiting, stopping

terms: n. words (or phrases), names

asserts: v. says, insists

at odds with: idiom. does not agree with, goes against

launched: v. started, began

blocked: v. stopped, prevented

prohibited: v. denied, forbidden, banned

profanity: n. bad language, obscenity

Microsoft's Cyber Censorship

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From **Amnesty International**

In December 2005 Microsoft cooperated with Chinese **authorities** to shut down the **controversial blog** of Zhao Jing (Michael Anti), a Beijing-based researcher for the New York Times, and an active critic of **censorship** in China.

The blog, which was hosted on **servers** located in the United States, was removed and was therefore **censored** not only in China but **globally**.

Reacting to **criticism**, Microsoft claims to have **implemented** a new set of standards **to ensure** that they will only remove blogs when they receive formal **legal** notice from the Chinese government and that **access** will only be denied to users in China.

Microsoft's search engine MSN China **filters** the results of searches for **politically sensitive terms**, **displaying** a message in Chinese which states 'Certain content was removed from the results of this search'. Searches undertaken in June 2006 by **AI produced** this message for the words '**Falun Gong**', 'Tibet Independence' and 'June 4' (the date of the Tiananmen Square **massacre**).

Furthermore, Microsoft has **admitted** that it responds to **directions** from the Chinese government by **restricting** users of MSN Spaces from using certain **terms** in their account name, space name, space sub-title or in photo captions. At the same time the company **asserts** that MSN Spaces do not filter blog content in any way. Amnesty International considers this claim to be **at odds with** the facts.

When Microsoft **launched** MSN Spaces in China in June 2005, attempts to create blogs with words including 'democracy', 'human rights' and 'freedom of expression' were **blocked**, producing the following error message (in Chinese): 'You must enter a title for your space. The title must not contain **prohibited** language, such as **profanity**. Please type a different title.' Tests by AI carried out in 2006 demonstrated continued blocking of certain terms

incident: n. happening, event

the full range of: n. all of, every

including 'Tiananmen **incident**' in the title of blogs.

As a result of such actions, Microsoft users in China are denied the ability to access **the full range of** information available internationally on human rights topics, including websites and web pages of Amnesty International and other human rights organizations.

Learn More:

Amnesty International

<http://www.amnesty.org/>

Human Rights Watch (Asia)

<http://hrw.org/doc/?t=asia>