

Presenting Dissenso.org - a platform designed to foster debate on free speech-related issues in Brazil

Thiago Dias Oliva
InternetLab

"Dissenso.org" is a reference platform developed by InternetLab with the support of Google that aims to foster debate on free speech-related issues in Brazil. In order to stimulate the development of research on the topic and increase the reach of material already produced, the platform has a comprehensive database of judicial decisions and a repository of academic papers. By employing a rating system and granting an award to the best work submitted each semester, Dissenso.org is intended to engage authors and readers, while attracting the academic public in general by making it easy for Brazilian researchers of the field to find papers. The platform also intends to establish connections between the law, humanities and other sciences on free speech related-topics by inviting columnists to write on technology and freedom of expression. Besides enabling a dialogue between columnists from different fields, the non-technical language proposed by the section opens the debate to society at large. It explores cases and narratives which attest how freedom of expression may generate diversity of thought and opinion. In order to increase diversity in public sphere debates, the platform has sections linked to the mobilization around counter-speech strategies. The idea behind those sections is attesting the role of freedom of speech as means to empower dissenting voices and engaging younger audiences in order to make them sensitive to the protection of freedom of speech. Dissenso.org promotes the value of free speech for democracy and offers alternatives to the growing trend of internet content removal as the default response to content considered questionable or undesirable.