

Konrad Duden

Digitale Sachherrschaft

[Digital Possession.]

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Our everyday existence is increasingly permeated with connected devices and the Internet of Things. This connectedness not only enables new potential applications and business models, but also puts the user of the device at the mercy of the supplier, who may be able to lock a device by blocking access to the cloud-server or by disabling software embedded in the device. A supplier can thus turn a high-tech end-user device into electronic waste. The law of contracts will apply in many such cases; but what if there is no privity of contract between the user and the supplier of the device? Users have no recourse other than whatever protections possession or ownership may afford. Konrad Duden investigates whether the digital use of a device is covered by such protection at all.

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