

FTC: Children still marketed violent content

December 3 2009, By BARBARA ORTUTAY , AP Technology Writer

(AP) -- The video game industry is doing a better job at keeping young kids away from violent and other inappropriate content than the music and movie businesses, according to a new report by the Federal Trade Commission.

But all three could improve self-regulation, especially when it comes to new technologies such as mobile games and viral online marketing, the FTC said Thursday.

The report, which reviews the marketing of violent entertainment to children, also found that movie studios intentionally market PG-13 [movies](#) to kids under 13.

Unrated DVDs pose another challenge, because stores often sell such versions of R or PG-13-rated films. Nearly six out of 10 parents surveyed didn't know that unrated movies can contain additional adult or explicit content that wasn't in the original cut.

This was the FTC's seventh such report to Congress since 2000, and each found that the movie and game industries made progress in restricting the marketing of products intended for grown-ups to children. The music industry, however, "had not significantly changed its marketing practices since the Commission's initial report," the FTC said.

The report did find that fewer kids are able to skirt age restrictions than just a few years ago. To see if retailers and movie theaters are enforcing age limits, the commission sent 13- to 16-year-old "mystery shoppers" to

see movies and buy DVDs, video games or music not intended for their age group.

On average, 20 percent of them were able to buy M-rated video games when unaccompanied by a parent. This is down from 42 percent in 2006, the latest available figure.

In contrast, 72 percent of the kids were able to buy music CDs with explicit content warnings, compared with 76 percent in 2006. More than half of them were sold R-rated movie DVDs, down from 71 percent three years ago.

[Movie theaters](#) are also checking IDs more: only 28 percent of the teens could buy tickets for R-rated movies, down from 39 percent in 2006.

More information: On the Net, link to the report: <http://bit.ly/4XGOsA>

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