



Big Brother Awards Italy 2009

Winners announcement

Today, the votes of the jurors for the Big Brother Awards Italia 2009 (<http://bba.winstonsmith.info/>) is public. The jurors have made their choice on the basis of the proposals sent by all Italians.

This is the first year when the winners are announced first to the press. The prizes will be handed out during the **E-Privacy 2009 meeting, which will be held in Florence on Saturday, May 23.**

The Big Brother Awards come in six flavours:

- **Worst public organisation**
- **Worst private company**
- **Most invasive technology**
- **"Boot mouth"**
- **"Lifelong threat"**
- **"People's Lament"**

Besides the "negative" prizes, there is also a positive one - the

- **Winston Smith - Privacy Hero**

The Big Brother Awards are assigned on the basis of public proposals, which are selected and voted by a jury.

For a month everyone, even anonymously, was able to propose persons or organisations for one of the prizes. The nominations have been evaluated by a jury, which has voted the most meaningful; each of the 6 members of the jury gave 5 points to the most meaningful proposal, 3 for the second and 1 for the third - this for each category.

The proposal with the maximum score (the best one can get is 30) gets the prize. In case of an equal result the jury goes for a second round; if there is still an equal result, the president of the jury decides.

The winner of one of the prizes has already been announced; it's the "People's Lament" prize, assigned without a decision of the jury to the person or organisation which received the largest number of negative proposals.

This year we received 56 proposals, of which 48 were complete - 40 for the negative prizes and 8 for the positive one.

This year, the prize **"People's Lament"** has been won to the well-known social network operator **Facebook**, with 12 proposals on 40.

The organisers of BBA Italia 2009 have already invited Facebook to send a

representative to Florence to take the prize.

The winners of the other categories are announced today. These prizes will be handed out on May 23 and **all winners are invited to send a representative.**

Prize "Most invasive technology": facebook (21/30).

Facebook is not a really innovative technology, since it uses almost exclusively existing standard technologies. What is unique is the specific mix that, like for Dr. Jekyll's drug, encourages to the maximum possible extent the compulsive need to put our personal data on the Internet.

It does this with the protection of a policy that, although it has been largely discussed and even partially changed, allows any type of use of any textual, graphical, relational data put into into.

The success of the company is an indication of its dangerous ability to profile and control its users. The fact that it stores and processes not only simple search or email messages, such as Google, but directly social relationships, i.e. the most intimate of personal data, makes it potentially much more dangerous.

Prize "Worst private company": facebook (25/30)

Facebook manages to establish an unprecedented record in the history of the Big Brother Awards, in Italy and elsewhere, winning this prize with an almost unanimous score.

Notwithstanding the trendy and informal "look and feel" of this company, its behaviour is rather disappointing. The recent and known case of an "acceptable use policy" that allows everything to Facebook and nothing to its users (as is unfortunately "natural" for a free service which must obtain its income through other means) goes on par with an unsatisfactory care to those who see their accounts violated by strangers or blocked by Facebook itself on the basis of third parties' notifications.

Without discussing the functioning of this social community, Facebook is, in the experience of those who voted it for this prize, a substantially "opaque" company, very difficult to contact, which does not make its business plans public and shares very little of its internal operations or its current and future strategies.

Prize "Lifelong Threat": MP Gabriella Carlucci (16/30)

MP Carlucci has promoted in the past some law proposals that keep into very low esteem those honest persons with a double citizenship, of Italy and of the Internet. A network which is full of "pedo-terror-satanists" or by stupid in need of protection. Such as her recent proposal **DDL 2195/2009**, originally titled "**Internet, a territory of freedom, of rights and of duties**", and now "scaled down" to "**Measures to ensure the legality of the Internet network and assigning power to the Government to create to this end a committee of the Authority for Communications**".

This law proposal had been promoted as a remedy to limit the "widespread" illegality on Internet and to fight against pedophily.

The document, which had no trace of such intentions, has been immediately analysed by Netizens, who discovered that the document has been written by *Davide Rossi*, the president of *Univideo*. The reactions that followed have convinced many that "freedoms and rights" of the proposal are only those of the holders of so-called "intellectual property rights" and the "duties" are only those of Italian citizens, to be turned into homogenous and disciplined "consumers of bit". There continues to be no trace of any "pedo*" stuff in the final text, which spends most of its length to define and create a new

"...high authority with functional and investigation powers, with no prejudice to the role of criminal, civil and administrative judges and to the functions of existing regulatory and control bodies."

Netizens are, clearly, incredibly missing such a new authority.

The "very high authority" would have in its remit to regulate:

"... all the activities of access to the Internet done by or through devices or infrastructures located in the national territory."

In short: an **Italian Little Brother** to identify everyone, destroying the Italian Internet as we know it, in order to save intellectual property rights. On the other hand, our Constitution refers not to the latter but rather to *freedom of expression* and *inviolability of communication*, but this only shows that our Constitutions needs to be changed (again).

Prize "Foul Mouth": MP Gabriella Carlucci (21/30)

MP Carlucci establishes a new record - two prizes in one year - which is unfortunately immediately surpasses by Facebook, which gets **three prizes**. For a single person this is anyway without precedent. This prize is for the "most terrifying" public sentence on the topic of privacy and civil rights on the Net.

"The time has come to fight and destroy anonimity on the Internet. Yet another time, anonymous criminals use the Internet to slander, ridicule, categorise, offend, denounce. This time the target is our police forces, filed and offended by an anonymous blogger. This is the umpteenth unacceptable case of an improper use of the Internet, showing how badly and urgently we need a law preventing law-breakers to use the net for anti-social goals, hiding behind the cover of anonimity."

And this is it for honest Italian citizens, who since some centuries **have used their right to anonimity, even if only by sending a letter with no sender**, when they feel they need to, **without creating police crisis or institutional collapses**, and without this preventing the fight against crime.

Prize "Worst public organisation": Ministry of Home Affairs (23/30)

The **Ministry of Home Affairs** has implemented an initiative to identify and file all roma children, via compulsory fingerprinting.

With the approval of the so-called "Security Package", the Ministry will probably get the possibility to censor websites without a prior judicial decision, using the technological infrastructure funded and built for a fictitious action to contract "pedo-pornography", and getting back to using the never forgotten crime of "apology of ...", the real swiss knife of censorship.

Prize "Winston Smith - Privacy Hero": Electronic Frontier Foundation (15/30)

The US organisation Electronic Frontier Foundation works to defend privacy and civil rights on the Internet since 1990.

Its activities, always visionary and dedicated, have had important effects **throughout the world, including in Italy.**

The support given to Tor (<http://tor.eff.org>) has been one of its most important activities, but its ongoing attention and reaction to all initiatives aimed at censoring the Net or repress freedom of expression has been absolutely precious.

All Netizens, whether Italian or not, have a real debt towards it. For this reason it receives a prize which is normally reserved to Italian organisations - which this year have not been as effective.

What 's the Big Brother Award ?

What is Big Brother Awards Italy? It is a "negative" prize which is awarded in the whole world to those who have most endangered privacy.

In a scenario where privacy is virtually annihilated by new technologies and controversial initiatives to enhance "security", where censorship is becoming a normal tool for social control, the BBA aims to bring attention to the worst privacy offenders, who often benefit from the fact that - as usual - public spotlight is kept far away from these subjects.

In the best tradition of the Internet, the BBA is a serious initiative which doesn't take itself too seriously. The BBA is also about having fun, not because the issues under consideration are not serious, but because having fun is the best way to do things effectively. For this reason, the award event, which will take place on May 23 during E-Privacy 2009 (<http://e-privacy.winstonsmith.info>), will sport some surprisises..

BBA Italy is organised by the Winston Smith Project (link <http://www.winstonsmith.info/pws>), in cooperation with Privacy International (<http://www.privacyinternational.org/>) and other organisations.

Per more information info@winstonsmith.info