Editorial

Amanda Brock, General Counsel, Canonical

I have the privilege of writing the editorial for this issue. I made the mistake of not going off on holiday in August and by default drew the short straw. So, lets start by saying happy October, yes, its October already not July. Some of you, our dear readers may have been disappointed not to have their copy of the journal to enjoy on their sun lounger this summer. All editorial committees find receiving the promised copy by the due date, a difficult task. In our enthusiasm to publish the first edition and our desire for a structured cadence of publication, we jumped to a 6 monthly publication cycle (remind you of any popular Linux distro), which revolved around publication in July and January.

With the benefit of hindsight, this was slightly naïve. We have been pushing people to deliver articles, as their business peaks, just before their summer and Christmas holidays. This is a difficult task for the brave souls who write for publication and those who review and edit and one which has frankly become unsustainable.

With that in mind, as an editorial committee, we have made the decision to move our publication dates starting from this issue, going forwards. We will in future publish in September/October and then in March, thus avoiding the holiday panic and receiving articles from holiday refreshed contributors.

We accept contributions of a legal and academic nature in the form of articles, platform or opinion pieces re the state of our industry etc., and of course technical contributions. In all instances the journal is independent and the views expressed are those of our esteemed authors and not our overworked and underpaid editorial committee. In the case of the platform pieces, this is an opportunity for contributors to have their views heard. The committee believes that this is a useful reference to both the well versed in open source matters and new entrants. We have to date had both general editions and – starting with this issue of the publication - themed editions, the latter approach continuing in Spring 2012 with an exploration of issues around GPLv3 licensing.

If you would like to contribute to the next GPLv3 themed issue, we are looking for contributions towards the end of November. Simply contact the editorial committee with a 100 word synposis of your proposed article for consideration – ed-com@ifosslr.org

But back to this edition. Iain G. Mitchell QC and Stephen Mason, Barrister have pulled together a significant piece of thought,[1] which along side the articles by Simone Aliprandi and Avi Freeman, delve deep into some of the knotty issues of patents, standards and interoperability. In a world of patent wars, this unprecedented depth of analysis and study has provided the perfect basis for our first coordinated discussion.

Having spent only 4 years in Canonical, dealing with the delights of open source I am still a relative Newbie in this industry. The great and the good of our profession have spent 10 and in some cases 10s of years, advising on the issues around this. We all have different experiences in our open worlds, whether these relate to open data or code and it would be great to have articles from a wide pool of people with varied experience and knowledge levels. So, please consider making a contribution, to our community of lawyers.

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1   The full text of the Opinion, along with Andrew Katz's brief is available on the IFOSSLR website.

About the author

Amanda Brock has been General Counsel of Canonical – lead sponsor of Ubuntu - since early 2008. She is a lawyer with over 15 years experience of commercial and IT law, more than 10 of these years being in-house working in commercial organisations including as European Manager at DSG International (Europe's biggest computer retailer) and UK Legal Director with Aramark. Whilst working for DSGi she was the first lawyer at the ISP, Freeserve and as a member of the management team, dealt with all legal aspects of the set up and operation of the business through to its IPO in 1999.

Amanda gained a masters degree (LLM) with merit in Intellectual Property and IT Law at Queen Mary and Westfield college, University of London (1999) and a Masters in Comparative Jurisprudence (MCJ) from New York University (1992- Rotary International Scholarship). Having studied for her first degree, LLB (Hons) at the University of Glasgow, Amanda is admitted as a solicitor in both England and Scotland.

She has presented extensively internationally in businesses, conferences and universities, has published many articles relating to commercial, e-commerce, open source and IP law. She is the author of the book "E-business – the practical guide to the laws" 3rd edition,2012 (Spiramus) and is co-authoring a book on Open Source Law with Andrew Katz.

She is an active participant in the FSFE's European Legal Network, is one of the co-authors of its Contract Risk Grid, Chair of its App Store Special interest group and has been very involved in the Linux Foundation's Member's Counsel. She led the FOSS Contribution Agreement Standardisation project, Project Harmony to Phase 1. Amanda is a member of the Board of the QMW, University of London Open Source Centre . She never sleeps.