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UK Issues Tougher Draft Code for Online Copyright Infringement

LONDON- United Kingdom communications regulator Ofcom published three documents on digital copyright infringement, including a draft code requiring large Internet service providers (ISPs) to inform customers of allegations that their Internet connection has been used to infringe copyright, and consultations on the code and on cost-sharing.

Under the proposed code, ISPs would have to explain in the notifications the steps subscribers can take to protect their networks from infringing copyright and tell them where they can go to find licensed content on the Internet, Ofcom said.

“Copyright holders would conduct an information campaign about why infringing their content is bad, and try to develop “more attractive online services to offer their content,” Ofcom said.

As a beginning, the code initially would cover ISPs totaling more than 93 percent of the UK retail broadband market, that is, those with more than 400,000 broadband-enabled fixed lines.

ISPs will have to send customers up to three letters reporting suspected infringement, a month apart, after which copyright owners may request anonymous information showing them the infringement reports linked to specific customers. The copyright owner could then seek a court order requiring the ISP to

reveal the customer’s identity, with the intent to take legal action under the Copyright Designs and Patent Act of 1988. Rights owners already have this right, but “the Code is designed to enable them to focus legal action on the most persistent alleged infringers,” Ofcom said.

There will be an appeal process for incorrectly named customers, with the independent panel set by Ofcom. The documents were prompted by the UK Digital Economy Act of 2010.

Now when ISPs send letters to subscribers, they must include the number of copyright infringement reports connected to their account.

And appeals got tougher, to be filed within 20 working days, and only on grounds specified in the Digital Economy Act.

Meanwhile, more measures could be on the way. Ofcom said: “The Digital Economy Act outlined a process for further measures which the Secretary of State might consider to help reduce online copyright infringement. These would require ISPs to take steps, such as internet bandwidth reduction, blocking internet access or temporarily suspending accounts against relevant subscribers in certain circumstances.”

“However,” it said, “those measures could only be considered after the Code has been in force for at least 12 months, and would require further legislation and approval by Parliament.”



Japan Signs Intellectual Property Cooperation Agreement

MANILA- The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Heads of Intellectual Property Offices of Japan signed an agreement to cooperate on Intellectual Property.

ASEAN and Japan Heads of Intellectual Property Offices signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) on Industrial Property between the ASEAN Member States Intellectual Property Offices (AMS-IPOs) and the Japan Patent Office (JPO) on its second meeting held in Singapore.

Chair of the AWGIPC and Director-General of the Department of Intellectual Property, Ministry of Commerce of Thailand, Pajchima Tanasanti said the signing of the MOC on Industrial Property ushers in an important milestone in furthering cooperation between ASEAN and Japan in the field of trademarks, industrial designs, patents and utility models. While Yoshiyuki Iwai, Commissioner of Japan Patent Office, said the MOC will enhance capabilities in ASEAN and Japan in the areas of industrial property protection systems, transparent and streamlined examination procedures and practices, industrial property administration, industrial property exploitation by the private sector and awareness of industrial property.

The meeting also proposed priority activities for implementation including: the conduct of a study on successful cases of Japanese SMEs in IP commercialization in the creative industry applicable to ASEAN, a workshop on the establishment of IT infrastructure to share dossier information on patent examination, and various support for accession to International Treaties for AMSs.

Source: Philippine Information Agency

Jamaica to Amend Copyright Act

KINGSTON- Jamaica's government is working to complete amendments to the country's Copyright Act, according to Industry Minister Anthony Hylton.

The changes would make Jamaica compliant with its treaty obligations, including the World Intellectual Property Organization's Copyright Treaty and the WIPO Performance and Phonograms Treaty.

"These treaties are commonly known as the Internet Treaties and allow for the protection of works disseminated over digital networks, including, but not limited to, the Internet," he said. The changes will also allow for regulations to be passed for government oversight of Copyright Collective Management Societies, representing the interests of creators and publishers of musical and literary works and producers of sound recordings.

Jamaica will also soon implement the International Voluntary Registration System for copyright, where Jamaica is reportedly the first English-speaking country to receive the system from the WIPO.

Source: Caribbean Journal



Jordanian Legal Committee Reviews New Amendments to Passports Law

AMMAN- The Lower House Legal Committee has recently reviewed the new amendments to the Passports Law, recommending that permanent diplomatic passports be given only to Royal family members.

Zarqa Deputy Mohammad Hjouj, a member of the Committee, said that the panel revisited deputies' previous decision to give themselves and their predecessors permanent diplomatic passports.

He also explained that the Committee recommended that temporary diplomatic passports be given «only» to serving premiers, ministers, senators and MPs and be withdrawn when they leave office.

The government's version of the legislation stipulates that diplomatic passports will be given to Royal family members in accordance with a related law; present and former prime ministers, Senate presidents, Lower House speakers and presidents of the Higher Judicial Council, serving MPs, ministers, Royal Court chiefs, King's advisers, chairman of the joint chiefs-of-staff, directors of the civil defence,

gendarmarie and general intelligence departments, presidents of the constitutional court, Independent Elections Commission, Anti-Corruption Commission and senior interior ministry officials.

The Lower House Legal Committee revisited the 2012 Passports Law, recommending that the provision granting members of Parliament permanent diplomatic passports be scrapped as proposed by the Senate, which rejected the Lower House's amendments to Article 9 of the law, under which senators and MPs were to be given permanent diplomatic passports.

While the government withdrew an amended version of the Passports Law from the Lower House after the two Houses of Parliament disagreed over the bill.

At that time, senators agreed that granting special and diplomatic passports to lawmakers «did not serve the purpose of issuing these documents».

Source: Jordan Times



New UN Human Rights Council Resolution on Internet Rights

GENEVA-The United Nations Human Rights Council has adopted a new resolution on the promotion, protection of human rights on the Internet. The resolution ties such rights to development, and is said to be the first UN resolution to put online human rights on par with those offline.

The resolution calls on all states "to promote and facilitate access to the Internet and international cooperation aimed at the development of media and information and communications facilities in all countries.

It "Encourages special procedures to take these issues into account within their existing mandates, as applicable," and "Decides to continue its consideration of the promotion, protection of human rights, including the right to freedom of expression, on the Internet and in other technologies, as well as of how the Internet can be an important tool for development and for exercising human rights, in accordance with its program of work."

Source: Intellectual Property Watch



China Launches National Anti-Piracy Campaign

BEIJING - The Government of China has launched a national campaign targeting electronic piracy through enhancing supervision and cooperation among agencies, according to a statement released by four local official entities.

The four-month campaign shall stress on watching over Internet installations, content and search engines' services and keeping them under control and supervision, not to mention the E-commerce platforms which was at the top of the list.

The campaign shall cover plans to censor E-commerce platforms through the participation of the concerned entities represented by the Department of National Copyrights Administration, Ministries of Trade and National Security, Ministry of Information Technology in addition to Internet Information Office. Such service providers shall implement specific rules to protect Copyrights and enforce internal sanctions for whoever violates the regulations.

Source: Jordan News Agency (Petra)



Microsoft Signs Two New Patent Licensing Deals Covering Android, Chrome

WASHINGTON- Microsoft has mentioned earlier that two more companies had signed patent agreements covering their Android and Chrome devices under the company's Intellectual Property (IP) licensing program that already has over 1,100 licensing agreements. The software giant said it would earn royalty from the two deals but did not provide details.

The agreement with Coby Electronics, a maker of Internet TVs, tablets, and other consumer electronics, provides broad coverage under Microsoft's patent portfolio for Coby's products running the Android or Chrome platform, while the patent agreement with Aluratek provides coverage under Microsoft's patent portfolio for Aluratek's e-readers and tablets running the Android or Chrome platform.

Microsoft said the program launched in December 2003 was developed to open access to Microsoft's research and development investments and its patent and IP portfolio, though some critics claim Microsoft views it as a revenue stream. A number of companies including Samsung have signed up for Microsoft's Android licensing program, but Motorola Mobility, now owned by Google, has not signed. Microsoft claims Android infringes some of its patents, hence the requirement for these licensing agreements.

One holdout, Barnes & Noble, settled patent litigation with Microsoft over its Android-based Nook e-reader in April as part of a broader alliance with Microsoft. Barnes & Noble and a new subsidiary set up with Microsoft under the terms of the alliance will pay Microsoft royalties for its Nook and tablet products.

Motorola and Microsoft have legal disputes in a number of countries, including one over patent infringement by the Xbox before the US International Trade Commission. A Munich court ruled in May that Motorola infringes on a Microsoft patent relating to SMS messaging.

Source: IDG News Service

facebook and

YAHOO!

Reach Settlement over Patent Dispute

WASHINGTON - After four months of legal battles, Yahoo Inc. and Facebook Inc. have announced reaching what they called a strategic alliance, just similar to a peace treaty. The Internet giants have launched an advertising campaign showing a legal settlement under the title of patent cross-license.

This agreement stipulates both companies to work together to attract more users and sponsors, which will make the latter benefit from services provided by the largest websites of the World Wide Web.

Source: Menafn

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