

New South Wales

Since the last issue of the Journal, the Society has been actively pursuing its seminar program. In May, Stephen Peach of Gilbert & Tobin and Jerry Davies, CEO of On Australia Pty Limited spoke on Internet and the Law. The seminar was convened by Brendan Welsh of Gilbert & Tobin and was very well attended by members of the legal profession, members of the publishing industry and people more widely involved in the information technology and communications industries.

The June seminar discussed the implementation of the trade related intellectual property rights (TRIPS) agreement by the Australian Government and its impact on the copyright and other intellectual property rights subsisting in Australia. Mathew Kennedy of Clayton Utz gave a discussion on the background

to GATT and the TRIPS ASPECT of GATT. Geoffrey Grinter, barrister-at-law, convened the session and gave a summary of the legislative amendments flowing from the implementation of TRIPS. Connie Carnabuci of Mallesons Stephen Jaques spoke about Australia's obligations in relation to enforcement of intellectual property rights arising under article 61 of TRIPS.

The now well established annual tradition of the joint seminar with the College of Law was held in July. The session was well attended. Elizabeth Broderick of Blake Dawson Waldron convened the session. Connie Carnabuci of Mallesons Stephen Jaques provided a discussion on multimedia, the legal issues and directions. Maureen Tangney, Acting Executive Member of the Privacy Committee of New South

Wales, gave an update on privacy law. Les Lawrence, longstanding member of the Society and former treasurer of the Society, principal of Vonaldy Pty Limited, gave an interesting discussion on the Internet, legal issues and recent developments.

The Committee has been developing a members survey (which it is intended will be distributed to members in August) seeking to identify member satisfaction with the services currently provided by the Society and asking members to provide some feedback on any alternative activities it would like to see the Society undertake. The Committee urges members to participate in the survey and have their opinions heard.

For more information about the Society's activities please contact Connie Carnabuci, The President, on (02) 250 3646.

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Victoria

Principal Office holders

Dr Gordon Hughes, after several years steering the Victorian Society for Computers & Law into a larger and more active Society, has handed over the keyboard to Philip Catania of Corrs Chambers Westgarth who is President for 1995. Former Secretary Amanda Bodger of Mallesons Stephen Jaques is now Vice President and Paul Gleeson of Russell Kennedy is Secretary.

1995 activities

Like everyone else in the computer community and indeed the community at large, VSCL has focussed its attention on the Internet. Our first meeting this year was addressed by Jason Romney of Price Brent who is an experienced journalist and publisher as well as a lawyer with Price Brent in their information technology department.

Jason also writes for *The Age* on Internet issues. He gave us a lively and comprehensive address focussing on the potential for law firms having their own home page based on Price Brent's experience of drawing new Australian and overseas clients to the firm.

This meeting was the largest attended by members and non members and has boosted interest in the VSCL.

Open EDI

Ken Steel Director of the Icaris (Intelligent Commercial and Research Information Systems) Open EDI project addressed the May meeting which extended until well after the usual 2.00 pm conclusion indicating just how much interest this topic provoked.

ICARIS is a research project at the University of Melbourne, Depart-

ment of Computer Science. The first objective is to identify the reasons for EDI not being widely adopted by the world-wide business community - particularly Small and Medium Business enterprises.

This has been done and the solution proposed moves EDI into its second generation technology, providing a much simpler and inexpensive route to Electronic Commerce for all businesses. One of the problems identified was the difficulty of matching the functionality of the receiving applications with those of the sending. (Graham Berendorf, electronic trading manager of Pacific Dunlop ALH Electrical Group - *Return On Information* October 1994 p.19)

In essence, the software being developed as a result of this research will provide through an EDI server, almost a shrink-wrapped solution to the problems of different computer file formats used by traders to interact with their application programs. Instead of agreements negotiated by humans to set standards for the meaning of terms used in transactions eg widget A specifications, widget B specifications, delivery date, the parties' computers will recognise and accept the definitions of terms used by each party as they will have been translated into a common format by the server. This will enable immediate communication between the respective financial and inventory management software of the supplier and the purchaser.

Whereas at present accepted estimates are that only 100,000 true EDI (as distinct from partial EDI agreements) exist now, in five years true EDI could encompass most small retailers. Australia is therefore at the head of such a revolution in retail trade. As we have watched the spread of EFT into small businesses

(albeit usually franchises) it is possible to see the potential for growth if the present top heavy and negotiated agreements can be avoided by a software standard.

As Ken Steel says, 'when a unilateral decision is made by one trading partner to move into second-generation technology its ability to do business with any trading partners still using old-EDI is unaffected'. An ECSDEF (InterChange Structure DEFINITION) is used to define the structure of incoming data and another ECSDEF is used to describe the application program requirements at the other end. An EDI server extracts the data from the incoming transaction file that is needed for processing.

Future development is dependent on the definition and solution of legal issues common to all trading agreements to eliminate the need for time consuming expensive and complex upfront negotiations and agreements.

More details from ksteel@cs.mu.oz.au or also see the above article in *Return on Information* October 1994.

Internet Conference in Melbourne on 4 October 1995

After the highly successful INFOTECH conference last year, the Victorian Society for Computers & Law proposes to host an Internet Conference - at reasonable prices compared with commercial organisations- on 4 October in Melbourne. Papers and sponsorship are sought from Victorian, interstate and international sources. Of course we also hope that you will attend what is planned to be a relevant technical and law oriented conference. See VSCL site at [http:// Expressions](http://Expressions) of interest to the author eMail - johnmacm@melbpc.org.au or to the

Society News

Chairman (Tony Beal) of the organising committee of VSCL E-mail - bealt@werple.mira.net.au.

For more information about the Victorian Society, please contact John

Macmillan, Meetings Officer, on (03) 9667 0240.

Queensland

Public Seminar

In October this year, the Society will be conducting an Electronic Publishing Trade Show. The show will be for a period of 2-3 hours at a prominent Brisbane City location such as the Hilton Hotel.

Each exhibitor will have the opportunity to demonstrate their products and services to the public and also to give a presentation of 15 to 20 minutes depending on the number of presentations.

Exhibitors are asked to tender for positions at the show.

All enquiries should be directed to Mr Allan Mason, PO Box 6022, Fairfield 4103, phone (07) 3227 8428.

Members Seminars

Seminars this year include:

February - IBM Demonstration ware

March 22 - Into the Internet

April - GITC Version 2

June 6 - Telecommuting - Remote Computer Access to the Office

July 11 - Computer Based Training Using Multimedia

August - Lotus Notes Project

Annual General Meeting

The Society's AGM will be held in early December.

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