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The First Thing We Do, Let's Pay All the Lawyers GPL.

Those who don't already know that those three letters stand for the General Public License soon will. Because they're at the core of the welter of litigation touched off by SCO Group's Linux-related suit against IBM, as well as IBM's countersuit. Not to mention SCO's demands for a \$699 payment from every Linux PC user and the worldwide howls heard from the freeware community.

At stake: Potentially, the very future of open-source programming. That covers thousands of programs, the best-known of which is Linux, an operating system now used by over 25% of servers worldwide. With world-class law firms like Boies Schiller and Cravath battling it out, things are going to get very interesting y and very complex y soon.

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To boil it down, the GPL was created by Richard Stallman at MIT in the 1980s. It requires that any software it covers, as well as derivative programs derived therefrom, may be freely copied and modified by anyone. You can sell the software, but you can't stop anyone from copying it. IBM holds that since SCO distributed Linux for years, the company effectively became party to the GPL and can't now claim proprietary right to what it says is its own Unix code found in Linux.

However, here's the nub. The GPL has never been tested in court. SCO is about to drop what The Wall Street Journal calls "a nuclear bomb" by maintaining that the entire GPL is invalid because it conflicts with federal copyright law. Were SCO to prevail, companies everywhere could conceivably be hit with surprise claims from software developers of any GPL-licensed program.

Of course, even were the court to rule for SCO, it wouldn't necessarily be on such sweeping grounds. Even so, many IT managers using open-source software are feeling queasy, and we'll probably see demands for greater patent-policing on the part of code contributors. But that doesn't sit well with Linus Torvalds, who maintains that engineers shouldn't be expected to also be patent attorneys. Still, he has agreed to support an alternative license recently created by the free-software community, just in case it's needed.

What does this mean to a marketer? The ramifications may be too diverse to ponder, but as a case in point, consider Thailand. Working with its native manufacturers, the country just launched a "People's PC" initiative to put low-cost, Linux-based computers costing US\$260 in the hands of a million that is. In just a few months, over 100,000 have been sold. Microsoft, initially caught off-guard, responded with an offer to join the program by selling its own machine complete with Windows and Office for only US\$296, a fraction of the cost elsewhere.

As a model for expanding computer usage and literacy in developing nations, the Thai experiment is hugely interesting. But could it be done without freeware? Without the competition, for instance, what would be Microsoft's incentive to sell its products so inexpensively?

The Effect of the U.S. - Singapore Free Trade Agreement on Singapore's Information and Communication Industry

The U.S. - Singapore Free Trade Agreement (USSFTA) - the U.S.'s first Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in Asia-Pacific - was initiated in 2000 and is expected to come into effect January 1, 2004. Singapore views the USSFTA as a substantial factor in its future growth, as it signals to the American business community that Singapore is the preferred location for continued U.S. investment in Southeast Asia. Singapore has long been regarded as a regional hub for multinational companies (MNCs) to manage their businesses across Asia-Pacific. Currently, over 6,000 MNCs have offices in Singapore - 3,600 of which have regional headquarters-related responsibilities. Of these, 1,400 are U.S. based companies, 300 of which use Singapore as their regional headquarters.

Within the ICT industry, the USSFTA will initiate a ground-breaking intellectual property rights (IPR) law, with significant enhancements related to trademarks, copyrights, patents and trade secrets - especially those used in DVDs, CDs and computer software. This is expected to cut Singapore's high piracy rate of 51%, creating high-wage jobs and fueling the economy. The agreement will further allow Singapore to position itself as a regional IPR digital distribution hub, offering digital movie production and distribution, as well as software publishing and distribution

services - positioning Singapore to become the second-most powerful software development market in the region, after India.

In addition, an integrated sourcing initiative will allow Singapore-based companies to source components from neighboring countries, but treat the items as local components when calculating the place of origin. All finished products originating from Singapore will then be exempted from duties when exported to the U.S. Currently, electronics account for 42% of Singapore's total industrial output, the majority of which is exported to the U.S. This new initiative is expected to save up to US\$170 million annually in tariffs; thereby, significantly assisting Singapore-based U.S. MNCs operating in the electronics sector.

With only a few months left before the USSFTA is set to become reality, Singapore is eyeing the key advantages it anticipates from the FTA and the related investments. The U.S.' nod to Singapore is likely to signal to the American business community that Singapore is one of the most pro-business and stable countries in the region, further encouraging US companies - especially those who are unfamiliar with the region - to use Singapore as a launch pad into the larger ASEAN marketplace. The USSFTA is positioned as the first step towards the U.S.-ASEAN FTA, with U.S./ASEAN bi-lateral trade valued at US\$120 billion, reaching 500 million consumers.

This article was written by Cindy Payne, Managing Director of Asia-Pacific Connections Pte Ltd (cindy@apconnections.com). For a more detailed analysis of the effects of the USSFTA on Singapore's Information and Communication Industry, please visit: <http://www.apconnections.com/perspective.html>

Asia-Pacific Connections (APC) is the leading provider of integrated marketing services to IT companies in Asia-Pacific. APC's individually-tailored services include market research and development, channels assessment, public relations, promotions and events, direct marketing and branding, copywriting, and collateral design and production. To understand how APC's innovative marketing approach has produced effective results for a multitude of clients, visit www.apconnections.com

What Do Men Want?

A previous issue of this newsletter noted that Harrison Ford plays well as an icon of masculinity in China. According to new research studies, he may be a good choice for European advertisers as well.

The studies' subject: marketing to men - a crucial audience for sellers of technology.

The recent Euromale survey conducted by Evo Research revealed both a confusion in men's minds regarding their roles in today's world and a high regard for traditional models of manhood. At the same time, research done by Emap points out that the advancement of women in the workplace and the knowledge economy's need for "feminine" skills such as teamwork and consensus-building leaves men feeling frustrated in their search for ways to express their masculinity.

As a result, Evo found, men will buy into images of action. They reject both the sensitive "new man" and the "lad" (think "frat boy" in America) images now found extensively in the media - but not completely. They want to look good, but not work hard at doing so. They want to feel intelligent. But they prize the joys of competition without apology, and the strength shown by plain speaking and decisive action.

Small wonder, then, that the focus groups ý conducted from Dublin to Hamburg, Madrid to London ý revealed James Bond as a perennial role model. Also getting high marks: David Beckham, for remaining a good husband despite fame and money, and Richard Branson for his entrepreneurial success.

One marketing campaign that got the nod was Jack Daniels', which shows men engaged in physical labor, either alone or together. Rejected out of hand: Ads like Calvin Klein's which treat men as passive objects of beauty, and out-of-touch stereotypes such as thugs and gangsters.

Research recently done by England's IPC ignite! agency confirms this. A study for Vodafone showed that targeting the "lad" was interpreted by men as undervaluing their intelligence and skimping on the product's benefit information. Intriguingly, however, research that the agency did for a mobile-phone client showed that, while women actively seek out the best deal, men opt for the familiarity of a network or store they know.

Pushing the Hot Button

InformationWeek reader Vikram Kamath says, "Protectionism is futile and not a long-term solution." Another reader names Editor-in-Chief Bob Evans "recipient of the Benedict Arnold Outsourcing Abroad Award for Journalism advocating that American work and dollars be sent outside the country." They're both responding to an Evans article about offshore outsourcing that ignited a firestorm of response. You can read the original article at: <http://www.informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=12803181>.

Then read Evan's follow-up article at: <http://www.informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=12808141> For more reader response, go to: <http://www.informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=12808100> And for another view of this most incendiary of topics, read what Mary Hayes has to say in "Doing Offshore Right" at: <http://www.informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=12807973>

Short Takes

Be very afraid: Nipping at the heels of Bowlingual, the successful dog-language electronic interpreter, a Japanese company will unleash a device that translates cats' meows into human speech I NovemberýOpening new e-markets: The government of Azerbaijan, together with the government of Turkey and Turktelecom, has undertaken an initiative to act as the principal provider of large-scale Internet services for the Turkic statesýStart saving now: Analysts expect a blockbuster IPO from Google early next year. If it succeeds, watch for a new round of public offerings from the tech sector.

Doing Business in Canada: Ten Tips

1. Leave the Hype at Home: One thing (among many) that distinguishes Canada from its neighbor to the south is its distrust of inflated promotion.

2. **Equality Trumps Hierarchy:** Unlike in more stratified cultures, the high value Canadians place on equality means that decision making can be vested in anyone y within the bounds of company policy, of course. There's no great need here to deploy senior management on both sides in order to get things accomplished.

3. **When in Rome:yspeak Italian.** When in Quebec, speak French if you can. Even an attempt will ease relations with those Quebecois of French heritage. Having written materials in both English and French is a good idea, too.

4. **The Eyes Have It:** When speaking to someone, Canadians make direct eye contact to show both engagement and sincerity. You should do the same. (The exception: Canadians from Asian or Inuit cultures may see eye contact as rude and avoid it.)

5. **What They're Talking About:** When will the world realize that Toronto is safe to visit; the controversy surrounding the federal government's proposal to allow same-sex marriages; and as always, the coming hockey season.

6. **Don't Dress to Excess:** Canadian culture is friendly and relaxed, so casual is the norm here. It's usually safe to err on that side if you have questions about how to dress, unless the occasion obviously calls for formal clothing.

7. **Call Me Ishmael:** In line with their approach to dress, Canadians usually call each other by their first names. You'll want to use a person's full name and title when you're introduced, but you'll probably be invited to use his or her first name soon after.

8. **Speaking of Introductions:** A firm handshake is expected, and is often given every time one meets or leaves a friend or colleague. Men will usually wait for a woman to offer her hand first.

9. **Even Casualness Has Its Limits:** When it comes to time, Canadians are punctual and they expect the same. Be on time for business engagements and no more than 15 minutes late for social gatherings.

10. **While You're There:** North America's largest repertory theater continues into November. See Shakespeare, Coward, Lerner & Loewe and more at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, just an hour west of Toronto. Or head to the Rockies to explore the glories of Banff and Jasper National Parks before winter sets in.

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

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Washington, DC
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Pat Bianchi
Irvine, CA
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Liz Kestler
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Irvine, CA
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Liz Kestler
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