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A wise client once told me that the only difference between hardware and software is bandwidth. Software, once loaded into a computer, creates a virtual machine. The functions performed by the software could be accomplished by soldering together a bunch of transistors and gates and it would be the same thing, just hardware rather than software running hardware. The fear of software patents is superstitious nonsense and fails to understand the very nature of general purpose processors. This is not to say that patents should be granted for mere algorithms but software should be looked at as a functional description of a machine, a machine that could be built without any "code" and would work exactly the same way, only faster!

This is the 21st Century! Get with it!