

From: David Combs [e-mail redacted]
Sent: Sunday, September 26, 2010 8:24 PM
To: Bilski_Guidance
Cc: [e-mail redacted]
Subject: Please, please, PLEASE disallow software-patents.

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Dear Patent Office,

Why should there be NO software patents allowed? Well, here's one (extremely good) reason:

Suppose you want to start a company that manufactures automobiles. Can you do that, manufacturing cars, in your bedroom? No sir! Would take a billion dollars for a huge plant, thousands of employees, and so forth.

Now, suppose you want to start a company that manufactures ("writes") computer software. This you CAN do in your bedroom, all by your self All that's needed is a two or three thousand dollar PC, some free software (gcc, etc) from the Free Software Foundation, your own brain, and you're off and running!

Now, suppose some monster company, IBM, say, has patented some software idea, some "algorithm", some SIMPLE algorithm, and you need to use it in your own software product. (And likely you never in your wildest dreams (nightmares) even imagined there could be a patent on that fairly-simple algorithm!)

Now, three years later when, with some business success, you've grown your company from one to five people, and OOPS, you get a "cease and desist" letter from the giant-company patent-holder.

You, my friend, are now totally screwed.

Since there is no way you can afford the IMMENSE legal fees needed to fight the patent, nor, say, can you pay the demanded license fees, you have but one option: fold the company. (Or maybe do a complete surrender and sell out, at some rock bottom price, to the patent holder.)

Giving patents on computer software has ALWAYS been a HORRIBLE idea.

Please disallow them entirely from now on -- and maybe undo all the existing ones too!

And thus unfetter us to better fight the Chinese and Russians and other software competitors that seem to be popping up all over the world.

Thanks so much for your consideration!

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