Abstract

A Study on the Legal Protection of Java API Program

- With a Focus on the Action of Oracle America, Inc. v. Google Inc. -

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May 9th of 2014 saw a decision on a case of ORACLE AMERICA, INC. v. GOOGLE INC. at the United States Court of Appeals, Federal Circuit. A striking point at this case involved whether the 37 JAVA API(application programming interfaces) package program's declaring source code and its sequence, structure, sequence, and organization(SSO) are the copyrightable work and whether the specific computer routine called rangeCheck and 8 decompiled files infringe copyright.

At this case, United States District Court, N.D. California rejected the copyrightability of 37 JAVA API package program's declared source code and SSO, whilst the United States Court of Appeals, Federal Circuit reversed the district court's copyrightability determination. Furthermore the United States Court of Appeals, Federal Circuit acknowledged the copyright infringement of rangeCheck program and 8 decompiled files. However, it remand its case to lower instance for the determination on the applicability of fair use for the 37 JAVA API package program's declaring source code and its SSO as an affirmative defense. Accordingly there follows a supplementary action under way at the United States District Court, N.D. California with regard to judge the applicability of fair use.

Meanwhile, this case has summoned up a considerable concern in the industries concerned since it relates to the Google' android operation system as well as Oracle's OpenJDK. While looking through legal problems presented above, therefore, it is deemed needful to delve into its probable impact which this case may cause to take place on open source software fields.

Accordingly this study discusses problems of legal protection of computer program with a focus on this case in more depth, based on which it explores any possible implications relating to open source software.

Keywords

Computer Program, JAVA, API, declaration source code, copyrightability, fair use, Open Source Software, copyright, patent.

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