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FIFTH EDITION

Computer Law

Edited by
CHRIS REED
and **JOHN ANGEL**

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Preface to the Fifth Edition

The first edition of *Computer Law* was published in 1990. The area of law covered by the book has developed considerably over the last thirteen years but there is a sense now that computer law has become an established area of law with a more stable content. This is reflected by the fact that, while the book as a whole has been thoroughly revised, updated and extended, there are no real additional chapters to the book in contrast with previous editions. In fact we have dropped a separate chapter on semiconductor chip protection because of the lack of developments in the area. The two Internet-related chapters have been combined into one under the title of 'E-Commerce' (Chapter 9). The chapter on European computer law has been replaced by relevant updates to all the other chapters together with the addition of 'EC Competition Law and the New Economy of Information Technology' (Chapter 12) which, as its title indicates, concentrates on the increasingly new and difficult competition aspects of the subject matter of the book.

The original concept of this book came from Chris Reed's desire to provide a textbook for students on the University of London's LL M course which could also combine as a useful book for practitioners. The fact that the course is taught by academics and practitioners, and that they are the authors of the book, makes *Computer Law* a unique contribution to the field which is clearly recognized as such as it now goes into its fifth edition. Chris Reed continues to make an enormous contribution to the book but I have tried to take more of the burden from him in my co-editorial role, for example, by writing this preface.

My thanks go to all the authors, who because they are very successful academics and practitioners in their own right have little time available in their busy schedules, but have still produced excellent contributions, largely on time! Lorraine Mulpeter, our Institute's administrator, deserves particular thanks for co-ordinating all the authors and ensuring that the electronic manuscript was received by the publisher on time. Also many thanks go to OUP for continuing to support the book since their acquisition of Blackstone Press, the previous publishers. Lastly I would like to thank my co-editor Chris Reed for his inspiration which continues to make this book a success.

John Angel
March 2003

Contributors

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From 1997 to 2000 Chris was Joint Chairman of the Society for Computers and Law, and from 1997 to 1998 he acted as Specialist Adviser to the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology. Chris participated as an Expert at the European Commission/Danish Government Copenhagen Hearing on Digital Signatures, represented the UK Government at the Hague Conference on Private International Law and has been an invited speaker at OECD and G8 international conferences.

John Angel is a solicitor who specialized in employment law and was a part-time Employment Tribunal chairman before leaving private practice for a period of twelve years in the IT industry. He has worked with City law firms in recent years and was formerly Head of Online Legal Services at Clifford Chance. He is a Visiting Professorial Fellow at the Institute of Computer & Communications Law which is part of the Centre for Commercial Studies, Queen Mary, University of London. John is consultant editor to *Electronic Business Law* (Butterworths Tolley), general editor of *Technology Outsourcing* (Law Society Publishing); as well as co-editing and contributing to *Computer Law*, he is joint editor of *Telecommunications Law*, also published by Oxford University Press.

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