

Current Awareness

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Book Reviews

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PEDLEY, P. *Digital Copyright* 2nd edition. Facet Publishing, 2007. ISBN 978-1-85604-608-4 (pbk) £34.95. 154 pp.

Since the publication of Paul Pedley's first e-book of the same title in 2005, one may wrongly assume that there have been no fundamental changes in this area (certainly not in comparison to the dramatic nature of European Directive 2001/29/EC, which was implemented in the UK at the end of 2003). However, the contents of the new 2007 edition prove that this is certainly not the case. Instead, the topic of digital copyright remains a highly relevant and evolutionary area of law. This is further highlighted by reference in the book to the publication of Gower's Review of Intellectual Property in December 2006 and the All Party Internet Group's findings in their Digital Rights Management public inquiry from June 2006.

Whilst the majority of us are familiar with copyright relating to hard copy materials, we are less well informed about how the law applies to digital information due to it being a newer and still evolving area of law. This book is an excellent practical guide to how the law applies to digital material and how it should be treated significantly differently from hard copy sources. It begins with a history of copyright dating back to the Berne Convention and stretching to the Gower Review of Intellectual Property and various new statutory instruments. Pedley focuses specifically on the main European legislation and the *Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988*, but he also makes useful reference to less well-known statutory

material and uses a number of largely unreported cases to illustrate important points (e.g. *British Horseracing Board v William Hill* on the infringement of database rights; *Shetland Times Ltd v Dr Jonathan Wills and Zetnews* on the use of hypertext links; and *Lowry's Reports v Legg Mason*, which highlighted the perils of providing digital information to employees when an organisation had not sought prior permission). These areas tend to be aimed more at the informational professional than the lawyer, thus providing immensely applicable material.

The text is both comprehensive and accessible, which is no mean feat considering the complexity of the area. In my view it undoubtedly covers all relevant fields. It addresses key questions such as why digital information (websites, e-books, music downloads, screenshots, images and databases) should be treated differently to hard copy and how information professionals should approach such areas when attempting to stay within the law. There is a specific chapter on educational establishments and also excellent new chapters on the copyright issues surrounding digital rights management systems and orphan works. Exceptions to copyright law are included in full, whilst the roles of the Copyright Licensing Agency and the Newspaper Licensing Agency and the licences they provide are fully explored. It also provides a guide to contract and copyright law, which is extremely helpful to those people who sign terms and conditions with electronic information suppliers.

The book does not provide a definitive guide to decisions that an information professional may or may have to make, although it does provide enough