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Open Source America's Operating System

"It's Not Just A Good Idea—It's The Law!"

September 15, 2009

Mr. John B. Owens, II, Chief Information Officer
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
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via Electronic Mail to publicdatadissemination@uspto.gov

Dear Mr. Owens:

It was a pleasure meeting you last week. Thank you for taking the time to give me the very information briefing on the USPTO MIS operations. You truly have a monumental task in front of you and it sounds like you've made great progress in the short time you've been in office.

I've had time to review SS-PAPT-09-10008, **Solicitation for USPTO's Data Dissemination Solution**. I'd like to apologize in advance, but because of the short notice I will be unable to come to Washington, D.C. for your Vendor Information Meeting on September 24.

After reviewing the RFI, I did have four questions for you:

1. The RFI indicates that responses will only be accepted in Microsoft Word. Is there any reason that responses cannot be accepted in other standard industry formats such as OpenOffice or PDF? Has Microsoft furnished any monetary or in-kind compensation as part of the requirements for use of Microsoft Word™, Microsoft Visio™, and Microsoft Excel™ for submissions?
2. It was unclear if all bids will be made public after the redaction of any marked proprietary information. Knowing what bids have been submitted will allow the public a greater ability to understand the tradeoffs made by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in evaluating the submissions and for any subsequent decisions to issue an RFP.
3. Given the fundamental and long-lasting repercussions of this initiative, has any thought been made to holding a West Coast or Midwest open meeting in addition to the one being held inside the Washington Beltway? Likewise, will audio and video from the meetings be made available to the public on the Internet?

4. As this initiative may fundamentally alter your distribution strategies, will the Under Secretary and other members of the U.S. PTO senior management team also be participating in this process?

Again, it was a pleasure to meet you, and I look forward to watching the unveiling and progress of your efforts to build a next-generation Data Dissemination Solution.

Sincerely yours,

Carl Malamud
President & CEO
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