Foreword: Intelligent Multimedia

This volume stems from the encounter between two communities: Creative Commons (CC) and Artificial Intelligence and Law, especially those people devoted to the development of Multimedia Technology. The Institute of Law and Technology (IDT-Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona) and the CC French chapter (CERSA-Université de Paris 2), together with leads from other CC jurisdictions, are united in one common effort to discuss CC values, technology and innovative solutions.

  We think that authors contributing to this volume share the following trends:

1. *Commons-oriented management*: Humans are able to organize collective action on a much larger scale than predicted by theories of individualistic rationality. Intelligent multimedia means that collaborative work on access and reuse is more efficient for building a common good of digital texts and images.

2. *Open Access*: Technologies develop and promote interoperability standards when building ontologies, interfaces, documents, platforms, and in the reuse of software and tools to facilitate the efficient dissemination of content. The Open Access Initiative (Declaration of Budapest, 2001) has its roots in the open access and institutional repository movements. Universal access to information and knowledge is a key principle in UNESCO's overall mandate to promote the free flow of information and thus to place information and knowledge through multimedia platforms at the doorsteps of communities.

3. *Free Culture and public data*: This movement states that all citizens are free to participate in the transmission and evolution of knowledge and culture, without setting artificial boundaries on who can participate or how to. The Free Culture movement seeks to develop knowledge, creativity and participation by promoting principles such as public domain, communication and free expression or citizens' civil liberties, and offer technological means to practice and develop their liberties.

4. *A common interest in multimedia creation, imaging and management*: Accessibility means flexibility and the possibility of an easier and more effective readability and use of the shared content. As emphasized by the African, Asian and Latin-American experiences, people seek for a faster and cheaper communication to organize their lives and their social bonds. This is coming to be essential either in hard or safer environments. The Social Web is becoming the Web of (linked) Data. Multimedia and Mobile technologies are the next step for such a programme.

Moreover, this book is the follow-up of a first work edited in 2004 by two of the editors when the Creative Commons France licenses were launched in Paris[1]. Since then, the Creative Commons International Project expanded its main research subject matters. Communities of academics, lawyers, economists, sociologists or commoners are going along with Semantic Web developers to design new intelligent tools, to analyze experiences coming from the Social Web, and to work out better regulations and governance. The European Thematic Network on the digital public domain Communia (2007-2010) is on the track. It is our contention that the CC initiative will participate increasingly into world commons movements, at large.

However, we know that the values promoted by the commons cannot be absolute. We do not think they can be imposed or even enforced through a positivistic conception of the law. We are convinced that we all live in a mixed, hybrid, global, complex culture. As shown by the experience of the Free Access to Law movement, the creation of a public space to create and share knowledge and innovative works is not necessarily incompatible with the implementation of rights in a global market. This is the real issue for the next decade. Dialogue among all stakeholders — authors, users, service providers, companies, institutions and states — is essential to preserve and develop creativity. Our volume is conceived to foster this kind of dialogue as well.

May 2010

Danièle Bourcier
Pompeu Casanovas
Melanie Dulong de Rosnay
Catharina Maracke

---

[1] D. Bourcier & M. Dulong de Rosnay (eds), *International Commons at the digital age. La création en partage*, Romillat, Paris, 2004.