

Emerging Issues In Electronic Commerce

Brendan Scott

Welcome to the New Year, the first issue for 1998, and a new editor. This issue sees a changing of the guard, with Brendan Scott taking over from Simon Pollard as NSW editor of the Journal. Brendan looks forward to maintaining the high standards of the journal, and of responding to subscribers' needs.

This issue is focussed on electronic commerce and content regulation. Electronic commerce has been a catchword in the information technology and banking industries for some time now and is somehow down its inevitable expansion to the internet. The technologies underlying electronic commerce promise a number of benefits for all players. The time is not so far away now where electronic commerce will play an integral part in all of our lives, from smartcards over the counter to internet banking. The world is certainly headed towards a golden era

of heightened personal freedom through these enabling technologies.

Or is it? The cynical in the community have noted that, while we can be sure that electronic commerce will permeate our daily lives, just as every major technology has in the past, the journey will not necessarily be a pleasant one. In this issue our contributors discuss some of the bumps, and the likely means of avoiding them. Professor Mark Sneddon comments on the Attorney-General's report on a framework for legislation for electronic commerce and Brendan Scott writes about some legal and procedural issues in relation to electronic commerce. One of the main threats to personal liberty most highlighted by adversaries to electronic commerce is that posed to personal privacy of individuals. These issues are discussed in detail by Roger Clarke and Kent Davey in their articles.

On the content side of things, internet censorship has been a hot issue in the internet community practically since the internet's existence as an object of public attention. Kaaren Koomen of the ABA provides a very good insight into both the underlying issues in the debate and the means by which we can expect our government to become involved in its resolution.

The first issue of the Journal for a year is also traditionally the time for consolidating and presenting reports from the various societies supporting the Journal and this year is not exception. The issue concludes with relevant presidents' reports presented at the Societies' AGMs.

We hope that this will be a fruitful year for us all and that the Journal will continue to serve your needs. Let us know what you think.

**A WARM WELCOME FROM THE PRESIDENT AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS
OF THE NSW SOCIETY FOR COMPUTERS AND THE LAW**

Welcome to the NSW Society for Computers and the Law.

New members include:

Mr Quenten Dawson of IT Liability Managers

Ms Elisabeth Williams of British Telecom (Asia Pacific)