

Astroturfing

Democracy In Danger

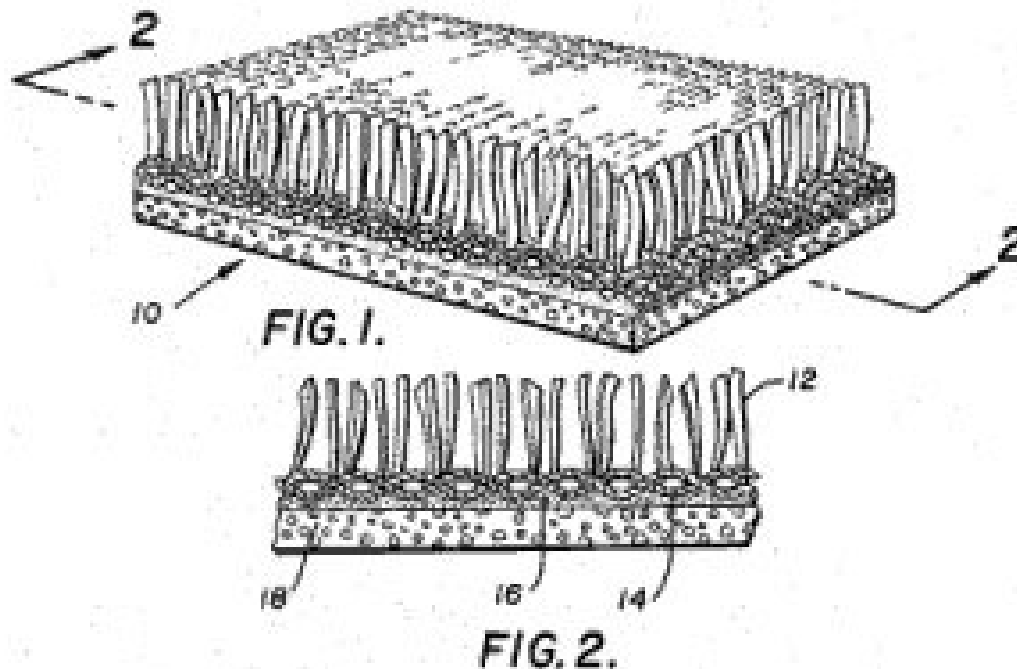


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Astroturfing - what is Astroturf?

- ➔ Astroturf (TM): artificial grass invented by M. Faria and Robert T. Wright of Monsanto Industries (US-patent #3332828 1965)



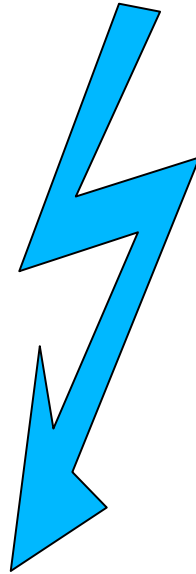
Internet Jargon File [Raymond]

- ➔ „The use of paid shills to create the impression of a popular movement, through means like letters to newspapers from soi-disant ‘concerned citizens’, paid opinion pieces, and the formation of grass-roots lobbying groups that are actually funded by a PR group (AstroTurf is fake grass; hence the term).”



W-Questions

- Who?
- What
- When?
- Where?
- Why?



Astroturfing Characteristics

- ➔ Unlike genuine grassroots activism which tends to be money-poor but people-rich, astroturf campaigns are typically people-poor but cash-rich.



DCI Group Washington

- ➔ www.TechCentralStation.be etc.
- ➔ “The Internet allows you to take an issue and communicate it on your terms to the world - no media filter, no hostile interpretations by opponents. It also provides unparalleled opportunities to mobilize constituents, employees and the public at large. We can design a website that fits your specific needs and ensures your side of the story is heard.”



SME lobbying in EU-Parliament

- ⇒ PRO swpat lobbyists
 - dependend SME
 - PR professionals dressed as SME
 - unaffected and misinformed SMEs

- ⇒ CONTRA swpat lobbyists
 - Brussels SME organisation representatives against swpat, national SME organisations
 - German entrepreneur initiative (~ 600 SME)
 - Economic Majority Initiaitve (> 1500 SME, launched 24 April)
 - Freelancers, professionals, Open Source



Example Campaign4Creativity



campaign for creativity

- ⇒ Who is behind?
- ⇒ SMEs?
- ⇒ Creatives want software patents?



- ⇒ Simon Gentry, Gentry Campbell Ltd. PR company
- ⇒ former well-funded gene patent campaigner



Gentry Campbell

Campbell Gentry

European Public Affairs, Communication and Compliance

- ➔ “We deliver professional [:-)], fact-based [:-)], measurable, results-driven public affairs management and communications for organisations in a wide range of sectors, from insurance and financial services, to pharmaceuticals and the voluntary sector.”
- ➔ “The court of public opinion is harsh and often unfair.”
- ➔ “We help companies review their activities and positions and work with them to understand how these might be perceived by the media, the public and politicians. This will enable you to develop and implement communications programmes to remove or reduce the threat.”



Microsoft Blackmail attempt

- ➔ MS Denmark Public Affairs Marianne Wiersen leaked details of Bill Gates talk to BØRSEN financial magazine
- ➔ MS would move Navision jobs out of Denmark

- ➔ Comments
 - Job move not credible at all
 - Territorial principle of patent law (hard to understand for pro-swpat lobbyists?)
 - “best practice”, we love MS lobbying



News from Hungary

- ➔ BSA has spread blank forms for employees to fill out on the "Help me preserve my job" topic. They'll submit them to MEP-s.

Europe needs your help!
Please return this passport and check the boxes below if you're willing to do more to support the President.

- Please send me _____ more passports? If so, be happy to fill out and return them.
- In writing to talk with media and decision makers with my proof that I'm a member. Feel free to put me in touch with them!
- Confirm that I have sent the full batch of passports back to the European Parliament and support legislation.
- Confirm that I have sent a letter or letter to my elected representatives in support of C2 2009.

First name _____
Last name _____
Company _____
Home address _____
E-mail address _____
Signature _____

BSA's mission is to ensure your privacy. Your details will only be used for the purposes described and not shared with third parties without your explicit permission. You can request removal from the BSA mailing list by returning this card or by writing to the Business Software Alliance, 10000 Woodbridge Avenue, Suite 1000, Irvine, CA 92618 or by email: bsa@bsa.com

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Belgium



Choose the right road!

Ericsson Employees

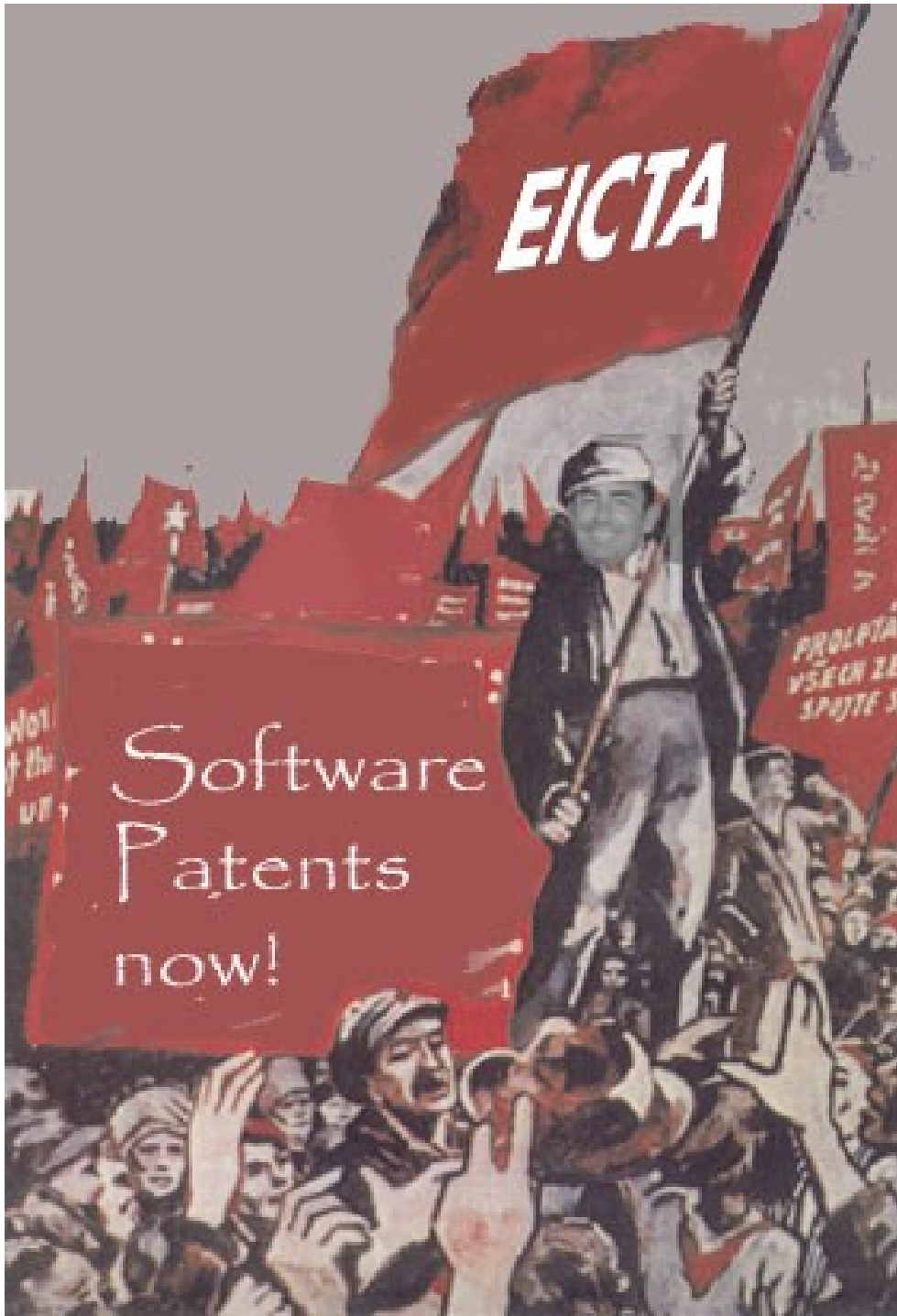
- ➔ 17:05 < ciaran> Ian Clarke met MEP XXX this morning, she said that Ericsson employees had been phoning her telling herr they would lose their job if software wasn't patentable.



Mark McGann, EICTA, EUReporter

- ➔ “Once again I am not sure in what stage of the debate it became a bad thing to be a large corporation, but this is perhaps another debate. The companies I represent employ two million technology workers...”





Comrade EICTA

- ➔ claims to represent "employees"
- ➔ "SME perspective"



PR E-Mail from EICTA

Subject: Patentrichtlinie ist für mehr als 2 Millionen Arbeitsplätze in der Technologiebranche lebenswichtig
Date: Thu, 28 Apr 2005 12:12:32 +0100
From: <XXXXXX@Brunswickgroup.com>

Die High-Tech-Industrie beschäftigt mehr als 2 Millionen Menschen in Europa. Ohne Patente und dem damit verbundenen Gewinn aus den Investitionen in Forschung und Entwicklung, werden Arbeitsplätze im High-Tech-Bereich sowie ein signifikanter Anteil des Bruttosozialprodukte in Europa gefährdet. Um die Unterstützung der Gewerkschaften zu dieser Richtlinie zu hören klicken sie bitte hier:

www.patents4innovation.org/index.php/eng/index_employee_perspective

Mitarbeiter in der digitalen Technologie unterstützen die Richtlinie, da sie Investitionen in Forschung und Entwicklung fördert und dabei hilft neue Arbeitsplätze zu schaffen. Sie unterstützen nicht die Änderungsanträge des Europäischen Parlamentes aus der ersten Lesung, da sie Investitionen in Forschung und Entwicklung und daher Arbeitsplätze in Europe gefährden.

EICTA, der Industrieverband europäischer High-Tech-Unternehmen ist davon überzeugt, dass der Richtlinienentwurf zur Klärung und Kodifizierung des bestehenden Patentrechts beiträgt. Daher wird die Richtlinie Europas Position als global führenden Innovationsstandort weiter ausbauen, Arbeitsplätze schaffen und Technologietransfer wie auch Wissensaustausch fördern.



Content EICTA E-Mail PR

- ➔ Patents for 2 million workers “life essential”
- ➔ IT workers support the Council directive but not the Amendments of Parliament
- ➔ Trade Unions supported EICTA's Patents4Innovation Campaign
- ➔ Software patents or unemployment



What do real Trade Unions think?

⇒ e.G. Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund position statement, 16.06.05



⇒ Jobs in danger **with** software patenting!

⇒ Improvements needed

- Sharp definition of Technicity
- no trivial patents
- no program claims (Art. 5.2)
- Interoperability



What do professionals think?

➔ Noepatents Petition:

> **400 000** signatures
against software patenting in Europe

➔ German Survey IFRIS/BMWA study

➔ Petition of leading french computer scientists

➔ etc. etc. etc.



Empirical Facts about SME

- ➔ SME hardly own EPO software patents,
- ➔ ~75% US and JP multinationals
- ➔ SME and individuals underrepresented in patent system in general
- ➔ EU Software market dominated by innovative SMEs



W-Questions

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MEP, Journalists, General Public



BSA “SME Study”

- ➔ **Very angry response** from journalists
e.g. ZDNET:
- ➔ Ingrid Marson: BSA figures do not add up
- ➔ zdnet leader: Lies, damn lies and statistics
- ➔ “Unless the BSA gets its act together and replaces overstated and misconstrued data with properly researched and carefully presented facts, it will become known as an arrogant organ of propaganda.”



New EU rules needed

- ➔ Astroturfing bad for an Open Society
- ➔ unsound lobbying methods
 - sanctions?
 - Commissioner Kallas “Transparency Initiative”
 - Better EU lobbying transparency rules
- ➔ 28.June Lobbycontrol and Corporate Europe Observatory complain about Campaign for Creativity at Commissioner Kallas



Who is behind EMCITA?

- ➔ Interests: German Internet Providers and their customers
- ➔ Fear of litigation in E-Commerce
- ➔ huge commercial risks and costs

