

Copyright guide is a practical gem

The Copyright Book, third ed., by William S. Strong (MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1990, 249 pp., \$17.95)

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The book world is full of little gems. The problem is finding them in all the sand. William Strong's *The Copyright Book*, now in its third edition, is such a gem. As anyone in the software field knows, copyright and other intellectual-property issues are no longer concerns solely of the legal and marketing departments — they affect developers, too.

In this guide, Strong covers copyright issues of all kinds succinctly and clearly. And the latest edition is very current, including changes to US law made in 1989.

There is no separate section on software, but relevant sections are easy to

find by looking in the index under "Computer programs." Developers will find his coverage of software's look and feel, copyright eligibility, Copyright Office filing requirements, and scope of protection very useful. The explanations of traditional copyright (for published and recorded material) should also help shed light on the basic issues involved in today's software-copyright debates. And those practitioners who write books and articles may benefit from understanding what rights they own in their writings.

If you are the least bit interested in copyright — whether by inclination or necessity — I urge that you keep a copy of *The Copyright Book* on your reference shelf. It will come in handy when copyright issues arise in your work. And arise they will.

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