From: David Barrett [e-mail redacted]
Sent: Sunday, September 26, 2010 12:06 PM
To: Bilski_Guidance
Subject: Please be strict on software patents

I'm the founder and CEO of Expensify, an online business modernizing expense reports. As a company owner, lifelong programmer, and inventor of five software patents currently pending approval, I'm begging you: do everything you can to reduce the scope of software patents. They are a disaster for our industry and do nothing but stifle innovation and create risk. The programming landscape is already a minefield of entirely obvious, overly broad software patents, to the point that you essentially can't write anything without risk of violating some patent somewhere. If you must insist on granting software patents, please reduce their term lengths severely -- even a decade is a lifetime in this industry, and if a patent holder hasn't been able to recoup their investment in that time they probably never will. Software patents have become nothing but danger to all involved, meaning everybody needs to get them just on the off case you get sued by somebody, with the sole hope that maybe you can countersue them for violating yours. It's a crazy, horrible process and needs to be stopped. Thank you.

-david
Founder and CEO of Expensify