

WordPress Foundation Suffers Setback In Trademark Application via @sejournal, @martinibuster

The WordPress Foundation suffered a setback in its attempt to trademark the phrases 'Managed WordPress' and 'Hosted WordPress,' which could have allowed them to demand licensing fees for their use. An organization called Unprotected.org published documents showing it successfully petitioned the U.S. Patent Office to deny the trademarks.

The Uprotected.org website published:

"We have successfully made a petition to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) against both trademark applications for "Managed WordPress" and "Hosted WordPress".

They then quoted the United States Patent Office decision:

"Applicant must disclaim the wording "MANAGED" because it is merely descriptive of an ingredient, quality, characteristic, function, feature, purpose, or use of applicant's goods and services.

...This wording appears in the identification of goods and services. Thus, the wording merely describes applicant's goods and services because applicant provides software for managing content on a website."

Next Steps

The WordPress Foundation has three months to file a response, according to the documentation:

“Response deadline. File a response to this nonfinal Office action within three months of the “Issue date” below to avoid abandonment of the application.”

The Register quoted the owner of Unprotected.org:

“This represents a great victory for the WordPress ecosystem, and we will continue to fight until there is accountability and a change in leadership...”

They went on to promote Joost de Valk as a new leader. Joost de Valk himself has to date promoted the idea of a change in the leadership structure of the WordPress open source project, with Matt Mullenweg still playing a role.

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