



OPEN RIGHTS GROUP

Review of Activities

Annual Report of the Open Rights Group

Prepared by:
Becky Hogge
19 November 2008

For more information contact:
Open Rights Group
7th floor, 100 Grays Inn Road
London WC1X 8AL
+44 (0) 20 7096 1079
<http://www.openrightsgroup.org>
info@openrightsgroup.org

Contents

Annual Report of the Open Rights Group.....	1
Contents.....	3
Chair's foreword.....	5
About the Open Rights Group	6
Digital rights issues	8
Access to knowledge	8
Government and democracy	8
Privacy, surveillance and censorship	8
Achievements this year	9
Campaigns and issues	9
Datagate	9
Creative Business in the Digital Era	9
Three strikes	10
Phorm and BT Webwise	10
E-counting in the London Elections	11
Sound Copyright.....	11
Extermi-knit!.....	12
Freedom Not Fear: The Big Picture.....	13
The inside track	14
UKCCIS	14
Convergence Thinktank	14
Events.....	15
ORG-GRO	16
Getting voices heard	17
Working with the media	18
The year ahead.....	19
Review of Activities 2008	3

New issues	19
Opening up the organisation	19
How you can help	20
Support ORG	20
Volunteer	20
Support form.....	21
Treasurer's statement.....	22
Accounts.....	24
Income and expenditure account.....	24
Balance sheet	26
Notes to the accounts	27
Independent Examiner's report	28
Appendix I: ORG People.....	29
ORG Patron	29
ORG Advisory Council	29
ORG Board of Directors (present)	30
ORG Board of Directors (past)	30
ORG Staff	30
ORG Interns	31
With EXTRA SPECIAL THANKS to ORG's amazing volunteers	31
Appendix II: Company information	32

Chair's foreword

Open Rights Group is a wonderful, spontaneous creation of the people who most care about the information age.

Built on the enthusiasm and promise of people who live, work, play, socialise and create online, ORG is a celebration of the emerging possibilities that technology and the internet offer us. ORG exemplifies that social activism which brings out the very best people have to offer: expertise, creativity, energy, and professionalism – and none of this ever without humour.

Behind this lies an irrepressible motivation. The ORG community knows there are real abuses of our rights online, and real threats to our information society.

Thanks largely to ORG, we may have seen off, for now, the threat presented to our democracy by insecure and unreliable e-voting techniques in the UK. But we still have the rising threat of disconnection stirred up by lobbyists working for panicking rights-holders. Our civil liberties are eroded in an instinctive rush to surveillance. Powerful people are frightened, and don't understand the sort of information-age world we want to live in.

Against this, ORG deploys the expertise and enthusiasm of a community which has, just this month, passed 1000 signed-up and paid up subscribers, fronted by three professional staff, and served by wonderful teams of volunteers and advisers.

Under Becky's directorship, which I regret to say is nearly complete, ORG has developed a formidable media presence, a smooth-running machine, and made great strides towards financial sustainability based on no-nonsense business management. She leaves ORG in great shape, with our thanks and best wishes for the future.

What next? Society still needs legislators and the media to be better informed about information technology. ORG needs to be more ambitious still, under a new director, in its core work, its own development, governance and transparency.

Thank you to everyone who contributed in every way to what is described in this annual report. We're on the right track. We need to stick to our task and build on what we've achieved to date.



William Heath
Chair, Open Rights Group

About the Open Rights Group

The Open Rights Group (ORG) is a grassroots, technology-focussed organisation which exists to protect civil liberties whenever they are threatened by the poor implementation and regulation of digital technology. We call these rights our "digital rights".

Our digital rights are affected when the increasing ability of corporate and state entities to store data about our physical make-up, our habits or our communications threatens our right to privacy. Our digital rights are affected when the introduction of computers into the voting process threatens our right to a free and transparent election, or when over-zealous intellectual property legislation, brought into being by the concerns of traditional entertainment conglomerates when faced with new technologies, denies us access to our cultural heritage or threatens our right to freedom of expression. Often, it is simple ignorance that threatens our digital rights: the media and politicians sometimes don't understand new technologies, but comment and pass laws anyway.



ORG's aims are:

- to preserve and extend traditional civil liberties in the digital world;
- to raise awareness in the media of digital rights abuses;
- to provide a media clearinghouse, connecting journalists with experts and activists;
- to collaborate with other digital rights and related organisations; and
- to nurture a community of campaigning volunteers, from grassroots activists to technical and legal experts.

The Open Rights Group was founded in December 2005 by a pledge from 1000 people to "create a standing order of 5 pounds per month to support an organisation that will campaign for digital rights in the UK".

The ORG story started in the summer of 2005, when a group of technology activists organised a panel discussion entitled "Where's the British EFF?", at OpenTech, a technology and open source conference. The event was received with overwhelming interest

and it soon became clear that there was significant support for a UK-based digital rights organisation.

That afternoon, Danny O'Brien created a pledge on PledgeBank, with a deadline of Christmas Day 2005. The pledge read: "I will create a standing order of 5 pounds per month to support an organisation that will campaign for digital rights in the UK, but only if 1,000 other people will too." The pledge reached 1000 people on 29 November 2005, and ORG started accepting donations from its supporters in January 2006.

ORG employs three staff, who are supported by a 23-strong Advisory Council tasked with helping form policy and prioritise issues, a nine-strong board of non-executive directors and a volunteer community of over 50 people who actively help in the running of the organisation. Our patron is the author Neil Gaiman.

Digital rights issues

The Open Rights Group was deliberately set up to have a very wide remit that would cover any issue where digital technologies affect civil liberties, consumer rights or human rights.

Technology moves rapidly and it is essential that ORG be able to respond to unexpected and unpredictable developments. Although ORG is unable to campaign on all the issues that are current at any particular time, our main areas of interest are:

Access to knowledge

- Copyright term extension
- Copyright reform
- Alternative licensing schemes, such as Creative Commons
- Digital Rights Management
- Software patents
- Access to public sector data
- Access to public service content

Government and democracy

- E-voting
- Freedom of Information

Privacy, surveillance and censorship

- Data protection, data-sharing
- Transformational government
- National vehicle tracking database
- National DNA database
- Data retention
- Interception of communications
- Network-level content-blocking
- Media regulation

Achievements this year

ORG has used this year to build on past campaign successes, as well as focus on new issues. From the Government's loss of two DVDs containing half the nation's bank details in November 2007, to widespread concern throughout 2008 over plans to disconnect from the internet people accused of illicitly sharing copyrighted material, this was the year that digital rights went mainstream. ORG was there to inform the debate, providing a calm, technically-informed perspective to the media and policymakers.

Campaigns and issues

Datagate

Just days after we released our first Review of Activities last year, news broke that the confidential details of 25 million child benefit claimants had been lost by HM Revenue and Customs, on two password-protected DVDs. The news revealed the cavalier attitude of officialdom towards the security of citizens' personal information, momentarily bringing the long-held data security concerns of digital rights and privacy advocates, including ORG, centre stage.

The news had long-term effects too. Suddenly, every new data loss was headline news, and ORG's log of UK Privacy Debacles (<http://www.openrightsgroup.org/2008review/02>) became a focus of activity.

Independent reviews concluded in June 2008 that, given the lax culture over data security at HMRC, further data loss was a distinct possibility, and a separate Police Complaints Commission report found "no visible management of data security at any level". The lasting effect is that every new proposed government database now has to publicly address fears about data security that previously had only been raised by computer security experts.

Creative Business in the Digital Era



Partnering with 01 Zero One, the new media skills and development centre, ORG embarked on a research project examining how the internet enables creative entrepreneurs to develop innovative business practices by being more open with their intellectual property. Creative Business in the Digital Era examined new business models and the wider context in which they sit, culminating in one day-long and two evening courses where creative practitioners were invited to share our research and apply it to their own practice.

Congratulations are due to Suw Charman, ORG's founding Executive Director, for conceiving, developing and executing the research and training course. In the end, the day

course, which included lectures, group exercises, and special Q&A sessions with three exemplary Creative Business projects, was vastly over-subscribed, with the evening courses also featuring lively debate from the dozens of people who participated. Materials, which were developed collaboratively on a special Creative Business wiki, have been made available for remix and reuse under a Creative Commons licence.

Three strikes

ORG continued to fight disproportionate and ineffective sanctions devised by rightsholders to protect their analogue-age business models and punish consumers for sharing media files online. Emboldened by the draconian "Olivennes Agreement", brokered by the Sarkozy administration in France in 2007, UK rightsholders began demanding that British ISPs terminate or filter internet users' connectivity in response to claims of infringement. When the UK Government began to take such requests seriously, and put pressure on internet intermediaries to come to voluntary agreements, ORG joined the debate to argue against such a practice. In our opinion, the "three strikes" model – whereby a simple repeated claim of infringement could lead to innocent users losing internet access – was unjust, disproportionate and fraught with practical problems. Our concerns were widely reported in the national and international media.

When it appeared that the European Parliament was also falling prey to rightsholder lobbying in the Autumn by amending a package of telecoms legislation to include a three strikes regime, ORG urged its supporters to take part in a pan-European letter writing campaign. This eventually led to a new amendment being adopted that would preclude disconnection from the internet without judicial authority.

Although the UK Government now claim to have backed away from mandating this proposed course of action, ORG remains vigilant. We expect the Government to conclude its public consultation on measures to deal with illicit P2P filesharing, to which ORG made a lengthy submission, in the New Year.

Phorm and BT Webwise

From the moment that behavioural advertising company Phorm's plans with British Telecom were made public, ORG and its supporters worked to shine light on the nature and risks of this controversial new ad tracking system. We soon realised that, until detailed specifications were released about the ad system – which dials direct into your ISP's network and examines the sites you visit online in order to serve you targeted ads – speculation about how it affected user privacy would only continue.

Partnering with the Foundation for Information Policy Research, we visited the Phorm offices to get the low down on their system. What followed was a detailed technical analysis produced by ORG Advisory Council member and FIPR treasurer Dr Richard Clayton. Nicholas Bohm, an internet lawyer who also divides his time advising both ORG and FIPR, then released a partner legal analysis. Together, the two documents made the case against Phorm clear.

During the "Phorm storm", ORG emerged as a key information hub for activists campaigning against the technology (and seeking justice for the illegal trials conducted by BT in 2006 and

2007) and a clearinghouse for the popular media investigations of and reports about Phorm. BT has now gone ahead with further trials of Webwise, its implementation of Phorm, but we believe our role in raising awareness of the dangers of Phorm has helped nurture a public opinion that is rightly hostile to the technology. And although it has become clear that there is no protection in the UK for citizens and consumers from those who wish to illegally intercept their private communications for financial gain, we are now looking to Europe to enforce the law and protect citizens from intrusion into their digital private lives.

E-counting in the London Elections

Following on from a successful mission last year, ORG deployed 27 volunteer election observers to monitor e-counting at London's elections in May. Volunteers were asked to officially accredit themselves with the Electoral Commission as ORG observers and to devote their day to democracy on 2 May, monitoring the counting of over 7 million ballot papers by computer systems in three count centres across London.

Their observations contributed to a detailed report, launched in July 2008, which concluded that there was insufficient evidence to declare confidence in the results of the elections. Transparency around the recording of valid votes was a major issue, leading many of our team to conclude that they were unable to observe votes being counted. And while hundreds of screens set up by vote scanners showed almost meaningless data to observers, London Elects admit that the system was likely to be recording blank ballots as valid votes. System error messages observed on the day raised significant concerns, as did the inability of elections managers London Elects to publish source code audits, citing last minute concerns over the commercial confidentiality of their suppliers.



ORG Advisory Council member Jason Kitcat was invited to give evidence to the Greater London Authority's elections scrutiny committee based on the report's findings. A week later, the Electoral Commission released its report into the London elections, echoing many of ORG's findings and calling for the GLA to assume that the next elections for the GLA and London mayor should be counted manually.

Sound Copyright

Building on our success in 2006 in helping the Government conclude that extension to the term of copyright on sound recordings was not an economically sound proposition, we

partnered with EFF Europe to launch a petition against the proposal as it made its way (in the briefcases of record label lobbyists) to Brussels. To date, over 14,000 people have signed the petition asking elected representatives and bureaucrats in Brussels to “keep copyright sound” and reject the bogus proposal to nearly double the term of protection afforded to sound recordings from 50 to 95 years.



ORG is now in the middle of an intense campaign in the European Parliament to reach out to MEPs and convince them to reject the proposal. Thanks to a generous grant of €30,000 from the Open Society Institute, ORG has been able to hire a dedicated part time campaigner for this work, who forms part of a network of European advocates working on this and other intellectual property reform issues. Our submission to the UK Intellectual Property Office, who will lead the UK’s policy on the proposal at the Council of Ministers, showed that ordinary performers are likely to gain as little as 50¢ per year from the change, while record labels pocket millions. Our opposition to the proposal has been strengthened by rejections of it from almost all of Europe’s major IP research institutes, including the Max Planck Institute in Germany and IViR in the Netherlands.

Extermi-knit!



Sometimes it’s hard to tell what digital rights stories will capture the public imagination. So it was when knitter Mazzmatazz contacted ORG for advice on a letter she had received from BBC Worldwide’s brand protection team, telling her to take down from her blog knitting patterns based on popular characters from *Doctor Who*.

ORG blogged about the case, and by the end of the week, Mazz’s story had spread to all corners of the British press, including *The Sun*. The coverage caused the BBC to agree to meet with Mazz and turn her knitted designs into exclusive promotional products. Mazz’s other knitting designs have since been featured in *The Guardian*. As well as launching Mazz’s career as a guerrilla knitter, the episode served as a useful way to underline the reforms needed to intellectual property law to allow fan fiction and derivative uses of works, and the injustices regularly suffered by fans with less media-friendly stories of faceless corporate copyright takedown notices.

Freedom Not Fear: The Big Picture



On 11 October, civil society activists around the world held events to celebrate democracy, free speech, human rights and civil liberties and to speak out against increasing levels of surveillance suffered by citizens at the hands of corporations and the state. The international day of action was called “Freedom Not Fear” and ORG and NO2ID contributed for the UK by constructing a piece of community artwork which harnessed the power of online and offline protest to visually stunning effect.

We asked citizens around the country to capture the database state, taking photos of surveillance society ephemera and sending them in to us or uploading them to Flickr. We used these photos to build a giant mosaic depicting Gordon Brown as Big Brother, put together live in Parliament Square on the day. Our message was clear: although as individuals we only see incremental invasions of our privacy, put together these creeping changes constitute a wholesale shift towards a society predicated not on freedom but on fear.

Despite the seriousness of our message, we had a lot of fun delivering it to Parliament, on a beautiful sunny afternoon, with help from the ORG and NO2ID communities, the Godalming Quakers, and a special delegation sent from the under-twos community to speak out against the children’s database, Contact Point.

The inside track

Part of ORG's mission is to exploit the expert knowledge of our community in order to inform policymakers. As ORG's reputation has grown, invitations to take part in Government initiatives have begun to arrive in our postbag. Because of our limited resources and our desire to remain absolutely independent, we are always careful to balance the work we do on "the inside track" with our grassroots and public engagement work. This year we participated in two Government policy-making and regulatory initiatives.

UKCCIS

In September 2007, Dr Tanya Byron conducted a review into the risks to children from exposure to potentially harmful or inappropriate material on the internet. Dr Byron's approach was generally positive, and we felt that she understood the benefits new technology could deliver children, as well as the potential risks that often worried parents. Following our submission to the Byron Review (See *Getting voices heard*), ORG was asked to join the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS), a body set up as part of the Review's Action Plan. Although we had been opposed to the formation of this council during the review process, suspecting it to be an unnecessary and potentially dangerous distraction from real digital rights issues, we felt that, as the only third sector organisation with a freedom of expression mandate invited to join the council, we needed to be involved. We will keep a watching brief on the actions of the UKCCIS, and get involved in any ORG-specific issues as they arise.

Convergence Thinktank

After ORG gave a presentation at the Westminster e-Forum which asked policy-makers to think differently about illicit peer-to-peer filesharing, we were asked to get involved with the Convergence Thinktank, a cross-departmental initiative set up to examine the implications of technological development for the media and communications industries. This opened the door to a series of events held to inform policymakers, with ORG either in the audience or on the stage. Again, we were unsurprised to find that we were often the only organisation representing the digital consumer or citizen. The work of the Convergence Thinktank has now been subsumed by Lord Carter's new "Digital Britain" initiative, which will report in Spring 2009 (see *The year ahead*).

Events

ORG grew its reputation for putting on excellent, thought-provoking and generally unmissable intellectual knees-ups this year, from our Machinima screening and panel in Autumn 2007, to our debate held at the British Computer Society on the Future of the Internet in Spring 2008. Here's a run down of the highlights:

Bloodspell and the rise of Machinima: In association with London Metropolitan University we presented a screening and panel discussion of the world's first feature-length, machinima animated film.



The Future of the Internet in Focus: Put on in association with the British Computer Society, this sell-out event featured Jonathan Zittrain and Bill Thompson discussing iPhones, computer viruses and how to break the internet.

OpenTech 2008: Put on together with UKUUG, mySociety.org and NO2ID, this informal, low cost one-day conference on technology, society and low-carbon living, was a chance for everyone to meet old and new friends, and for ORG to launch the ORG-GRO campaign.

Piracy vs Obscurity: Neil Gaiman, the illustrious patron of ORG, gave the first public appearance of his Graveyard Book UK tour to ORG, inviting fans and ORG supporters to discuss piracy from the perspective of a creator.



Open Source for Games Developers: In association with Own-It we hosted an event for the London Games Fringe. The panel featured veterans of law, code and business

Conference stalls: ORG volunteers also manned a number of supporter recruitment and information stalls at technology conferences and community fairs throughout the year, including LUG Radio Live, PyCon and Dulwich Festival Fair. Chances are that if you went to a tech conference this year, you will have been accosted by Glyn Wintle or one of his team of tireless ORG supporter recruiters.

ORG-GRO

At the beginning of July, we launched ORG-GRO, an initiative to double the amount of financial support we receive from individuals. Thanks to a generous grant of £20,000 plus £10,000 in matched funding from the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust Ltd, we were able to devote resources to attracting and retaining enough supporters to put ORG on a sustainable financial footing into the future.

ORG-GRO was launched at OpenTech, a grassroots technology conference put on by the UK Unix User Group in association with ORG. It was a fitting place to launch our call to the digital rights community to help us achieve financial sustainability by the end of 2008: ORG had been conceived at OpenTech 2005.

That day we released a "fundometer" widget for members of the community to upload to their website or blog, which updated itself each time we registered new financial support. So far, over 30 different websites are displaying the ORG fundometer, publicising our campaign to raise funds.



The ORG-GRO campaign has several elements. First and foremost it is about encouraging and incentivising existing supporters to recruit their friends or increase what they give to the organisation. To encourage people to recruit friends, a video showing how to do it, that also introduced newcomers to digital rights issues, was produced (watch it at <http://bit.ly/Zps0>). Asus provided a prize of an Eee-PC for the supporter who recruited the most new supporters during ORG-GRO, and dozens of people now appear to be actively taking part in this competition, with positive results for ORG's supporter numbers. We encouraged supporters who lived outside of London to set up local meetings about digital rights using Pledgebank (see, eg <http://www.pledgebank.com/orgsouthwest>), promising to send representatives from the organisation if sufficient numbers were reached. We also held a number of one-off events and giveaways to increase support to ORG.

The ORG-GRO goal of doubling the amount of support we receive from individuals, from the equivalent of 750 fivers / month, to 1500 fivers / month is set for the end of the year. One month after launch, we were receiving 825 fivers. Two months after launch, we are receiving 934. Today, we are receiving 1001 fivers/month. For more information, visit <http://www.openrightsgroup.org/org-gro/>.

Getting voices heard

This year we submitted responses to a wide variety of national and regional consultations. We used a special tool adapted and developed by the ORG volunteer community to allow supporters and other interested parties to interact with consultation documents and express their views: <http://www.openrightsgroup.org/consult/>.

- The independent *Byron Review* into risks to children from exposure to potentially harmful or inappropriate material on the internet and in video games
<http://www.openrightsgroup.org/2008review/04>
- The independent *Thomas–Walport Data Sharing Review* consultation into how personal information is used and shared in the public and private sectors
<http://www.openrightsgroup.org/2008review/06>
- The Ministry of Justice *Freedom of Information (Fol): Designation of Additional Public Authorities* consultation into whether and how the Fol regime should be extended to organisations that carry out functions of a public nature
<http://www.openrightsgroup.org/2008review/08>
- The UK Intellectual Property Office's *Review into Exceptions and Limitations in UK Copyright Law*
<http://www.openrightsgroup.org/2008review/10>
- The European Commission's *Content Online* Review
<http://www.openrightsgroup.org/2008review/12>
- The UK Intellectual Property Office's request for comments on the European Commission's proposal to extend copyright term for sound recordings
<http://www.openrightsgroup.org/2008review/14>
- The Ministry of Justice's *Weekend Voting* Review
<http://www.openrightsgroup.org/2008review/16>
- The Home Office's *Consultation into transposing the Data Retention Directive into UK law*
<http://www.openrightsgroup.org/2008review/18>
- The Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform's *Consultation into Legislative Options to Address Illicit Peer-to-Peer (p2p) File-sharing*
<http://www.openrightsgroup.org/2008review/20>

Working with the media

ORG crossed two media Rubicons this year, debating digital rights issues on BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme and in the pages of *The Sun*. This, and our consistent presence in a huge range of specialist and general national and international press and broadcast media underlines ORG's reputation as a trusted and informed commentator on the digital issues of the day. A selection of these publications follow – for a more comprehensive list, visit our archive of press coverage, maintained at <http://www.openrightsgroup.org/2008review/22>:

- BBC (World News, World Service, local news, online news, Radio 4, 5Live & 6Music)
- *Channel 4 News*
- *Daily Mail*
- *Financial Times*
- *Guardian*
- *ITV News*
- *New Statesman*
- *Observer*
- The Register
- *Scotland on Sunday*
- *The Scotsman*
- *Sky News*
- *Sunday Herald*
- *The Sun*
- *Telegraph*
- *The Times*
- ZDNet

The year ahead

New issues

In just three short years ORG has effected real policy change on a number of issues, from copyright reform to e-voting. But threats to our liberties are not subsiding, they are increasing.

In 2009, ORG anticipates new threats to civil liberties and consumer rights emerging at the network level. From unchecked snooping by advertisers and bureaucrats to network level regulation of content, the underlying structure of the internet as a network of ends is under threat. This has implications for privacy, for freedom of expression, and for the potential of the internet to continue to flourish as a tool that puts the many in touch with the many, stimulating innovation and education, rapidly accelerating information dissemination and connecting communities across geographic boundaries.

We already know of two Government initiatives that will require the attention of the ORG community in 2009.

The first is the alleged plans of the Home Office to build a centralised database of communications traffic data relating to the emails, phone calls and web visits of every UK citizen – the so-called "Intercept Modernisation Programme". The programme, if implemented, would represent an archive of the movements of all UK citizens online, creating both a honeypot for criminals and private snoopers, and an irresistible dataset for ever-expanding official intervention into private life.

The second is the so-called "Digital Britain" initiative, announced by the new Minister for Communications, Technology and Broadcasting, Lord Carter, in October 2007. The initiative, which brings together much existing government work on digital inclusion, next generation broadband and intellectual property enforcement online, is designed to make Britain as competitive as possible for the creative and knowledge industries. But it is vulnerable to capture by corporate lobbyists, advocating draconian IP enforcement measures and the trading off of net neutrality to encourage investment in upgrades to network infrastructure.

Opening up the organisation

We are immensely proud of the organisation we have built up over the last three years. The vibrancy and enthusiasm of the ORG community, and the increasing financial support of its members, indicates that ORG is an organisation people feel happy to get behind.

As a group that aspires to represent the community, as well as one that wants to last for as long as we're needed, we know we should always be looking for ways to do more to open up our governance process. In the coming year, we will aim do everything we can to function as an open, transparent and accountable organisation, with clear and accessible governance structures. This could involve opening nominations to the ORG Advisory Council, and even asking the ORG supporter community to elect members of the ORG Board, as well as publishing more information more regularly about our activities and ambitions.

How you can help

ORG is its supporters. The central team's role is to spot the best opportunities to put our collective intention to best effect. Without a solid foundation of people willing to support ORG financially and take on volunteer work, we would not be able to carry out the day-to-day activities that support its mission. More importantly, it is ORG's supporters who, by donating their money and time, also lend us their strength – as an organisation ORG has more weight because so many people are willing to dig into their own pockets to support us.

Support ORG

We accept one-off donations but it is the regular donations from our supporters that keep ORG ticking. Most ORG supporters pay between £5 and £10 each month but some give more. The best way to support ORG is through a monthly standing order, which you can set up via the ORG website (<http://www.openrightsgroup.org/support-org>), or simply fill out the form overleaf and post it to us.

If you're already supporting ORG financially, you can help us by letting your friends and colleagues know why they should be too. We also accept donations in kind – over the last two years supporters have donated office space, computer hardware, raffle prizes and much, much more. If you've got something you think we could use, email info@openrightsgroup.org.

Volunteer

The Open Rights Group depends upon the work of expert volunteers. Whether you have technical or design skills that we can make use of, whether you have expertise you can share, or whether you just have enough time to write to your MP on a subject that vexes you, your involvement is essential. We support volunteers either to work remotely, from wherever they are in the country, or to come work with the staff in our London office. ORG needs your time and your voice. If you're interested, email volunteers@openrightsgroup.org.

Support form

Support the Open Rights Group!

Please complete and return this standing order form to:
Open Rights Group, 7th floor, 100 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8AL, UK

Your details:

Name:	Salutation: (Mr/Ms/Dr/etc)
Address:	
Postcode:	
Email:	

Making a regular contribution is the best way to support our work,
it costs less to process and helps us plan in advance.

'I love ORG' donation: £10 per month

Standard donation: £5 per month

Concession: £2.50 per month

Standing Order Mandate:

Name of Bank:	Sort Code:
Branch:	
Branch address	
Please pay The Co-Operative Bank PLC, business direct, PO Box 250, Skelmersdale WN8 6WT (Open Rights Group, sort code 08-92-99, account number 65185766) the sum of £_____ and in words, _____ monthly on the ____ of each month, beginning _____ until further notice in writing and debit my account accordingly.	
Account Number:	Account Name:
Signature:	Date:

If you'd like to send an additional donation then that'd be super. We take cheques payable to Open Rights Group, direct payment to our bank account (details above), or PayPal to paypal@openrightsgroup.org. For more information, contact info@openrightsgroup.org or visit www.openrightsgroup.org.

Treasurer's statement

In this section of our Review of Activities I will outline the principles and details of our funding model, which has brought us close to financial sustainability in just three years. Our aim is to secure the core fixed costs of our normal operations through funds raised by relatively small, regular donations from a large number of individual supporters, whilst funding larger campaigns via contributions from grant-giving bodies. This broad base of grassroots support enables ORG to maintain its independence from any single patron or influence. This has been vital in gaining and retaining the trust of our supporters, the media and politicians and is giving us growing legitimacy by virtue of the number of people who stand behind us when we speak.

It is our intention to be a transparent and open organisation and so we voluntarily publish a level of detail consistent with best practice guidelines for voluntary sector organisations, which is considerably in excess of our statutory obligations. If after reading this statement and report you have any questions or feedback I and the rest of the Board would be very pleased to hear from you so that we can make any changes necessary in advance of next year's Review of Activities.

Your generosity has enabled us to quickly and effectively establish a confident and considered voice for citizens and consumers in technology-related public policy debates. Following the successful pledge to found ORG in 2005, I reported last year that we had received over £19,000 from ORG supporters like you in our first financial year (ending 31 October 2006). I am pleased to note that this figure increased to over £35,000 in the year ended 31 October 2007, the accounts for which period follow this statement. Most reassuringly, despite the economic gloom, our supporter growth has further accelerated in recent months.

In the financial year ended 31 October 2007, the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust (JRRT) Ltd continued its support of ORG and granted us £5,000 towards our "Release the Music" campaign against copyright term extension and £23,950 to thoroughly investigate and disclose the risks to democracy associated with electronic elections. We are also very grateful to the Foundation for Information Policy Research for their kind grant of £1,000 towards our work on e-voting.

In the financial year ended 31 October 2008, we received a significant additional grant of £20,000, plus £10,000 in matched funds from the JRRT Ltd which enabled us to accelerate our supporter drive and move closer towards our goal of establishing ORG as a sustainable organisation.

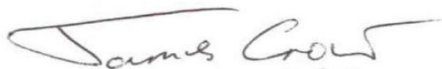
In addition, as project and campaign funding, we received £19,800 from new media development centre 01 zero-one to prepare and deliver educational materials for creative businesses using the open architecture and culture of the internet. Most recently, the Open Society Foundation granted ORG €30,000 to expand our campaign for intellectual property reform to cover developments across Europe. This has paid for our third (part-time) staff member.

The Board (all unpaid volunteers) remain focused on the financial self-sustainability of ORG and concern ourselves continuously not just with providing all the support we can to the Executive Director and her staff in growing the supporter numbers, and hence income of the organisation, but also with keeping our operating expenditure tightly managed, lean and efficient. Our task in doing this was greatly eased by all of the individuals and organisations that have supported us either by donating their valuable time to us as volunteers or providing goods, services or resources to us at reduced or no cost. Thank you.

Looking ahead to the coming year, we are targeting significant growth in our supporter numbers and aim to increase our receipts from individuals by another 50%. In addition, following the recent changes to UK charity law, we are investigating registering Open Rights as a charity in order to maximise the value of our supporters' donations through Gift Aid. The goal of creating a financially sustainable organisation is very near and with continued focus will be achieved by the end of 2009.

If you're already a supporter I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you sincerely for your continued generosity and ask politely if you're able to consider increasing your gift. If you're not an ORG supporter, then I hope that this report has helped show you the care we take to maximise the effect of our supporters' hard-earned donations and has done its part to convince you to become one.

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors



James Cronin
Acting Treasurer, Open Rights Group

Accounts

Income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 Oct. 2007

	2007	2006
	£	£
INCOME		
Subscriptions	46,639	19,228
Grant from Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust Ltd	28,950	2,958
Sponsorship from Foundation for Information Policy Research	1,000	
Donations	1,264	129
Interest receivable	410	111
	<hr/> 78,263	<hr/> 22,426
EXPENDITURE		
Consultancy fees – Executive Director		7,000
Consultancy fees – Operations Manager		3,076
Consultancy fees	9,940	
Gross Pay	33,196	
Employer's NI Contributions	3,308	
Bank Service Charges		1,020
Bank Service Charges – PayPal	914	
Bank Service Charges – Co-op	48	
Campaign event		1,540
Creative Business in the Digital Era	1,000	
Copyfighters	46	
E-voting	17,048	
Release the Music (Copyright term extension)	3,387	
SOAP (Community party)	86	

	2007	2006
	£	£
Other campaigns	523	
Marketing	568	
Office supplies	510	
Postage and delivery	64	
Printing and reproduction	315	
Professional fees	1,241	2,000
Recruitment	548	
Service Providers	818	575
Taxes (corporate)	410	
Telephones	1,062	
Training	71	
Travel and hotel	945	773
Unclassified (To be reimbursed)	12	
Other overheads		301
	<hr/> 76,060	<hr/> 16,285
Surplus of income over expenditure for the year	<hr/> 2,203	<hr/> 6,141
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Balance Brought Forward	6,141	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Balance Carried Forward	<hr/> 8,344	<hr/> 6,141
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Balance sheet as at 31 October 2007

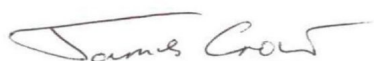
		2007		2006	
	Note	£	£	£	£
Current Assets					
Cash at bank			23,419		22,139
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year					
Subscriptions received in advance	2	3,527		13,998	
Other creditors		11,548		2,000	
			15,075		15,998
Net Assets			8,344		6,141
Represented by:					
Accumulated Fund			8,344		6,141

For the year ended 31 October 2007 the directors are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption under Section 249A(1) of the Companies Act 1985 and that no member or members have requested an audit pursuant to Section 249B(2) of the Act.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for:

1. Ensuring that the company keeps proper accounting records which comply with Section 221 of the Companies Act 1985; and
2. Preparing accounts which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of Section 226 of the Companies Act 1985, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of this Act relating to accounts so far as applicable to the company.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 18 August 2008 and signed on its behalf by



James Cronin
Director

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 October 2007

1 Accounting policies

The Financial Statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective January 2007).

2 Subscriptions

Each annual subscription is banked on receipt and the benefit is credited to income in 12 equal amounts over the ensuing year.

3 Surplus income and the Accumulated Fund

As a not for profit company, all income is dedicated to its object of raising general awareness of digital rights matters and is credited to an accumulated fund to be used for future projects. As a company limited by guarantee and without share capital, income cannot be distributed to shareholders.

4 Corporation Tax

It is our understanding that corporation tax is not payable by Open Rights as it is a not for profit company.

5 Bank Service Charges and consultancy fees

In 2007 we are showing bank service charges separately rather than as a combined figure, whereas we are showing consultancy fees as a combined figure.

Independent Examiner's report to the Board of Directors of Open Rights for the year ended 31 October 2007

I report on the accounts of Open Rights for the year ended 31 October 2007, which are set out in pages 4 to 6.

Respective responsibilities of the directors and the examiner

The Board of Directors are responsible for preparing the accounts. The Board of Directors consider that an audit is not required and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to issue this report on its accounts.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the company and a comparison of the financial statements with those records. It also included considering any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements and seeking explanations from you as directors concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the directors have not met the requirements to ensure that:
 - proper accounting records are kept, and
 - accounts are prepared which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or
- To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Anthony Epton BA FCA CTA FCIE
Goldwins
Chartered Accountants
75 Maygrove Road
London, NW6 2EG

Appendix I: ORG People

ORG Patron

Neil Gaiman, author

ORG Advisory Council

The Advisory Council is made up of experts from fields such as the media, computer security, software design and consumer rights. Each member serves in a personal capacity to provide guidance on ORG policy.

- Richard Allan (Power of Information Taskforce, Cisco, former MP - Sheffield Hallam)
- Owen Blacker (Iris Digital, NO2ID, mySociety.org, Stand.org.uk)
- Nick Bohm (The Law Society, FIPR)
- Ian Brown (Oxford Internet Institute, NO2ID, FIPR, Privacy International, Creative Commons UK, European Digital Rights)
- John Buckman (Creative Commons, Magnatune, Bookmooch)
- Michelle Childs (Consumers Association, Knowledge Ecology International, Medecins Sans Frontiers)
- Richard Clayton (University of Cambridge Computer Laboratory, FIPR)
- Tom Coates (Yahoo! Brickhouse, BBC)
- Alan Cox (Fellow: Red Hat, FIPR, vendor-sec)
- Grahame Davies (Demon Internet, Easynet, LINX)
- Cory Doctorow (EFF, Creative Commons, BoingBoing, author)
- Lilian Edwards (Professor of Internet Law, Sheffield University; Associate Director, AHRC Centre for IP and Technology Law, Edinburgh; FIPR, BILETA)
- Wendy Grossman (Freelance writer)
- Ben Hammersley (The Times, The Guardian, The Observer)
- Jason Kitcat (Brighton & Hove City Councillor, Netmums, former ORG staff member)
- Paula le Dieu (BBC, Creative Commons International, Magic Lantern)
- Stef Magdalinski (UpMyStreet.com, mySociety.org, Stand.org.uk, Moo.com)
- Kevin Marks (Google)
- Desirée Miloshevic (Afilias, Internet Society)
- Keith Mitchell (Internet Systems Consortium, UK Network Operators' Forum)

- David Rowntree (Blur)
- David Weinberger (Berkman Centre for Internet and Society)
- Jonathan Zittrain (Oxford Internet Institute, Harvard Law School)

ORG Board of Directors (present)

- James Cronin: Company Secretary, October 2005-present; Acting Treasurer, June 2007-present (BBC, NO2ID, TheyWorkForYou.com, mySociety.org, Stand.org.uk, Venda, Paul A Young Fine Chocolates)
- Louise Ferguson: Chair, October 2005-May 2008; Acting Vice-Chair, May 2008-present (Usability Professionals' Association, Design for Democracy, FIPR)
- David Harris: October 2007-present (IT and IP barrister)
- William Heath: Vice-Chair, December 2005-May 2008; Acting Chair May 2008-September 2008; Chair September 2008-present (Kable, FIPR)
- Ben Laurie: December 2005-present (The Bunker, Apache, SSL)
- Dan McQuillan: October 2007-present (Multikulti, Amnesty International)
- Danny O'Brien: December 2005-present (Electronic Frontier Foundation, Stand.org.uk, Need-to-Know)
- Rufus Pollock: December 2005-present (Foundation for a Free Information Infrastructure, Open Knowledge Foundation, Creative Commons UK, Free Culture UK)
- Vijay Sodiwala: October 2007-present (BSkyB, Chime Communications, News International, Tiscali, Video Networks)

ORG Board of Directors (past)

- Ian Brown: Treasurer, December 2005-June 2007
- Suw Charman: March 2007-May 2008 (social software consultant, former Executive Director of ORG)
- Stefan Magdalinski: October 2005-October 2006

ORG Staff

- Becky Hogge: Executive Director, January 2007-present
- Michael Holloway: Operations Manager, April 2006-present
- Gavin Hill: Campaigns Officer, May 2008-present
- Jason Kitcat: E-voting campaign coordinator, April 2007-September 2007

- Suw Charman: Executive Director, January 2006-January 2007

ORG Interns

- Dan Ray
- Jonathan Roberts

With EXTRA SPECIAL THANKS to ORG's amazing volunteers

Adam Giles, Adam McGreggor, Adrian Thurston, AJ Finch, Alaric Snell Pym, Alex Robinson, Alex Tingle, Austin Chamberlain, Caroline Ford, Casey Fitzpatrick, Chris Adams, Chris Waigl, Christopher Scally, Daryl Lloyd, Dave Draper, Denise Wilton, Elliot Hughes, Felix Cohen, Fred Fix, Gervase Markham, Glyn Wintle, Harry Metcalfe, Howard Burdett, James Casbon, James Cox, James Heaven, Jon Roberts, Jordan Hatcher, Joss Wright, Lemon, Loretta Platts, Lucy Sherriff, Marc Hankins, Mark Levitt, Matt Nida, Matt Peperell, Matthew Petty, Mike Little, Patricia Hanrahan, Patrick Jones, Rachel Clarke, Raph Goldacre, Richard King, Robin Fisher, Rowan, Ryan Alexander, Sam Smith, Sheila Thomson, Susanne Lamido, Taylor Storrs Kegel, Tim Duckett, Tom Ackers, Tom Reynolds.

And with many thanks to Venda for the rent-free use of office space, the endless free cups of coffee and the free use of meeting and conference facilities within which to bring all these wonderful people together.



Appendix II: Company information

Company number:

5581537

Registered in England and Wales

Registered Office:

Open Rights
12 Duke's Road
London WC1H 9AD

Office Address:

Open Rights Group
7th Floor
100 Grays Inn Road
London WC1X 8AL

Independent Examiner:

Anthony Epton BA FCA CTA FCIE
Goldwins
Chartered Accountants
75 Maygrove Road
London
NW6 2EG

Bankers:

Cooperative Bank plc
PO Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester M60 4EP



This document is published under a Creative Commons 2.5 Attribution-Share Alike license
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.5/>

Support the Open Rights Group!

<http://www.openrightsgroup.org/support-org>

Photo credits: Kerry Buckley, Marc Hankins, Becky Hogge, Felix Cohen, Sheila Ellen and Bowbrick