



6 April 2009



**AN OPEN LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY RE:**

I write this letter in order to be 100% transparent with you about a new initiative that could prove critical to the development of computing and the Internet: the protection of the term “**Open Cloud**” with a certification trademark (like British Standards’ [Kitemark®](#) and the [FAIRTRADE](#) symbol) as well as its definition via an open community consensus process.

Cloud computing users will soon be able to rest assured that offerings bearing the “**Open Cloud**” brand are indeed “open” in that critical freedoms (such as the right to access one’s own data in an open format via an open interface) are strongly protected. It will also ensure a level playing field for all vendors while keeping the barriers to enter the marketplace low. Offerings also bearing the “**Open Source**” mark will have additional freedoms relating to the use, modification and distribution of the underlying software itself.

*Cloud computing is Internet (“cloud”) based development and use of computer technology (“computing”).* It is the first significant paradigm shift since the introduction of the PC three decades ago and it is already changing our lives. Not only is it helping to deliver computing to “the other 3 billion” people, but also facilitating communication and collaboration, slashing costs and improving reliability by delivering computing as a utility (like electricity).

The Open Source industry is built around the [Open Source Definition](#) (OSD), which is itself maintained by the non-profit [Open Source Initiative](#) (OSI). The fledgling “**Open Cloud**” industry should be built on a similar set of well-defined [Open Cloud Principles](#) (OCP) and the associated [Open Cloud Initiative](#) (OCI) will closely follow their example. The proposed mission is simply “*To define and protect ‘Open Cloud’*” and the body will be developed from inception via an open process. Even if USPTO eventually reject our pending registration, by drawing attention to this critical issue now we may have already won.

I need your help, which is why I have called on individuals like [Joi Ito](#) and [Bruce Perens](#), as well as established vendors including [Google](#) and [Amazon](#) (and their respective developer communities) for assistance. By way of this open letter, I commit to donate assets held in trust (domains, trademarks, etc.) to a non-profit similar in spirit to the Open Source Initiative which acts to protect the rights of the number one stakeholder: You.

Sam Johnston  
Founder