John Wilbanks replies to the ChemSpider/OpenData discussion

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Citation

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Abstract

Not long after I posted my view on things, John posted his reply on the ChemSpider/OpenData discussion. His comment was merely to illustrate an internal advice to some organization, which got accidentally leaked. Anyway, a must read, with two good links to further reading on open data licensing.

Copyright

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His blog mentions the concept of *public domain*, where data might be dumped, but I always understood that the US public domain concept is different from that of mainland-EU, German law in particular. This second 'good link' points to a license which formalizes this 'public domain' idea. And reading it, I realize that I have read it before. But I had completely forgot about it.

A quick reread of these two links, tells me that it indeed is BSD-versus-GPL all over again; with the Science Commons license on the BSD side, and CC-BY-SA at the GPL side. The first surely makes the life easier of aggregators who wish to combine licenses. Can't argue with that.

Then again… what's wrong with a bit of viral character in the license? What's wrong with the statement that 'you may use my data, if I may use your aggregated data with the same license'? That limits your what you practically can do, but does not limit your freedoms.