
Subject: Re: IDL, GDL, copyright, EULAs and such
Posted by [Michael Wallace](#) on Thu, 14 Jul 2005 15:56:55 GMT
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- > But if an algorithm is that obvious you can use it of course.
- > Just write it yourself and don't copy it.
- > It will look different. Even if it is similar: I think nobody could
- > convince a judge that you should pay anything because you used
- > *similar* code, especially if a subroutine is almost trivial.
- > But if you use the *same* code it might be different.

Well, there is one thing that could throw a wrench into the works. It all depends on what definition of "reverse engineering" RSI is using in their EULA. In general, reverse engineering is the simply figuring out how a particular software feature or function works when you do not have the source code available. Much of the time we think of reverse engineering as someone getting into the binary files, using decompilers and figuring things out that way. But, it can also apply to just figuring out how something works to the point that you can reproduce it in an independent work.

If an algorithm is purely mathematical and you can point to a source other than IDL where the algorithm was published, then the reverse engineering claim doesn't stand. However if you study IDL long enough and figure out how to duplicate some internal algorithm exactly, then they could claim you reverse engineered that particular feature, even though your source code and RSI's code are different.

-Mike
