

## Merlin Legal Open Source Foundation Launches

Improving access to justice through the use of open source software

Denver CO, October 16, 2019—John Tredennick, longtime trial lawyer and former CEO and founder of award-winning Catalyst Repository Systems, today announced the formation of the Merlin Legal Open Source Foundation. The Merlin Foundation is a nonprofit corporation in the process of registering as a 501(c)(3). Its simple mission is to improve access to justice and make legal and regulatory compliance more efficient through the use of open source software.

### **The Mission: Promoting Open Source for Legal**

“Open source has revolutionized the way software is developed worldwide,” explained Foundation Director John Tredennick. “It represents a new and powerful alternative to proprietary software and has great applications in legal. Teams of developers and legal professionals worldwide are collaborating to make software that improves access to justice for clients and makes legal and regulatory compliance less costly,” he continued.

“At its heart, open source is about collaboration. What makes it so powerful is that people can come together worldwide to develop and release free, fully featured software tailored to legal needs,” said Mary Mack, the former Director of ACEDS and now embarking on a new venture. “I am excited to support and be a part of this great new venture.”

The Merlin Foundation plans to achieve its mission by:

- **Fostering** worldwide education about the advantages of open source software and secure cloud computing;
- **Providing** a central platform for legal professionals to collaborate on open source development projects; and
- **Distributing** open source software under free licenses to individuals and organizations around the world for legal and regulatory compliance processes.

The goal is to develop a central repository of active legal open source projects and provide a home for legal technologists to collaborate on great software that will benefit both the legal profession and those who need legal services at an affordable price.

“An Open Source Foundation like this has been needed for the legal profession for years,” stated Bob Ambrogi, an award-winning legal reporter, writer and podcaster who will serve on the Merlin Advisory Board. “Open source has been opening doors for efficiency and cost savings in just about every other part of the world. Legal is ripe for open source collaboration efforts. In fact, we are already seeing open source projects springing up across the globe,” he added.

Industry veteran Lew Visscher will act as Chief Financial Officer for the Foundation. Lew is a well known financial and accounting professional who served for more than a decade as Catalyst’s CFO. Before that he worked with a number of foundations and technology companies, beginning his career as a CPA with PriceWaterhouse. “As a nonprofit, Merlin has to be above reproach with respect to its financials and donations. My job will be to make sure the organization is in sound financial shape and to report on our books to the public,” Lew stated.

Starting fast out of the gate, the Merlin Foundation has already lined up a number of leading professionals to serve on its Advisory Board. “We are going to hold back until we have the board fully established,” explained Tredennick. “But we already have top names from major law firms, legal departments and open source technologists in the U.S and the EU. We hope to recruit in Asia Pacific and Australasia as well in the next few months,” he added. “We are actively looking for great people to join our cause.”

### **Increasing Complexity and Regulatory Demands**

As worldwide legal and regulatory requirements increase in both scope and complexity, there is a pressing need for technology that helps legal departments and law firms meet their obligations. Open source collaboration allows legal teams from different organizations to work together to build software that they can all use for compliance processes. It can also help us reach out to consumers worldwide, helping them navigate these difficult waters.

### **About the Merlin Legal Open Source Foundation**

The Merlin Legal Open Source Foundation is dedicated to improving access to justice and making legal and regulatory compliance more efficient through the use of open source software. A worldwide, non-profit organization, the Merlin Foundation strives to foster worldwide education about the benefits of open source software; provide a central platform for legal professionals to collaborate on open source development projects;



**For Immediate Release**

and distribute open source software under free license to individuals and organizations around the world to improve access to justice and for legal and regulatory compliance.

The Merlin Foundation is a non-profit corporation in the process of registering as a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization.

For more information about the Merlin Foundation, go to [www.MerlinFoundation.org](http://www.MerlinFoundation.org) or contact:

Kaylee Walstad  
Communications  
[kaylee@marymack.com](mailto:kaylee@marymack.com)  
612.804.3244