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BSA
Business Software Alliance

Promoting a safe and legal digital world

Anti-Piracy Information

Resources for Business

In today's digital economy, software is indispensable to every business, large and small. Your own business probably depends in a significant way on software every day to deal with vital information on computers and the Internet. Thanks to software, your business is more efficient, your workers more productive and you can take advantage of all the benefits e-commerce offers.

But many businesses, even without knowing it, face potential disaster because of software piracy, the installation or use of unauthorized copies of software. Software piracy is illegal and can have very costly consequences to your business.

Illegal software is more likely to fail, rendering your computers and their information useless. You can expect no warranties or support for illegal software, leaving your company on its own to deal with such a failure. Illegal software is also one of the prime sources of computer viruses that can destroy valuable data throughout a company. Software piracy can lead to stiff fines and criminal prosecutions.

Software piracy in the workplace has become far more common in the past decade as the penetration of personal computers has risen in business. Piracy can be as simple as two employees installing the same program on their computers when the license agreement permits only one. It can be as widespread as the deliberate, systematic copying of programs throughout an organization, or the purchase of computers with "pre-loaded" software that was never authorized by the software's creators.

The Internet has also made it much easier to steal, market and distribute copyrighted material. Sometimes called "warez," pirated software on the Internet is often transmitted via bulletin boards, e-mail, news groups, site links and, most notably, Internet auction sites, which defraud bidders by claiming that illegal software is a genuine product obtained at a deep discount.

If your business has obtained software from these sources, or has purchased software that did not come with a license for its use, proper documentation, or other obvious signs that it is genuine, you may well be using pirated software and are taking a big risk for your company. If an employee installs unauthorized copies of

RESOURCES:

Guide to Software Management

Software Needs Analysis

Sample Corporate Policy

Sample Memo to Employees

Software Management Training Video:
MPEG
Quicktime

software on company computers or illegally downloads software from the Internet, the company may be held liable - even if the company's management was not aware of the employee's actions.

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