

The Board of Directors
The Business Software Alliance
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We are aware that Business Software Alliance is the largest non-profit trade association representing 80% of the software industry worldwide according to your web site.

We believe that after 20 years of dedicated effort by the BSA to reduce the rate of piracy through education and enforcement programs, amongst other strategies, that is time that a solution was found to the problem of software compliance faced by organizations worldwide.

As an organization we do not set out to pirate software but feel that the software industry globally, through the method of software deployment and software licensing makes it exceedingly difficult for any organization worldwide, small, medium or large to be able to comply and accurately account for installations of software on their systems. Managing software compliance is a major cost burden.

Furthermore, we understand that fonts are also subject to licensing and we find that is absolutely impossible to be able to monitor and account for font installations on our systems.

Due to the manner that software licenses are deployed, we are unable to easily verify or validate the changes to Licensing Agreement conditions in EULAs, PUR and VLA terms and conditions your members make, as upgrades and patches are applied, and yet we are expected to automatically comply with the latest version of many varying types of "licenses" at all times.

We know when it comes to software, that we are dealing with an attitude of "It's Soft Therefore It's Free" and this is a cultural issue that cannot be overcome by education in a society that has grown up, and is growing up, on Peer To Peer, Bit Torrent, Open Source, Facebook and MySpace and YouTube (and other emerging social networking sites) all of which easily and freely demonstrate how to crack software etc. These social networking sites are known conduits to links for illegal software, and circumvention techniques for activation codes, software keys and serial numbers.

Our core business is NOT software compliance audit and monitoring of software. This is NOT the reason we operate and run a business. Our stakeholders have other objectives that we need to meet.

Software compliance is not high on our agenda and nor should it be when you have failed as an industry to make it easy for anyone to manage software compliance.

Our business will no longer act as your gatekeeper and bear the brunt of costs that we feel are escalating out of control based on pressures and demands to remain compliant to software installations that are very difficult, if not impossible to manage in the manner that your members package and license them to end users and organizations.

We believe that it's time that the BSA Members came up with a management solution to ensure that systems and software that we deploy to our end users, stay configured as compliant systems.

After 20 years of the Business Software Alliance offering everything but a solution, we feel that it is vital that your membership group bands together and generate a solution that allows us to minimize our costs of ownership of systems in a manner that allows us to demonstrate software compliance.

At the same time, we recognise that the solution needs to demonstrate to Software Vendors a level of compliance that our industry and business can operate to, at minimal cost, under consistent licensing conditions that are fair and reasonable and not continuously changing, every time that a new patch or upgrade is applied.

The outcomes of this approach to both the BSA members and to our industry would be mutually beneficial and will reduce your rate of piracy across businesses and also reduce our costs of monitoring and compliance.

Surely a group that represents 80% of the software industry has some significant resources that can come up with a management solution which we believe is vital.

If our business ran at a piracy rate of 20% we would become insolvent in a matter of days or weeks and yet you have been claiming a rate of no less than 20% over the last 10 years or more, worldwide.

We can longer operate in an environment whereby you promote reward schemes that leave it open for employees or ex-employees to set themselves up to claim a reward (or be very disruptive at the least) by doing things to our systems in a manner that we cannot easily detect, monitor and control.

Our business has much better things to spend our scarce resources on and we feel that we are shouldering unfairly the burden of the failure of the software industry to deliver robust software to our systems in a manner that protects both your interests and our interests at the same time.

Should the BSA Members not consider this an issue worthy of consideration, then one obvious solution would be to consider using Open Source software systems and cease using paid licensing and maintenance offerings from your member vendors. We recognise that Open Source has maintenance and supportability costs, but that can be more than offset by the cost savings generated by not paying for software licenses and for expensive compliance programs.

We can no longer afford to act as your "audit controller" to demonstrate compliance to software installations that are very difficult, if not impossible to manage in the manner that your members package and license them to end users and organizations.

Do not come back with another "Education and Enforcement" program as the solution!

Education and Enforcement is NOT the answer as it does not provide any management solution to the issues faced or any tangible benefit to organizations in terms of trying to meet and comply with impossible and unrealistic ever changing license conditions to satisfy software compliance.

We await your response, It's Now Time for a Solution - what are you going to come up with?

The CEO