



## So, Microsoft is at it again, filing Piracy suits!

PCProfiles' management focused spin on the article at <http://www.technewsworld.com/story/46242.html>

If you are a CEO or C level executive, we (and probably you also) don't really care how much Microsoft and other vendors are losing due to piracy as that is not relevant to what you are doing if you are running your own business or organization. Sure, they have a right to pursue the pirates, but, you have better things to do, make, sell, service, support or make a profit from, so why be concerned with how much they are losing?

The real issue that organizations need to face up to is that it doesn't really matter how much the software behemoths lose, there are real losses, much larger, that are not being disclosed until now, occurring within YOUR organization!

So as readers of this article, typically the business and end-user organizations in private sector, public, not-for profit and industry and government agencies, defense and education sectors, you may need to pay more attention and read-on.

### Pay Attention

Why? Have you realized just how much wasted time and effort your employees might be engaging in (under your nose in many cases) when it comes to downloading software, music, movie files and fonts, through pirated copies, that are activated by key generators, activation codes, hacks, dubious serial numbers, cracks and other circumvention methods!

"Doesn't happen at our site" we hear you say! But can you be sure? When did you last check?

"We have policies" we hear you scream, and yet we can show you many large corporations and medium and small sites that also had policies that ended up paying big sums (some of them 5 and 6 figure amounts in fines) because they were caught short on license counts vs what they had paid for in terms of legitimately purchased software!

All of these pirated files are prone to cause mega problems on an organizations systems and yet no one is focusing on the lack of ROI being generated by stupid and irresponsible behavior by both employees and managers behaving badly.

By all means, the industry needs to have a go at the reseller market and square away box delivered software that is delivered "under the counter", but this not your problem unless you purchased one of these "under the counter" units!

### Change The Focus

The focus needs to turn to the C level execs and managers who fail to budget, fail to plan, fail to check and who sanction piracy/copying etc in the organization. As a result the \$ losses that really occur are many times over the industry figures being spoken of and this is the key issue that we raise in this feature article. Execs and managers behaving badly in this area and those paying lip service to the issues are at risk and it happens far more often that many would be keen to admit. We have seen it all before after over 15 years in the business of helping organizations "save their bacon" and many organizations pay lip service to the issues until such time as they are refocused on business basics by learning how to self manage the situation, rather than wasting big \$ on consultants and wasted efforts on audits etc.

### Microsoft aren't focused on the right area yet!

In Microsofts' case, the real issue for Bill Gates and Steve Balmer is that they are NOT engaging the C level management in the manner they need to, to enlist them "as allies" in the game of countering the issues faced with piracy.

Every time Gates and Balmer (and other software vendors) come up with a technology means to counter piracy the technology gurus in the hacker and cracker underworld find a work-around and they haven't failed yet. Example areas that used to handle this were Rootcon and now Toorcon and many other warez sites. There are literally thousands and thousands of them on the web and every time one site gets taken down they spawn off elsewhere and start again.

### PSSST ..... "do you want a free copy of....."

It's a well known fact (generally handed around verbally or via e-mail) that you can get freely available copies of both the software and the serial numbers, activation codes, key generators, and cracks for almost every version of software that you can imagine and it's not yet showing any signs of stopping. P2P and BitTorrent activities have seen the wider spread of file sharing and the processes used are very easily accessible with minimal effort and energy. Here today, gone tomorrow, it's soft, it's free and everyone knows at least one site they can grab free stuff from and they know it's illegal!



## **A Sea-Change is Needed**

You need a sea change in attitude to overcome piracy in the workplace and the technology means on offer or being mooted under Digital Rights Management, just don't cut the rug in giving you the protection you need!

Why? The attitudinal issues that people have to piracy stem from the firm belief that's now reached cult proportions, is that software is "soft", "it's expensive", "the software vendors are rich anyway" and "besides, how will they know if I have a copy" therefore, the commonly held view in many areas is "it's OK, so here's your copy"!

It happens every day, in every office all over the world, and the number of burnt CDs/DVDs of music / movies being created in business premises, using your assets, is very significant, and yet management are not paying attention!

Our view is the movie and entertainment industry will become even more aggressive than Microsoft and other software vendors when it comes to piracy clampdowns and legal action against businesses as they have mega millions to lose at the box office and DVD sales etc due to existing sloppy behavior and work practices in place on most sites.

Think it doesn't happen? Think again. When did you last "not hear" the words in your office area "hey, I've got a copy of xyz, would you like one too?" It often happens as soon as people return from an overseas holiday!

### **Using technology solutions to solve what is really "a people based problem" is NOT the answer.**

To lower the risk in any organization you need a sea-change in attitude, ie; a culture shift, which focuses directly on business basics and gets the business back on track to its real core activities and not wasting time and productivity!

After all, why else are you running the business? Do you really want to continue to waste money on audits or sloppy work behavior or illegal activity, that could place your business and yourself at risk?

Failing to generate this culture shift and drive it through the organization, places you personally at risk<sup>1</sup> and its only a matter of time when sites who engage in dubious practises such as copying software, sound and movie files within the organization, are trapped via their IP addresses and Open Ports which can be used to trace back into organization street addresses and CEOs/directors/stakeholders. It's no longer a question of "if you get caught", it's a question of "when"!

### **Don't' wait for a knock on the door by the anti-piracy police!**

There are tried and proven legal tactics that are used to conduct a raid using an Anton Pillar<sup>2</sup> order. When this happens and these organizational sites are proven to have been lax enough to allow bad practices such as copying using corporate assets, they are likely to be dragged through the courts for aiding and abetting the whole issue of piracy right across the board! The penalties for this by organization and by individual<sup>3</sup> are very significant sums and yet they don't reflect the true cost of the whole affair that can be 4 to 5 times the published values when you add up all the costs!

### **Using technology solutions "to solve YOUR people based problem" is NOT the answer.**

Organizations need a sea change in attitude that starts at the very top and needs to be cascaded right down, through and across the organization, making everyone accountable! It's really very simple when you understand the basics, particularly when you start focusing on why you are really in business!

### **How can PCProfile help?**

PCProfile offers the widest range of low-cost, self-help information for managers to use in-house regarding reducing risk by managing software assets in a cost effective manner!

Our focus is not on software audit or asset management tools but on management by using effective proven work practises! Changing the culture by getting back to basics can save you significant amounts of money! It's that simple!

See [http://www.pcprofile.com/SCT\\_Intranet.htm](http://www.pcprofile.com/SCT_Intranet.htm)

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<sup>1</sup> Read about the risks you face both personally, and as an organization at <http://www.pcprofile.com>

<sup>2</sup> The Software Compliance Toolkit has details on Anton Pillar orders that will alert you to the risks you face!

<sup>3</sup> Penalties in terms of size of fines can be readily obtained at many anti-piracy sites. We can tell you where most of them are located – there is one in a jurisdiction near you! [pcprofile@internode.on.net](mailto:pcprofile@internode.on.net)