Software piracy and it's effects 13734

Technology, Internet

Software Piracy and it's Effects

Identification and Description of the Issue

Copyright law are perhaps those laws which are breached the most by individual

on a daily bases. This is because one might not know be informed about these law

or because not much is done to enforce these law. Also some countries of the

world have no Copyright laws. Software Piracy is a breach of a copyright law as

one copies data contained on the medium on to another medium without the consent

of the owner of the Software. When one buy a software one buys not the software

content and therefore it isn't ones property. Instead one buy the license to use

the software with accordance to the licensing agreement. Software companies

invest a lot of time and money in creating a Software and the company rely upon

the sales of the Software for it's survival. If illegal copies are made of

Software the companies earns no money and could therefore be forced into

bankruptcy. Software Piracy can be compared to robbing as one is stealing the

goods of someone else and using it without paying for it. Up to 13 Billions

dollars are lost in computer piracy yearly and in order to overcome these cost

the company are force to rise the prices of their product. Brand name are

properties of their respected companies and they have the right to protect their

properties.

Understanding of the IT background of the Issue

Software is contained on disc or on a CD-ROM. Pirates copy can easily be made of

Software on disc by copying from one disc to another disc. For CD-ROM one needs

a CD-ROM burner or one copies the content onto a large hard disc and then on to

a floppy disc. There are some underground bulletin boards (BBS) that contain

pirate software. A user who logs on to one of these BBS can download Full

version of Pirate Software provided one too can give something in return. On

the Internet there are binary Newsgroup such as alt. binaries. warez, WWW pages

and FTP sites that also contain Pirate Software. On the Newsgroup the Files are

send upon request from anonymous users. As a result people who have access to

the Internet can retrieve these Software Program free of charge. The person

posting the Pirate software could be from a countries that has no copyright laws.

These methods used in Software Piracy are hard to stop because of the fact it is

done on the Internet and between individual form different counties. Buying one

legitimate copy of a Software package and then offering it over an internal

network so that it can be accessed by more than one individual at the same time

on different computer is another form of Software Piracy.

Analysis of the Impact of the Issue

Software program is a service just like any other service the difference that

this service come on a medium from which one can make copies. Software are could

be judged as begin expensive but one wants them but doesn't want to pay for it

or can't afford to therefore one could be judged as begin a theft. Office 97

from Microsoft required 3 years to develop and Microsoft invested Millions of

Dollars. Microsoft will rely upon legitimate sale of this product for income and

upon that judge on future versions of their product. If people don't pay for the

program but make pirate copy Microsoft doesn't earn a cent and therefore could

be force not to make future version of the product. This would mean that the

Computer Industry growth would be halted and that one will not be expecting

newer technology on Software as the Companies will not have the initiative to

bring out better product if the don't get anything out of it. Unfortunately many

people aren't able to see these as many pirates copies are made but also more

importantly also used. Society doesn't see Software Pirates as thieves or

criminals that could be because one to makes illegal copies in order not to pay.

In Economical these means that if a companies can't make money it will

eventually have to go bankrupt these would mean that people will lose their jobs.

Solution to Problems arising from the Issue

Software piracy will have to be fought on 2 different levels the first level

will be the political and the second one will be on the technological level. On

the political level one will have to pass tougher legislation against Software

pirates. Also the government should makes regulation with other governments on

Software piracy and encouraging them to be though on Software Pirates and try to

combat them. Appropriate action should be taken against countries who fail to do

so. On the technological level one should consider to insert " Harder" Copy

protection on the Software product. One such method could be that once the

Installation of the Program has been completed one has to register the product

and receive a code and each code begin different according to different

variables. Some Software program have copy protection one them but all of them

are cracked very quickly by hackers and therefore it to unlikely that any new

copy protection will not be cracked. To much copy protection could drive away

legitimate consumers. Till now politician haven't really looked into the problem

of Software piracy and Copyrights very thoroughly as they think that there are

bigger problems to solve. Once though legislation are passes and people made

aware that Software Piracy is a crime one could see a fall in Software Piracy.

In dealing with other country involves a lot of bureaucracy but also a committed

government. For anything to occur on the political level could take years for

any effects to be seen. It has the greatest chance of solving the problem in the

long run. In the technological side one could solve the problem only one a short

term but implementation would be fast.

Sources

Internet Page WWW. pcworld. com/News December 96 Business Software Alliance

Information Sheet on Software Piracy Computer Ethics Tom Forester

Morrison Chapter3 " Software Theft" page 51-72 CNN Computer Connection December

96 - January 97 PC Magazine entire 96 Volume Reuters InfoWorld, Vol. 19, No. 6

Reuters 6 Feb. 97 Media Daily, Jan 30, 1997 Article on FBI crackdown on Software

Pirates