Intellectual property piracy

Intellectual Intellectual property is under attack by pirates. These pirates are not wearing an eye patch or sporting a peg leg, they are anybody and everybody who are selling or copying software for personal or business use. When it comes to software and online piracy, in certain countries, it is like the Wild West, there are laws that are very cut and dry but it seems like nobody follows them. On the other hand there are certain countries where it almost seems like anything goes with a lack of government regulation.

The United States has very strict laws about copyright infringement. If a person is found guilty of copyright infringement in the US, it is considered a felony charge which carries a heavy fine as well as possible jail time. In December 2011, the Office of the US Trade Representative (USTR) released a list of " notorious markets," or markets that " typify the problem of marketplaces that deal in goods and services that infringe on IPR and help to sustain global piracy and counterfeiting," according to a USTR press release(China Urges US, 2012).

Along with strict enforcement of anti-piracy laws, countries of North America, Western Europe and Australia tend to follow the Rule of Law in which society validates laws and codes. There are many associations emerging to fighttechnologypiracy to ensure intellectual property rights. Such organization such as WTO (World Trade Organization), WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization), and the WCT (World Copyright Treaty) have been created to police the piracy of intellectual property. With these organizations, intellectual piracy had seen a decline for a short amount of time.

In a study in 2009, it was found that of all software found in developed countries, 80% of the software was legitimately purchased. On the other hand, it was also found that in emerging countries, about 60% of software was found to be pirated. Those emerging countries account for 45% of the global hardware market while they only account for less they 20% of legitimate software. Emerging countries are actually putting out more computers then legal software to put on the computers. In 2009 alone, the US lost 50 billion dollars to software piracy. It is a daunting task to police these intellectual thieves.

When looking at the piracy of intellectual property globally, it seems to be a complicated task at hand to police. There are many countries that are trying to get a grasp on the problem at hand. Statistically the United States are leading the way with only 21% of its software was pirated in a 2008 report. In January 2012, the US passed the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) in the U. S. House and the Senate's Protect Intellectual Property Act (PIPA) which would strengthen penalties for pirating movies, music, merchandise and books, have pitted corporate interests against each other and against free-speech advocates(Mitchell, 2012).

Though one out of five computers in the US had illegal software, which is better than the 95% of software pirated in the country of Georgia. Organizations such as the WTO are helping on the forefront of against piracy by creating treaties amongst countries to in order to reduce the level of theft of IPR's. The countries that seem to be adhering to this these treaties tend to have a higher level of individualism as well as a stronger grasp of the rule of

law in compared to their counterparts. Other ways of controlling the piracy plague have been put into place.

Technological security system like adding passwords and login, putting protection on the purchased software that would make it incapable of copying or burning are progressing to slow down the taking of intellectual property. Will this stop the problem completely? Most likely not, but it provides a promising future for IPR's. In undeveloped countries across the world, piracy is running rampant with out much government enforcement. In China, it is legal to have 499 pirated DVDs in a person's possession. If caught with more, it's only a fine that would be about the same as a parking ticket.

With countries such as China India or Russia that have a low sense of individualism, IPR is not a pressing matter. Those are some of the greatest populated countries of the world and the problem spreads even further then them. Without stricter enforcement in such countries, there is no end to how far piracy of software will go. In Western Europe, there is the alarming fact that more computer hardware is being produced then software is being sold. These emerging countries are taking hold of counterfeiting and sophisticating the way of doing business illegally.

With the internet and person to person sharing, it is getting easier and more efficient to sell and trade pirated software. Piracy is inevitable. When the people of the world have no ethical problem with breaking IPR's, there will be no end to the problem. The majority of the people that are pirating do not believe they are even breaking any laws. As much as we try to control, regulate and enforce piracy, there will always be someone looking for a new

way of finding an end to a means. Piracy has been compared to that of illegal drug trafficking, it is an endless war that seems to have no end in site.

If your take the cultures in where the heaviest of piracy of software is taking place, it is those that are a collective society, with little regard for those IPRs of individuals. The only way that piracy will end is if the world changes and conforms to having principles thatrespectthese creative individuals and their governments take initiative and lead the way in solving this problem. This unfortunately, may never happen, and piracy will continue to be a problem that plagues the business world.