

Information technology ethics issue summary assignment

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With today's advances in technology, software development and usage is paramount. Software connects computer's hardware to users. Without software, computers would be useless. Unfortunately due to the complex nature and high demand for many software systems, the prices have sharply risen. A Seattle man, Rexes Yang and a few friends decided they could capitalize on this high demand, high price market. To keep their overhead down and maximize on profits, the group chose a less than ethical route.

According to an article in Forbes, Yang and the other participants in the software scam worked since 2009, obtaining and selling fraudulent product activation keys for Microsoft and other software programs through e-commerce websites. The participants traded product key codes over email and wired money to each other between different bank accounts. They allegedly operated a series of commerce sites, claiming to be selling the product activation keys legally, and received many "cease and desist" letters from Microsoft. It is thought the group may have made at least \$30 million in profits over the years.

That surge in profit from pirated software began to fall apart in 2013. In April 2013, Homeland Security Investigation Agents, received a tip that the owner of a company called "Software Slathers" was selling counterfeit computer software and DVD's, mostly from China. Through the investigation, Yang's wrongdoing was uncovered. Although no criminal charges have been filed to date, the process of seizing property has begun. At the end of 2014, HIS Special Agents began seizing bank accounts and assets connected to the pirated software. Over \$7 million in liquid assets (as shown in the table below) were taken;

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In Dalton, the following items were also seized; Vehicles, including a Porsche
Four Role watches (one studded with diamonds) A Diamond ring The seizure
of property is often the first step in these investigations, eventually leading
into criminal proceedings. Software piracy is taken very seriously in the United
States, and companies do not take kindly to others stealing their software
and activation codes. This group of unethical individuals will most certainly
face a lengthy prison term and possible the liability of restitution.