

Section 03. Smart Solutions in IT

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The Problem of Computer Piracy

The problem of illegal downloading is widely spread in the modern world. There are various reasons lying behind the desire to get some paid software or programs free of charge. The most popular are the following:

- it is fast and convenient due to special computer or Internet programs so there is no need to wait until the paid product is delivered or go somewhere to buy it;
- it is free, so people save considerable amount of money especially in the countries with low incomes;
- it is not strictly punished to download and use pirate programs;
- many other people do it.

However, illegal downloading often threatens the proper work of a computer because many PC users post free but infected games, software and programs in the Internet that is why viruses can easily damage machines. What is more, illegally downloaded programs have a lot of spam and advertising.

Another problem deals with the development potential of software industry. If most users continue to frequently download programs, games or software for free, then it will soon lead to the loss of productivity and income of the developers. They will simply not have enough money to develop a program or game.

In some parts of the world (Europe, United States) illegal downloading is punished by the law. It means that people have to pay fines or face a more serious punishment for the use of illegal programs.

Ukraine is also trying to deal with this problem promoting the cooperation between the Department of Cyber Police of Ukraine and American law enforcement agencies and adopting necessary laws and fine procedures. For instance, illegal download is punished by a fine from 170 UAH to 3400 UAH with confiscation of counterfeit copies; illegal copying and distribution are punished by fines from 3400 UAH to 51 000 UAH, or by correctional labor up to 2 years, or imprisonment for up to 6 years with the confiscation of the counterfeit copies.

However, even stricter monitoring of piracy should be conducted by the government. It is necessary to close programs that help in illegal downloads. Preventive measures should also include various informational campaigns for ordinary users explaining the consequences of the computer piracy. It can help people develop more responsible approach and fight against the piracy more efficiently.