
Subject: Re: Just a question about licence
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Fri, 29 Apr 2011 20:36:37 GMT
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Trigkos writes:

> Dont missundersand me. I didnt ask how to steal IDL. It is not my
> style to use cracked software. But searching the internet you always
> find cracks hacks licences for new releases in maximum 20 days time.
> Thats the only software that you cant find a licence for the new
> release. And i am just try to explain it. its Just my "perverted"
> curriosity...

This brings up interesting issues of social justice,
intellectual property, the responsibility of
corporations and citizens, and a whole host of other
thoughts that are running through my mind this afternoon.

Naturally, I am only too aware that books can be "cracked"
as well as software.

I am wondering about my own role and responsibility in the
world. I have been trying this week to get some IDL software
organized for a class in a very poor country in Africa.
The students there cannot possible afford the prices we
pay for IDL software. When I was in a similar poor African
country four or five years ago it was clear that most of
the software on any computer you cared to examine was
"cracked," including, I imagine, the IDL software used by
the students for the research we were conducting.

I am not rich by any stretch of the imagination, and yet
I was rich in those countries, and I remember coming home
and being embarrassed by what I found in my closet. Junk
mostly, things I didn't need, but just wanted. I have
made a conscious effort to pare down since then, but I live
in a rich country and even the poorest of us often live
better than the vast majority of people I found in Africa.

What, if anything, do we owe poor people? If they steal my
book and it causes them to learn IDL better, analyze data
better, create more water resources for their drought-stricken
country, what is the cost to me? Nearly nothing. And in the
great tallying up at the end of my life, maybe that even goes
into the positive column. Who knows? Maybe I did some good
just by writing the book.

I guess I believe people who can afford to pay, should pay.

But I am more ambivalent about people who can't afford to pay,
especially when I travel outside my own country.

Cheers,

David

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David Fanning, Ph.D.

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Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.idlcoyote.com/>

Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")
