
Subject: Re: A Plea for Fair Behavior

Posted by [Gray](#) on Mon, 07 Feb 2011 22:07:38 GMT

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On Feb 7, 5:04 pm, David Fanning <n...@dfanning.com> wrote:

> Folks,
>
> I was all excited today to get a mock-up of my new book,
> and I was looking forward to publishing it soon, when
> I got a bucket of cold water poured on my head. No, not
> a Super Bowl celebration. A report that my old book, in
> PDF form, could be downloaded for free on a public web
> page. Indeed, I just downloaded it.
>
> Here's the thing. I'm not out to cheat anyone. Or take
> money out of anyone's pocket. No one pays me to write
> books, maintain my web page, or provide free advice to
> anyone who e-mails me. I do that all at no charge to
> anyone. In fact, what limited advertising I do on my web page
> doesn't even cover the cost, so I *pay* to do that, too.
> I'm sure if I withheld all the information I give
> away for free on this newsgroup and in my web page and put
> it instead into books, I would probably be writing 4-5 books
> a year.
>
> I'm probably a sucker to give so much away, but I like
> the feeling of being in a community, and I enjoy very much
> being a part of this one.
>
> So, don't rip me off. If you can't afford a book, let me
> know. I'm always able to work something out. I'm not getting
> rich doing this. In fact, just the opposite. I'm practically
> driving myself into bankruptcy. I'd like to write 3-4 more books
> because I think I have something valuable to offer the IDL
> community. But this kind of news really makes me question
> whether it's worth it at all.
>
> I don't know. I don't feel like working much today.
> I guess I'll go get a beer. Maybe that will help.
>
> Cheers,
>
> David
>
> --
> David Fanning, Ph.D.
> Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.
> Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming:<http://www.idlcoyote.com/>

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

I'll buy a book!

Subject: Re: A Plea for Fair Behavior

Posted by [Paul Van Delst\[1\]](#) on Mon, 07 Feb 2011 23:59:48 GMT

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David Fanning wrote:

> Folks,

>

> I was all excited today to get a mock-up of my new book,

> and I was looking forward to publishing it soon, when

> I got a bucket of cold water poured on my head. No, not

> a Super Bowl celebration. A report that my old book, in

> PDF form, could be downloaded for free on a public web

> page. Indeed, I just downloaded it.

Jeez.

Can't you sic the lawyers onto them with a cease-and-desist order?

Subject: Re: A Plea for Fair Behavior

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Tue, 08 Feb 2011 00:50:44 GMT

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Paul van Delst writes:

> Can't you sic the lawyers onto them with a cease-and-desist order?

Uh, I think it costs money to hire lawyers. :-)

Cheers,

David

P.S. Anyway, it conflicts with my pseudo-Bhuddist philosophy of life. After drinking heavily this afternoon I finally came to the conclusion that it is my choice to do what I do. I believe that if you live your life "on the path" that good things happen. Whether that's true or not, I don't know. But I do know that's what I prefer to believe, and I am going to choose to act from that place rather than someplace else. We'll see what happens. Life's an adventure no matter what you do. :-)

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.idlcoyote.com/>
Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

Subject: Re: A Plea for Fair Behavior
Posted by [pgrigis](#) on Tue, 08 Feb 2011 15:30:02 GMT
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On Feb 7, 7:50 pm, David Fanning <n...@dfanning.com> wrote:
> Paul van Delst writes:
>> Can't you sic the lawyers onto them with a cease-and-desist order?
>
> Uh, I think it costs money to hire lawyers. :-)

Well sorry to hear that, but I would suspect that the same fate happens to every book in circulation.

I guess the trick usually is to send a letter and *threaten* to hire lawyers... not actually hiring them.

Ciao,
Paolo

>
> Cheers,
>
> David
>
> P.S. Anyway, it conflicts with my pseudo-Bhuddist philosophy
> of life. After drinking heavily this afternoon I finally
> came to the conclusion that it is my choice to do what I do.
> I believe that if you live your life "on the path" that good
> things happen. Whether that's true or not, I don't know. But
> I do know that's what I prefer to believe, and I am going to
> choose to act from that place rather than someplace else.
> We'll see what happens. Life's an adventure no matter what
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Subject: Re: A Plea for Fair Behavior
Posted by [Paul Van Delst\[1\]](#) on Tue, 08 Feb 2011 16:26:34 GMT
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David Fanning wrote:

> I believe that if you live your life "on the path" that good
> things happen. Whether that's true or not, I don't know.

It's true if you remove the modifier "good".

You live your life....

...and things happen.

:o\

cheers,

paulv

Subject: Re: A Plea for Fair Behavior
Posted by [guillermo.castilla.ca](#) on Wed, 09 Feb 2011 14:54:21 GMT
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On Feb 8, 12:26 pm, Paul van Delst <paul.vande...@noaa.gov> wrote:

> David Fanning wrote:
> No one pays me to write
> books, maintain my web page, or provide free advice to
> anyone who e-mails me.

I know is none of my business, but have you considered adding a Google Checkout button in your website? That way people who are willing to contribute to supporting the free services you provide to the community could do so. Hawthorne Beyer, a guy who is famous in the ESRI user community for providing for free awesome tools, has circumvented the legal intricacies of international donations by asking folks to support the project by purchasing "consulting services" that will result in the improvement of the software (<http://www.spatial ecology.com/gme/gmepurchasing.htm>).

Cheers

Guillermo

Subject: Re: A Plea for Fair Behavior

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 09 Feb 2011 15:09:45 GMT

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Guillermo writes:

> I know is none of my business, but have you considered adding a Google
> Checkout button in your website? That way people who are willing to
> contribute to supporting the free services you provide to the
> community could do so. Hawthorne Beyer, a guy who is famous in the
> ESRI user community for providing for free awesome tools, has
> circumvented the legal intricacies of international donations by
> asking folks to support the project by purchasing "consulting
> services" that will result in the improvement of the software ([http://
www.spatial ecology.com/gme/gmepurchasing.htm](http://www.spatial ecology.com/gme/gmepurchasing.htm)).

Timely advice. I am setting up a new store front now.
I'll give this some serious thought. :-)

I've always had a button to accept donations on my
web page, and I have always matched those donations
one-to-one and sent any receipts to various charities.
I had visions at one point of becoming a community
philanthropist. Alas, the expected "donations" did not
materialize. It has amounted to perhaps \$1000 donated,
even with my matching funds, over the past 10 years.

Maybe I need to be more mercenary about it. :-)

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

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Subject: Re: A Plea for Fair Behavior

Posted by [Paul Van Delst\[1\]](#) on Wed, 09 Feb 2011 16:38:12 GMT

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David Fanning wrote:

> Guillermo writes:

>

>> I know is none of my business, but have you considered adding a Google

>> Checkout button in your website? That way people who are willing to
>> contribute to supporting the free services you provide to the
>> community could do so. Hawthorne Beyer, a guy who is famous in the
>> ESRI user community for providing for free awesome tools, has
>> circumvented the legal intricacies of international donations by
>> asking folks to support the project by purchasing "consulting
>> services" that will result in the improvement of the software ([http://](http://www.spatial ecology.com/gme/gmepurchasing.htm)
>> www.spatial ecology.com/gme/gmepurchasing.htm).

>
> Timely advice. I am setting up a new store front now.
> I'll give this some serious thought. :-)
>
> I've always had a button to accept donations on my
> web page, and I have always matched those donations
> one-to-one and sent any receipts to various charities.
> I had visions at one point of becoming a community
> philanthropist. Alas, the expected "donations" did not
> materialize. It has amounted to perhaps \$1000 donated,
> even with my matching funds, over the past 10 years.

I'm confused. I have several times thought to donate to your website for the work you do/services you provide, but I always interpreted the donation button as "any \$\$ donated will be forwarded onto a charity, with matching \$\$.

The two things that occur to me are:

- 1) If I wanted to donate to a charity, I would do it myself.
- 2) If you are matching any donations, you obviously don't need any donations for your IDL efforts to begin with.

Oh, and yes, I have become a total curmudgeon (I blame living in DC for 10+ years :o)

cheers,

paulv

Subject: Re: A Plea for Fair Behavior

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 09 Feb 2011 16:57:44 GMT

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Paul van Delst writes:

> I'm confused. I have several times thought to donate to your website for the work you
do/services you provide, but I
> always interpreted the donation button as "any \$\$ donated will be forwarded onto a charity, with
matching \$\$.

>
> The two things that occur to me are:
> 1) If I wanted to donate to a charity, I would do it myself.
> 2) If you are matching any donations, you obviously don't need any donations for your IDL efforts to begin with.
>
> Oh, and yes, I have become a total curmudgeon (I blame living in DC for 10+ years :o)

I believe the work I do for the IDL community is "community service" and I feel guilty being paid for it. My idea was that if people appreciated the contributions I made to the community and felt like they wanted to donate to that effort then I would "play that donation forward" and try to make a contribution to an even larger community.

I guess I envisioned ripples spreading in a pond.

I understand where you are coming from, though. I kind of like the idea of "paying" for on-going development effort. I'm thinking currently of having several buttons in the new store:

Check the appropriate box:

- ☐ Donate XXX to buy beers for Coyote on Friday Nights.
- ☐ Donate XXX to spread joy and comfort around the World.
- ☐ Donate XXX just for the hell of it and hope it will be used for something I care about.

Choice three is sort of like paying IDL maintenance on your IDL license. Maybe people will actually go for that. :-)

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

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

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

Subject: Re: A Plea for Fair Behavior

Posted by [Michael Galloy](#) on Wed, 09 Feb 2011 18:30:07 GMT

On 2/9/11 7:54 AM, Guillermo wrote:

- > On Feb 8, 12:26 pm, Paul van Delst<paul.vande...@noaa.gov> wrote:
- >> David Fanning wrote:
- >> No one pays me to write
- >> books, maintain my web page, or provide free advice to
- >> anyone who e-mails me.
- >
- > I know is none of my business, but have you considered adding a Google
- > Checkout button in your website? That way people who are willing to
- > contribute to supporting the free services you provide to the
- > community could do so. Hawthorne Beyer, a guy who is famous in the
- > ESRI user community for providing for free awesome tools, has
- > circumvented the legal intricacies of international donations by
- > asking folks to support the project by purchasing "consulting
- > services" that will result in the improvement of the software ([http://](http://www.spatial ecology.com/gme/gmepurchasing.htm)
- > www.spatial ecology.com/gme/gmepurchasing.htm).

That's an interesting idea. Perhaps it would also circumvent the restrictions in the US against government money being used for donations, i.e., someone from a government agency or on a grant from the government can't use that money as a "donation". (They are free to donate their own money, though.) But they can purchase consulting services.

Mike

--

www.michaelgalloy.com
Research Mathematician
Tech-X Corporation

Subject: Re: A Plea for Fair Behavior

Posted by [Michael Galloy](#) on Wed, 09 Feb 2011 18:33:16 GMT

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On 2/9/11 8:09 AM, David Fanning wrote:

- > Timely advice. I am setting up a new store front now.
- > I'll give this some serious thought. :-)
- >
- > I've always had a button to accept donations on my
- > web page, and I have always matched those donations
- > one-to-one and sent any receipts to various charities.
- > I had visions at one point of becoming a community
- > philanthropist. Alas, the expected "donations" did not
- > materialize. It has amounted to perhaps \$1000 donated,
- > even with my matching funds, over the past 10 years.

For what it's worth, donations for IDLdoc seem to be about the same level, approximately \$100 per year for the last five years or so. This does not cover the web hosting.

> Maybe I need to be more mercenary about it. :-(

Mike

--

www.michaelgalloy.com
Research Mathematician
Tech-X Corporation
