

# LRDC Computing Services

Computing Services Newsletter

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## **Software Piracy and the Law** by Karen Bassett and Shari Kubitz

Software piracy is so widespread that many people fail to realize the serious nature of this crime. Software piracy is the use, gift, loan, or sale of any software product without appropriate licensing. There are three types of licenses: Freeware, shareware, and commercial licenses. Freeware can be freely distributed. Shareware allows you to evaluate a program after which you are expected to purchase a full license or uninstall the program. If you continue to use the program beyond the specified time limit without purchasing a license, this is a violation of the shareware license. Shareware can be freely distributed according to the terms of the licensing agreement. Finally, when you purchase software from a manufacturer or reseller, you are purchasing a commercial license. This software provides a single license and any distribution constitutes software piracy.

Specific forms of software piracy include home piracy, corporate piracy, and industrial piracy. Home piracy is generally people trading disks such as games with their friends. Industrial piracy is when a group or individual is involved in the duplication and distribution of software for profit. This is a deliberate and serious crime. The main concern of LRDC Computing Services is corporate piracy, which includes installing more copies of a particular software package than the number of licenses purchased. Corporate piracy can be tempting, because tracking the exact count for each product is time-consuming, and waiting for Purchasing to process software orders can be frustrating. Nevertheless, piracy is against the law and LRDC could face substantial fines if an audit revealed widespread piracy.

Although there are for-profit software piracy rings, most software piracy is from people "lending" software to their friends and colleagues due to ignorance of the law or to avoid paying the high cost of commercial software. In an academic environment, educational discounts are so significant that there is no excuse to pirate software. Between Software Licensing Services (SLS) and the e-Store, the majority of software you may need is available at extremely low prices. For example, SLS sells MS Office Pro for \$77.00, whereas the retail price is \$349.00. The e-store sells Adobe Photoshop for \$220.00, which retails for \$600.00. If you need software that is not available from either SLS or the e-Store, contact either Karen or Shari and we will investigate the educational discount for that product.

Software piracy can also happen inadvertently, especially in an environment like LRDC where there are frequent computer swaps. If you get a new computer and your old computer is transferred to another user, you must purchase new copies of all the software you plan to use on your new computer that will remain installed on your old computer. By law, you are entitled to install all of your old software—provided you first remove it from your old computer. Since typically both machines will need the same software, it is best to purchase new copies of the software you need for your new computer. To be absolutely certain all software is legal, you can arrange for Computing Services to backup your files, and then reformat your old hard drive, making sure to only reinstall licensed software. This will also make the system more stable and ensure that your personal files are deleted.

It is also important to remember that when you upgrade software, the old version cannot be used. This is also considered software piracy. Many times the academic discount is less than an upgrade price. In the case where a new license is purchased, the old license can be legally transferred to another user.

As software piracy becomes an increasing problem, many organizations and universities have heightened their efforts to ensure that employees are not using unlicensed software that would put the institution at risk for a lawsuit. Random or structured audits of computer software could occur at any time. Individuals found with unlicensed copies of software could face criminal charges as well as University-based disciplinary action.

When you purchase software through LRDC Computing Services, we maintain a record of the purchase. However, if you purchase your own software or bring it from home, you must be able to show that you legally purchased the software. Some companies allow you to install a copy of their software on both a work and a home computer if they are not being used at the same time; other companies do not. You should check the license agreement that came with your software to determine your rights.

LRDC Computing Services has several policies to help prevent software piracy:

- ▶ We will not install software on a machine without first seeing a copy of the license or proof of purchase.
- ▶ Unless there are a sufficient number of licenses, we do not allow programs (other than freeware and shareware) to be placed on the LRDC File Servers.
- ▶ When we purchase group licenses, we maintain an ongoing count of the licenses in use to ensure that the number of times a program is installed does not exceed our license count.
- ▶ We may be required to perform random, unannounced software audits.

It is not possible for us to routinely check each machine for programs that were installed by a user. Ultimately, it is the user's responsibility to make sure that no unlicensed software is installed. In the future, the University might require us to perform software audits. If you use any personal software, you must be prepared to show proof of purchase. If you suspect that you have unlicensed software on your machine, please call Computing Services at x4-7033 to remove the application(s). Do not attempt to remove an application yourself by deleting the folder. This can cause serious problems on both PC's and Mac's.

## **Y2K Update!** by Gary Wilde

Due to building renovations, the Y2K project has fallen a little behind schedule. The Computing Services department is making a concerted effort to get back on track. We will be contacting all project leaders who have not had their Y2K strategy meetings and will be following up with the groups with whom we have already met. The University would like to have all Y2K updating done by September 30, 1999. This is a very large undertaking and we thank you in advance for your support.

## **LRDC Computing Services Virus Plan** by Shari Kubitz

Protecting your computer and data against viruses is an ongoing, yet critical process. The task of updating your antivirus software can be both time consuming and confusing. LRDC Computing Services has developed an Antivirus Plan to make this process as easy as possible. The plan is intended to prevent against and respond to computer virus emergencies. The core component of this plan will involve simplifying, and in many cases automating, the process of updating antivirus programs. Other components include training for project representatives, web-based alerts and updates, and virus tracking.

To ensure that we get off to a good start, we will be updating the virus software on every machine as we conduct our Y2K testing. We will soon be asking each project leader to appoint a group representative whom we will train to keep their project's virus software up-to-date. We will also e-mail important virus alerts and notification of updates to each representative so that they can inform project members.

In order to automate the update process as much as possible, we will be installing McAfee Viruscan on every PC and will be configuring it to automatically download virus database updates each week. Project representatives will be asked to update any PC's that cannot be configured for auto-update and all Mac's. Currently Virex does not have an auto-update feature; however the next full version (version 6.0) is scheduled to have this capability.

An additional component of our plan is to make alerts and updates readily available. When a serious virus threat exists, group representatives will be notified by e-mail and an alert will be posted on LRDC's Virus Central web page. In addition, as soon as they are released, all updates (programs, virus databases, and extra data files) will be placed on the Shared Volume of every LRDC File Server with installation instructions. If you prefer, you can also download these files directly from our web site.

A final component of our plan involves monitoring viruses that are detected at LRDC. If you detect a virus, please email "skubitz+@pitt.edu" with the name or description of the virus. As always, LRDC Computing Services is available to answer any questions you may have regarding this plan and its implementation. Call x4-7033 or e-mail skubitz+@pitt.edu if you need assistance.

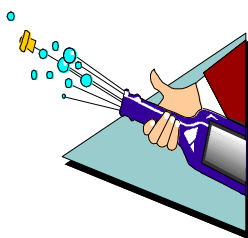
**LRDC Virus Central: [www.lrdc.pitt.edu/compserv/virus.html](http://www.lrdc.pitt.edu/compserv/virus.html)**

# Reminder:



September is just around the corner. If you need new equipment for the Fall term, please place your order now. As you know, there will be no special truckload sale. However, both Gateway and Apple Computer offer new computers starting at under \$2,000.00. Last year we were optimistic about moving to the new PRISM system which will allow us to process orders more quickly. Unfortunately, we are still using the old purchasing system, and therefore have a built-in delay of at least one week. All equipment from Apple and Gateway ship to Central Receiving first. This adds further delay. In most cases, you can expect to add two weeks to the total waiting time for an order due to the way Pitt processes purchase requisitions.

Once the order has been placed, Gateway can typically process an order in one to two weeks, and charges \$50.00 for shipping and handling. Apple Computer typically takes longer, up to a month, but there is no charge for shipping. Configuring computers can add a few days to a few weeks depending on the backlog of computers we have to set up. We configure computers on a first-come first-served basis with priority given to people who coordinated their order through Computing Services. If you'd like to place an order, or need advice, please contact us at x4-7033.



Shari Kubitz joined the LRDC Communications group eight years ago. It was soon evident that Shari also had a talent for computers. Three years ago when our group needed help, she joined our team part-time. Her dedication to helping users and solving computer problems has made her a valuable asset to our team. We are pleased to announce that Shari is now a Systems Analyst II. She will still perform the essential Communications responsibilities at 25% effort.

## Computing Services Staff Roster

Karen Bassett, Manager	Room 508A, x4-7037
Gary Wilde, Manager	Room 506A, x4-7042
Eric Fussenegger, Systems Analyst	Room 507, x4-7060
Shari Kubitz, Systems Analyst	Room 504, x4-2881
Kawa Shwaish, Systems Analyst	Room 507, x4-7060
Kim Flotta, Head Student Operator	Room 506, x4-7033
Tim Cooper, Student Operator	Room 506, x4-7033