



# Ethics In The Workplace



## Professional Ethics Is A Two-Way Street

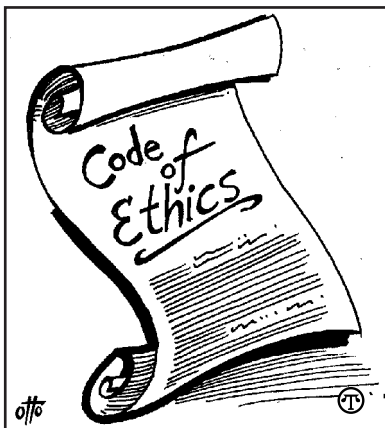
(NAPSA)—The news today is filled with corporations and executives being exposed for questionable ethics. Years of effort and millions of dollars spent building name recognition for themselves and their companies are lost in an instant. Why do they take such risks when they know their actions are wrong? Because they think they won't get caught.

The same is true for many individuals and organizations that ignore intellectual property laws and illegally copy software onto their PCs at home or at work. There are several theories as to why this takes place.

First, they don't think anyone will get hurt, when in fact the worldwide piracy rate is 40 percent. This reflects a revenue loss to U.S. business software developers of almost \$11 billion. The ripple effect of software piracy goes far beyond the software industry, impacting jobs, tax revenues and the economy of every country that creates and markets software.

Second, software pirates do not think a software CD has any value. They fail to realize that the application on the CD represents thousands of hours of developers' time and millions of dollars in research and development. According to the license agreement, they own the right to use the software, not the software itself. Without revenue to fund further development, product innovation will suffer and companies won't get new tools to help them become more productive.

Companies typically have guidelines for ethical conduct within their organizations such as sexual harassment policies. However, many fail to institute software management policies to let their employees know that it is not only wrong, but also illegal to make unauthorized copies of software. Companies need to explicitly communicate this message to employees to protect themselves from the consequences, which can include financial penalties, public embarrassment, damage to their reputation, and a lack of respect for corporate conduct among employees. The ethics message is a two-way



**Companies need to include software management policies in their employee code of ethics.**

street—a company that steals from others is sending a message that employees can steal from them.

While it is true that the economy has been slow and companies have had to survive with smaller budgets, there are other options available to meet resource needs besides stealing software. Many software companies like Autodesk, Inc., the world's leading design software and digital content company, are now providing options including rental and subscription. "These options help companies stay current with the latest versions of software but pay only for the amount they need, so that they can scale up or down as their needs change," said Sandra Boulton, director of Piracy Prevention at Autodesk.

It is up to each individual to bring the high standards of ethics they adhere to in their personal lives, among friends and family, to the workplace. There are many resources available to help. The Ethics Resource Center ([www.ethics.org](http://www.ethics.org)) provides resources to help organizations evaluate and establish clear organizational values and policies. To learn more about piracy prevention, to download free software management tools, to confirm they are not violating their software agreements, or to report suspected piracy, people can call Autodesk's Piracy Prevention Hotline at 1-800-NO COPIES or visit [www.autodesk.com/piracy](http://www.autodesk.com/piracy).