SOFTWARE COMPLIANCE MUST INCLUDE FONT COMPLIANCE

Ensuring that everyone has the computer software that they need to get the job done is vital for every organization.

Computer software is protected as a form of intellectual property, and ensuring that software is legally licensed is the role of IT and management.

A critical point that is often overlooked is that fonts are also covered by various licensing, intellectual property, and in some countries, trademark laws. These protections raise the legal importance of font licenses to that of computer software.

Font Problems Compel Compliance

Though critical to the operation of every computer, fonts are often overlooked during internal software audits. All too often, the risk of noncompliance with font licensing is overlooked, and can manifest itself as a legal, financial as well as public relations nightmare.

Problems with font compliance have led to some prominent legal cases, including:

- *Wizarding World of Harry Potter™ sued for $1.5 million in damages as well as destruction of all merchandise created with the font software*
- *NBC Universal sued for $3.5 million in 2012, and $2.0 million in 2009*
- *US Presidential candidate Rick Santorum's design agency sued for $2.0 million in damages*

What's the Risk?

While fairly easy to understand, the risk surrounding fonts typically comes from those who don't read or respect the terms of the license.

These risks include:

- *Introduction of unlicensed, low quality fonts from the Internet can cause computer instability*
- *Any user, anywhere in your organization, even outside the creative team, bringing in and or using unlicensed fonts*
- *Insufficient number of licenses needed by your team*
- *Older font licenses don't include rights for modern digital usage – online, ePub, etc.*
- *Font "sharing" between internal employees*
- *Distribution of corporate fonts to unapproved external resources*
- *Inadequate record keeping that breaks the audit trail*

Any organization could be at risk without even realizing it. For example, any team that heavily uses PowerPoint™ or other presentation software may inadvertently overlook the inappropriate use of non-system fonts in presentations.

Mitigating the Risk

You can limit these risks by tightly managing your font environment.

- *Control access to your collection*
- *Centrally manage the fonts available to your entire team, on every desktop*
- *Prevent unlicensed fonts from entering your workflow*
- *Institute a strict font purchase protocol for tracking and auditing*
- *Carefully read your font license agreements to understand your rights and restrictions*
- *Track font usage through activity reports*

Server-based font management software can get you well on your way toward managing the font compliance risk in your organization.

→ *Learn about font management solutions that mitigate your font compliance risks at* **www.extensis.com**

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