



News Release

For Immediate Release

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Security Threats Rank as Top Reason Not to Use Unlicensed Software, BSA Survey Finds

WASHINGTON, DC — June 24, 2014 — Computer users around the world cite the risk of security threats from malware as the top reason not to use unlicensed software. Among their specific concerns are intrusions by hackers and loss of data. Yet a striking 43 percent of the software installed on personal computers globally in 2013 was not properly licensed.

These and other findings released today in the BSA Global Software Survey underscore the need for effective software management practices, especially in business settings.

“Most people don’t know what is installed on their systems. That needs to change,” said BSA President and CEO Victoria Espinel. “There are common-sense steps managers and administrators can take to make sure their organizations are using genuine, properly licensed software.”

The BSA Global Software Survey is conducted every other year for BSA by IDC, which this year polled computer users in 34 markets, including nearly 22,000 consumer and business PC users and more than 2,000 IT managers. Among the findings:

- The global rate at which PC software was installed without proper licensing rose from 42 percent in 2011 to 43 percent in 2013 as emerging economies where unlicensed software use is most prevalent continued to account for a growing majority of all PCs in service.
- The commercial value of unlicensed PC software installations totaled \$62.7 billion globally in 2013.
- The chief reason computer users around the world cite for *not* using unlicensed software is avoiding security threats from malware. Among the risks associated with unlicensed software, 64 percent of users cited unauthorized access by hackers as a top concern and 59 percent cited loss of data.
- While IT managers express understandable concern that unlicensed software may cause harm, less than half say they are very confident that their company’s software is properly licensed.

“Unlicensed software use is an organizational governance issue — and this study shows there is a clear need for improvement,” said Espinel. “There are basic steps any company can take to ensure it is fully compliant, like establishing a formal policy on licensed software use and maintaining careful records. Companies also should consider implementing more robust software asset management programs that follow internationally accepted guidelines. These SAM programs can deliver substantial value by ensuring adequate controls are in place to provide a full view into what is installed on a network. That helps organizations avoid security and operational risks, and it ensures they have the right number of licenses for their users.”

Among the other findings in BSA’s Global Software Survey:

- The region with the highest overall rate of unlicensed PC software installations in 2013 was Asia-Pacific, at 62 percent. This represented a 2 percentage-point increase from 2011, with the commercial value of unlicensed installations reaching \$21 billion.
- Central and Eastern Europe had the next-highest rate of unlicensed software installations at 61 percent, followed by Latin America at 59 percent and the Middle East and Africa, also at 59 percent.
- North America continues to have the lowest regional rate of unlicensed software installations at 19 percent, although this constitutes a significant commercial value of nearly \$10.9 billion.
- In Western Europe, the rate dropped three points to 29 percent in 2013 with a commercial value of \$12.8 billion.

A full copy of BSA’s Global Software Survey, including country-specific data, is available for download on BSA’s website: www.bsa.org/globalstudy.

About BSA

BSA | The Software Alliance (www.bsa.org) is the leading advocate for the global software industry before governments and in the international marketplace. Its members are among the world’s most innovative companies, creating software solutions that spark the economy and improve modern life. With headquarters in Washington, DC, and operations in more than 60 countries around the world, BSA pioneers compliance programs that promote legal software use and advocates for public policies that foster technology innovation and drive growth in the digital economy.

