

A modern pirate is still a criminal

EDITORIAL

By **ANGELO PUZON**

IMAGINE you make \$400 a week but your boss steals \$100 each time. Do you think that is fair?

We might as well admit it, today most people own at least one illegally downloaded item, whether it be music, games, movies or software.

Piracy is more common than you might think and many people refuse to believe it is illegal and punishable by law.

Did you know that 70 per cent of online users find nothing wrong with online piracy? It is surprising how many of us download illegal items and trust that it is acceptable to do so.

Also, 75 per cent of computers worldwide have at least one illegal application, which means three in four computers contain an illegal download.

Considering the expensive nature of fast working and credible computer software, it is one of the most downloaded products. The most illegally downloaded software in 2010 was Adobe Photoshop CS. The problem with illegal and non-legitimate software lies in the fact that it may contain harmful viruses that can potentially destroy your computer. However, many of us would choose to risk the virus to avoid paying the fee.

More than \$12.5 billion is

thrown away in economic losses each year due to piracy in the music industry, with China currently in the lead for the most prohibited music downloads.

The average iPod contains \$800 worth of pirated music.

What most of us do not think about are the musicians whose monetary success depends on the number of legal albums sold.

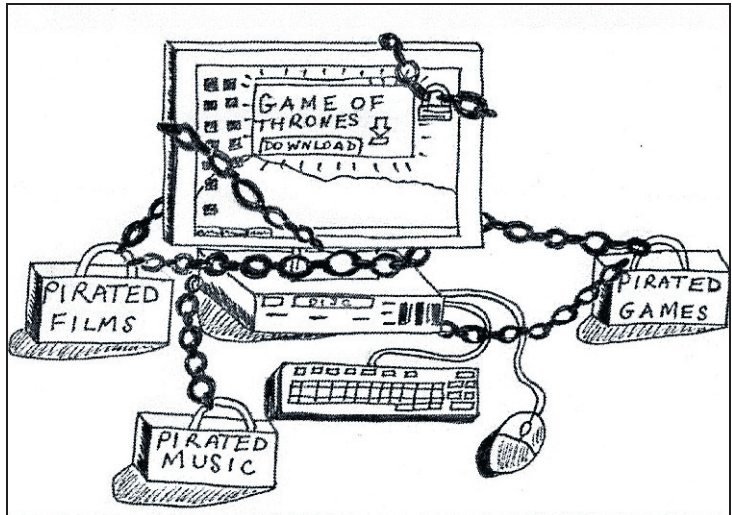
While we are happy at getting something for free, we should think about who it is affecting. Will our favourite musicians still be around if we continue to pirate?

Piracy is starting to get out of control within Australia, so much so that the US ambassador has pleaded for Australians to stop downloading season three of the hit television show *Game of Thrones*. The cause of this is the delay between the American and Australian show airing.

With the internet being such an integral part of our existence, it has planted itself easily into our subconscious. Many do not contemplate the ethical consequences of illegal downloading and only think of it as the cheapest and easiest way to acquire the next episode or latest game.

Most of us have come into contact with piracy at least once in our life, and most of the time we continue to download illegally because we suppose many others are also doing it.

So, the next time someone says, "you should get this new song" or "have you tried this new game", think twice. Piracy is a crime.



Cartoon: Clayton Carlon



THE FIGHT FOR STUDENTS: School work or downloading?

Picture: Jacinta Crawford

Piracy rife in classrooms

By **JOHN LEAO** and **MEAGAN FORD**

WITH the introduction of the 1:1 laptop rollout program in high schools across NSW, schools are coming to terms with a vast increase in download usage and internet mistreatment by students.

Principals of government and non-government secondary schools are dealing with students using the school network to illegally download features like music, films and software which are not for educational purposes. Hence the unprecedented jump of 10 per cent in piracy.

Students use websites like Pirate Bay, uTorrent, Kickass Torrent, and Torrent Freak to get pirated copies

of the latest music and movies for their personal use.

Students are also file-sharing by bringing USB sticks and external hard drives to share their illegally downloaded products with peers.

Students may not be aware, or choose not to think of piracy as a criminal activity – one which carries severe penalties.

In addition, copyright action can be taken against those who illegally download films and creators may seek substantial financial compensation for their losses.

By allowing this activity on their premises, teachers, parents and students are at risk of serious criminal penalties for piracy.

Students to get taste of university

By **DAVID WALKER**

HARD-WORKING Hunter year 10 students have been given the remarkable opportunity to test out their tertiary study skills at university this semester.

The program is run by the University of Newcastle and offers secondary students the chance to enrich their learning independently and possibly find avenues for their careers beyond schooling by undertaking a university-run course.

Possible study programs include Australian law, arts, engineering and biology, run by university professors every Friday from 1pm to 6pm at Merewether High School.

At the moment, a total of 40 students are taking part in the learning initiative.

Students will complete the same course requirements and assessments as university students and will attain an overall course grade based on their assessment achievement.

Molly Biscoff, of St Peter's Maitland, felt that it had been an opportunity she would always be grateful for.

"It has given me an insight into what university is like, the demands of completing a course and areas I might be interested in for my career," she said.

The course will be counted as a credit for an undergraduate degree for students who decide to continue their university study beyond the HSC.

Social issues reflected in rising crime rate

By **CLAIRE SAMS**

UNEMPLOYMENT, substance abuse and aggression have caused a rise in crime rates in the Hunter area.

Robbery with a weapon that was not a firearm rose 79 per cent in 2012. Domestic violence-related assaults were up 17.7 per cent, while there has also been an increase in car break-ins.

A Maitland police constable has listed the cost of living and increasing unemployment rates

as reasons why people commit crimes.

He suggested ways to lower crime, including training opportunities for the unemployed, being vigilant and reporting suspicious behaviour.

NSW Police Force Commissioner Andrew Scipione agrees: "Crime prevention and reduction is a community partnership. We can't do it by ourselves.

"As the old saying goes – the community is our eyes and ears. Tell us what you see, tell us what you hear and we will act."



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