

Tailteann Games Piracy Statement

The anti-piracy campaign

What is piracy?

Each and every year thousands of euros worth of illegal software is sold in Ireland at car boot sales, markets, mail order and other outlets by unscrupulous traders. The software sold by these traders has been illegally replicated without the approval of the game developers, manufacturers and distributors, and comes with no money back guarantee, instruction manuals or packaging. The only attraction is that it is cheap, often only at a fraction of the cost of the genuine item.

Why is it wrong?

The success of the computer games industry has made it a prime target for criminals. For example, it is estimated that more than £3 billion is lost every year by the UK industry to software pirates, which results in lost jobs and lost development opportunities, both locally and nationally.

Consumers have no recourse under law for faulty pirated goods. Pirated goods are often mixed with obscene material. There are proven links between many pirate organisations and dealers in drugs and pornography. Sales of pirate software are often used by terrorist organisations to fund terrorist activities.

Pirates sometimes try to justify their activities by claiming that paying the full price for a genuine game is a rip-off and lines the pockets of the fat-cats with your money. This is simply not true.

There are several issues here:

- It costs several million euros to make a game in the first-place. This includes adequately rewarding the programmers and artists whose creativity contributes so much to the games we all enjoy.
- A pirate simply pays a few cents for a gold disc, places it into a CD-writer, clicks a record button, and makes over €6.00 profit PER SALE for his troubles. This is often more profit than the Publishers and Developers make from the sale of an original title.

The people who really suffer from game piracy are the artists, programmers and other committed game development staff. Piracy directly affects people, and their families. Loss of revenue to the games industry through piracy means many are losing their jobs due to cut-backs that have to be made to ensure developers and publishers survive.

Some of the most highly regarded, hard-working and creative people in Ireland and the UK are losing their jobs while the pirates line their own pockets with your money. Where's the justice in that?

It's not just that copying software is against the law; owning copied software also constitutes a criminal offence; so anyone buying from these people is also at risk of arrest and prosecution.

This is in addition to the risk that the pirate product will be of a significantly inferior quality and often contains mechanisms that degrade the performance of the game.

ELSPA

The ELSPA Crime Unit was established in 1994 to safeguard the intellectual property rights of members' products.

The ELSPA Crime Unit:

1. Responds to information about illegal software received from members, consumers, the retail trade and other enforcement agencies.
2. Conducts investigations against alleged offenders.
3. Routinely makes test purchases from alleged offenders.
4. Regularly visits car boot sales and markets to monitor product being sold.
5. Executes warrants at offenders' premises.
6. Seizes infringing product.
7. Assists enforcement agencies such as Trading Standards Officers and Police.
8. Authorities in investigating software piracy.
9. Maintains close liaison with Customs and Excise over the importation of illegal software.
10. Takes Legal action against those found copying and selling illegal software.
11. Attends trade shows and conferences to speak to consumers and traders.
12. Operates a 24-hour confidential hotline for anyone wishing to give information about software pirates.

Penalties

Piracy leads always to arrests, community service, hefty fines and prison sentences.

For example, in a recent U.K court case, a two-and-a-half year sentence was handed down to a Birmingham man found guilty of manufacturing counterfeit CDs. And in a separate U.K case, a Sheffield man was given a five-month prison sentence for computer games piracy.

Legislation is provided to prosecute pirates and counterfeiters and Tailteann Games shall be actively working with the relevant authorities to ensure the guilty are punished.

If you uncover any information about pirate Tailteann Games related produce, please email us at fergal.mcdonnell@tailteanngames.com as soon as you possibly can. Please make every effort to assist us in this regard; the future of not only GAA games but games designed specifically for the Irish market may very well rest on our collective ability to prevent the criminals from stealing *Bainisteoir – Hurling's* niche market.