

TRADE WINDS

Non-compliant Software Users Gamble with Company Resources

Using unlicensed software is a gamble that flouts the principles of good corporate governance.

While originally introduced to promote transparency and protect shareholder interest, governance principles are also helping companies to drive performance. They assist the board and executive management to formulate strategic direction, ensure objectives are achieved, manage risk appropriately and ensure that company resources are used responsibly.

The increasing dependence of companies on technology requires executives to extend governance to information technology (IT), ensuring it sustains and extends the enterprise's business goals. This includes balancing IT risk and the value it offers and harnessing IT's enabling capacity, while achieving an appropriate return on investment.

Policies need to be put in place for managing software licensing and compliance along with other IT risks in areas such as security and data integrity.

"Companies that use unlicensed design software or remain in the dark about its legal status are taking a reckless gamble with company resources," says Errol Ashwell, MD of Autodesk Africa. The design software specialist is a founding member of the Business Software Alliance (BSA).

"Software developers, like Autodesk, have extensive online and reseller infrastructure dedicated to providing expert technical support to licensed users.

"Non-compliant users cannot access this backup. Should they experience technical problems, the output of designers and detailers can be severely hampered. Project milestones, and associated revenue are put in jeopardy and, sometimes, penalties can even be incurred.

"Software licensing is an integral part of good IT governance and short-term cost decisions should not be allowed to put overall project performance in jeopardy," says Ashwell.



Errol Ashwell, MD of
Autodesk Africa