

ASHTON-TATE NEWS

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Edward M. Esber, Jr.

SEVEN U.S. COMPANIES TAKE ACTION TO FIGHT SOFTWARE COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT

Anti-Piracy Operation Conducted in Hong Kong -- 10 Arrested

TORRANCE, Calif., November 30, 1987 -- Seven American computer software and hardware companies provided information to the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department for a "sting" operation conducted last Friday against nine major software piracy syndicates. Participating American companies include Apple Computer, Ashton-Tate Corporation, Autodesk, IBM Corporation, Lotus Development Corporation, Microsoft Corporation and Word Perfect.

More than 60 Hong Kong Customs and Excise inspectors raided nine locations on Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories and arrested 10 individuals involved in the printing, warehousing, distribution and export of counterfeit software. Inspectors confiscated printing plates and over 20,000 phony manuals and disks of dBASE III PLUS, Lotus 1-2-3, Word Perfect, MS-DOS and other software programs valued at an estimated total of \$2 million Hong Kong.

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Under the direction of Ashton-Tate Deputy General Counsel Thomas T. Chan, a Hong Kong private investigation firm gathered information for the raid from undercover surveillance it conducted at six counterfeit software operations. Chan said the U.S. companies plan to conduct similar actions in other countries.

John Chen, chief of the Hong Kong Trading Standards Investigation Bureau, said, "We are very pleased that key American companies are working with us to stop software piracy. We vow to take repeated action to eliminate these illegal operations, and create an even more favorable business environment in Hong Kong."

"Piracy is big business," said Ashton-Tate Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Edward M. Esber, Jr. "While it's hard to quantify our losses from piracy, we know that for every copy of Ashton-Tate software we sell in Hong Kong, ten counterfeit copies are sold.

"We hope the Hong Kong arrests will serve as a warning to software pirates and those in corporations who infringe on software copyrights. Nothing would make us happier than not to have to pursue this any further."

"In addition to curtailing the activities of software pirates," said Lotus President Jim P. Manzi, "enforcement activities are designed to send an important message to consumers. That message is, buying counterfeit software for personal use is just as illegal as copying it for resale."

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