

This Free E-Book is brought to you by Natural-Aging.com.

100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

The Value of Software in Our Daily Lives

By Bill Platt

The Value of Software in Our Daily Lives by Bill Platt

Long, long ago when I was in high school during the early 1980's, personal computers were just coming into existence. Back then, I had taken on Basic programming as a high school student. In those days, the PC of choice was the Radio Shack TRS-80 ---- this was just a couple of years before the introduction of the first Apple computer.

In those dark days before the Internet and before Microsoft, the only software choices we had were retail programs that could cost hundreds of dollars, or cheap video games that were offered as Shareware.

Believe it or not, in those days, we computer nerds would pass around software on floppy disk. These days, there simply are not too many programs that can be loaded onto a single diskette.

I mention this now as I contemplate the various ways in which software is now distributed. We consumers are always playing a cat-and-mouse game with software developers.

In the early 80's, the companies who had deep pockets were the ones selling their software at retail. The ones who were struggling to find traction in the marketplace were the ones offering their software as Shareware.

If you doubt this conclusion, then let me ask you a question. Which Microsoft products are available to the public as Shareware packages?

You just proved my point.

Being an individual who has played both sides of the software fence as both a consumer and developer, I am in a position to tell this story so that you as the consumer can really appreciate the quandary of the developer.

Nag screens are the storefront of the shareware developers. See, the challenge is that it really does cost money to develop software. Yet, the public is still of the mindset that they want all of their software for free.

Understanding the free mindset of the consumer, software developers have tried various schemes to get paid for their time and efforts. These days, you will find Shareware, Trialware, Adware and Retail.

See, the retail boys have the best advantage. They can afford to dump millions into advertising to build the interest in their products. Funnier still, the consumer does not expect to get retail products for free. For some reason, it is okay to pay the big boys retail for their products, but the little guy is supposed to give away his work for free!

So, why is it that we consumers treat the small companies differently? We will pay \$100 to \$175 for Microsoft Office XP, but we would not pay for Sun Office! Sun Microsystems Office product is considered by many to be a much better product than Microsoft's, but Sun had to resort to offering their version for free to get market share!

What is wrong with this picture?

Ironically, the difference is easy to see from my chair. As a marketer, I am always watching the marketplace horizons to see where the next advantage might be found.

We consumers have a need for one thing only. We want value for our money —— real value.

With Microsoft's deep, deep pockets, they are able to sell us on the idea of the value of their products. Additionally, Microsoft can afford to put their software into pretty boxes and on the shelves of thousands of retailers, adding to their carefully crafted perception of value. Because Microsoft can

afford to paint a solid picture of value to us, we do not hesitate to cough up the hundreds of dollars required to own Microsoft's products.

Now returning to the challenge of the little guy, we little guys do not have deep pockets to sell you on the value of our products. So, with Shareware and Trialware, we let you try our software for free for an amount of time, and then we hope and pray that the consumer will find value in the product and opt to pay for our products.

Other companies have seen the skeletons of companies who have tried the Shareware and Trialware and have failed. These other companies usually prefer to post their software on the market as Adware. The theory here is that the consumer is often so fickle that the developer would prefer to take their chances

with advertisers paying the bills, rather than to rely on the consumers to pay the bills.

Many people jump up and down, scream and holler about software that employs advertising to pay the bills. Yet, the same person doing the hollering, if placed in a situation where he was told that he would need to go to work everyday without any expectation for a paycheck, would explode in fury!

Would it be better that these dedicated software developers did not produce any software at all? Should software development be left only to Microsoft?

I don't know about your household, but in my household, if I don't bring in the money, then I would be minus a wife and family! So, the challenge I am left with ——— if I want to work in software development, I must find a way to get hired on at Microsoft, find millions in seed capital to create value for the retail market or to build advertising into my software. Me, I have tried the shareware route... and then cut my losses and moved on. It was a good product, really it was...

I will tell you what. If I ever write any more software for the Windows operating system, I will likely create an Adware product. From the developers perspective, it is the safe bet. >From the consumers perspective, it really should be considered a small price to pay to keep my wife happy and me working to improve the product.

The Value of Software in Our Daily Lives

I am talking about this issue tonight because one of my favorite software packages has gone to the Adware model with its latest upgrade. Upon the release of the new ePrompter software, people were upset to see advertising in this wonderful email notification software.

Let me assure you that the value of this software far surpasses the small price of looking at a few ads when I check my email. Should I prefer the developer to continue to work for free, or should I be willing to help him pay his bills while he continues to improve on the software? I will support his right to earn money for his time and effort.

ePrompter continues to provide more and more value in my daily life online. Try ePrompter for yourself by downloading your copy at: <http://www.eprompter.com>

I am certain that once you have taken ePrompter for a spin around the block, you will also appreciate the value of the Adware business model, and more importantly the value of the

ePrompter software.

Bill Platt owns The Phantom Writers, a company committed to helping people to establish an Internet presence & promote their businesses through the use of Free–Reprint Articles. All articles are distributed to 6,500+ publishers & web–masters as part of the package. Do you write your own articles? Let us distribute them for you. <http://PathTrax.com/x.pl/BP121,48>

Special Rules For Selling Software On Ebay.

By Kirsten Hawkins

Computer software is one of the biggest sellers on eBay - after all, everyone using eBay has a computer, don't they? There can be problems, however, if you try to sell certain kinds of software that eBay doesn't allow. Used software is a minefield, and you could end up buying something dodgy to resell without even realising it.

Here are the various kinds of software that you're not allowed to sell on eBay, and how to spot them. You should always try installing used software before you sell it, as this might give you a few clues.

Pirate Software.

This one is reasonably obvious, but pirate software can be hard to spot. The biggest things to look out for are auctions that don't have pictures or only have pictures from catalogues, unrealistically low

The Value of Software in Our Daily Lives

prices, and come with no manuals or documentation. Microsoft software comes with a 'Certificate of Authenticity', which you should check. Software that is on recordable media such as CD-RWs is usually pirated.

If you see software that offered for download only, it is often pirated - but not always. Some small software developers allow download licenses for their software to be resold on sites like eBay. Type the name of the software into a search engine, and go to the manufacturer's site to check. Remember that software you download is very unlikely to come with resale rights, though.

Beta Software.

Beta software is pre-release software, issued by companies for testing purposes. Companies generally do not give permission for their beta software to be sold or redistributed, as it won't be as good as the final product. Do not buy anything that says it is 'beta', and return anything you receive that says 'beta' or 'not for resale or distribution' anywhere on the CD or during the install.

Academic Software.

Some companies sell special 'educational editions' or 'student licenses' for their software, which are designed to make it affordable to students and teachers. You can only sell this software if you are a licensed educational reseller for the company, and your buyers are educational users. Academic software will usually say somewhere on its CD or in its installation what it is.

OEM Software.

OEM stands for 'Original Equipment Manufacturer' - this is software that is only supposed to be distributed with a new computer, as it came pre-installed on the computer. The licences for this software usually stop you from selling it without also selling any hardware. Look out for the message 'for sale with a new computer only', or similar. Note, though, that it's usually fine to bundle any OEM software you come across with computers that you sell on eBay.

If you sell any kind of software that isn't allowed, then eBay might shut down your auction, or your sellers might realise what they've bought and leave you bad feedback. It's not really worth the risk.

Now that we've got that out of the way, how about we try to get you a few more customers for the items you have that aren't against the rules. In the next email, we'll take a look at the real power of eBay store newsletters.

Kirsten Hawkins is an Ebay and internet auction enthusiast from Nashville, TN. Visit

for more great tips on how to make the most from Ebay and other

online auctions.



This Free E-Book has been brought to you by Natural-Aging.com.

100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!