

ICDL endorses Business Software Alliance's Code of Ethics for managing Intellectual Property in the digital environment

Move is in line with ICDL's global standard in the ethical use of technology and Intellectual Property

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ICDL GCC Foundation, the governing body and certification authority of the International Computer Driving License (ICDL) program in the Gulf region supports the Business Software Alliance (BSA), the organisation dedicated to promoting a safe and legal digital world, endorsing BSA's Code of Ethics for managing the use of intellectual property in the ICDL training and testing environment.



This initiative includes the endorsement of BSA's eight-point code of ethics to be adopted by all ICDL accredited training and testing centres affiliated with the ICDL program, both in the public and private sectors. Centres that agree to comply with the code will be issued a compliance certificate from BSA while those failing to sign the code will risk invalidation of their ICDL accreditation from the ICDL GCC Foundation.

Amel Humaid Balhol, Assistant secretary for Community Development at the Ministry of Culture Youth and Community Development said "The Community development Department at the UAE Ministry of Culture and Youth has always supported initiatives that further the society progress. The increasing role of the IT industry and internet is playing as a driving force in this industry specially in accessing various information and this is becoming a necessity in the advancement of societies. Nowadays, Software Piracy has become an index of the level of advancement of societies around the world and it is such initiatives that help bridge the gap between the societies of the Arab and the advanced world. This comes as an initiative from our end to build knowledge based economy free from piracy. I take this opportunity to congratulate both parties and would like to call other organisations to follow suit. Building a strong IT society free from piracy will develop the society in the right direction. Having higher standards in the community will create a better investment atmosphere."

Jamil Ezzo, Director General of ICDL GCC Foundation said: "Protecting Intellectual Property does not only spur social,

cultural, technological and economic development but also contributes significantly to business and industry. ICDL GCC Foundation has always been committed to curbing software piracy recognising the detrimental effects of this illegal practice on the economy.

We have extended our total support to authorities and organisations in the region in their efforts to limit the menace of software and courseware piracy. Our mandate and primary responsibility as the regional operator of the global standard for digital literacy is to ensure the usage of original software and enforce the implementation of IPR laws among all organizations affiliated with the ICDL program. We have approved renowned training institutes, academic institutions and governmental organizations to deliver the ICDL program; and to assert the ethic of responsible use of computers and intellectual property among the public.”

Jawad Al Redha, Co-Chairman, Business Software Alliance, said: “BSA’s cooperation with ICDL furthers our commitment to reduce software piracy, enforce Intellectual Property Rights and thus provide a healthy environment for attracting IT investments, encouraging entrepreneurial activity and generating new job opportunities leading to the growth of the regional IT sector. BSA and ICDL GCC Foundation share the vision of continuously raising awareness about the importance of using original software. We commend the Foundation for this positive move and request other organisations in the region to follow the lead taken by ICDL in adopting the Code of Ethics and publicly committing itself to the protection of IPR and the use of original software. We look forward to greater cooperation with ICDL in future.”

Anti-piracy efforts of both BSA and ICDL in partnership with regional governments have largely contributed to bringing down software piracy levels in the Middle East, which according to a recent IDC Global Software Piracy Study, declined by one percentage point to 57 per cent in 2005, at a time when global software piracy rates remained unchanged at 35 per cent.

Other areas of cooperation between ICDL and BSA includes working together on other policy initiatives and awareness campaigns that will further promote copyright protection and cyber safety among organizations and individuals to help further reduce the rate of software piracy.