

**Microsoft Genuine  
Software Initiative**

**Office Genuine Advantage Notifications**

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## *Intended Audience*

This white paper is intended for Microsoft customers. It has been developed to help customers understand how to identify whether their installation of Microsoft Office is genuine. For customers that learn they may have a non-genuine version of Office software installed, guidance is provided to help them remedy the situation.

## *Introduction*

The unauthorized reproduction, illegal distribution, and incorrect licensing of software impacts software developers, retail store owners, and ultimately all software users. Not only does counterfeit software affect Microsoft partners and customers, it has a detrimental impact on local economies. A recent report from the market-research firm IDC found that if the global, software-piracy rate was lowered 10 percent over the next four years, 2.4 million new jobs would be created and U.S. \$400 billion in economic growth would be contributed to the global economy.[1]

Customers who use counterfeit software are at greater risk of viruses and malware. In an IDC study, 25 percent of Web sites that were found to offer counterfeit or pirated software also attempted to install spyware that could compromise IT systems.[2] Customers also recognize that they may be subject to penalties if the software they purchased is determined to be non-genuine.

By educating customers about anti-piracy and investing in technologies to make it easier to identify and protect against counterfeit software, Microsoft can better ensure that customers will enjoy the full benefits of using quality, supported software.

## *Risks of Counterfeit Software*

There are many reasons why customers should avoid counterfeit Microsoft software. Pirated software often includes viruses and malware, placing IT systems at risk.[2] Counterfeit software can also increase IT costs. A Yankee Group study revealed that when problems arise with counterfeit software, IT administrators typically require 20-30 percent more time to identify and resolve problems. [3] In Microsoft internal studies conducted on counterfeit versions of Microsoft software, one in three counterfeit disks could not even be installed on a computer. Additionally, more than two in five of the remaining counterfeit disks contained additional programs or code with known vulnerabilities. Microsoft has seen instances of credit-card fraud and identity theft by companies that sell counterfeit software online. Finally, pirated software has reduced functionality because

customers using non-genuine software are not able to receive updates or certain downloads from Microsoft.

Purchasing from known and trusted sources and avoiding “too good to be true” deals are often the best ways to avoid pirated software.

### *Microsoft Genuine Software Initiative*

The Microsoft Genuine Software Initiative (GSI) is designed to combat software counterfeiting and other forms of software piracy. The initiative focuses on increasing investments across three strategic areas: Education, Engineering, and Enforcement.

#### *Education*

Microsoft is raising awareness among customers about the risks of counterfeit software to enable them to better protect themselves and ensure their software licensing is in order. Microsoft Web sites such as [www.howtotell.com](http://www.howtotell.com) provide detailed information and examples of counterfeit software. Additionally, Microsoft created the Genuine Microsoft Software logo to help customers look for genuine software.



Microsoft also supports associations like the Business Software Alliance (BSA) that help educate and enforce intellectual-property rights.

*Engineering*

Microsoft invests heavily in technologies that make piracy more difficult, alert customers to the presence of counterfeit software, and improve software-asset and license management. Microsoft invests in anti-counterfeiting technologies such as new Certificates of Authenticity (COAs) and holographic CDs..



*Enforcement*

Microsoft actively supports government and law-enforcement agencies in taking action against software counterfeiters. Thousands of reports have been filed with Microsoft. These reports have contributed directly to numerous civil actions that have been filed against manufacturers and resellers that are producing and selling counterfeit software. Microsoft has also increased cooperation with online-auction companies like eBay to limit counterfeit-software sales.

Raids in Southern China targeted a U.S. \$2 billion global, software-counterfeiting syndicate. Hundreds of Microsoft customers provided evidence to help the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and China's Public Security Bureau crack a large counterfeiting ring. Visit <http://www.microsoft.com/presspass/press/2007/jul07/07-24CounterfeitingSyndicatePR.aspx> for more details.

## *Office Genuine Advantage Notifications*

In October 2006, Microsoft introduced the Office Genuine Advantage (OGA) program worldwide, which requires all Office users to validate their copy of Office before they are able to access the Download Center. The program was created to help educate customers who use non-genuine software of the advantages of using genuine Office.

OGA Notifications is a technology that addresses software piracy by helping customers verify that the copy of Office software installed on their computer is genuine and properly licensed.

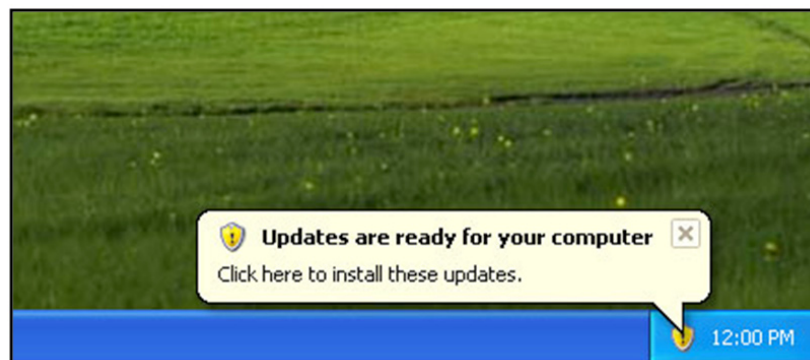
Notifications enable customers to identify non-genuine Office software, and resolve the situation, so they can enjoy the benefits of genuine Office. Only genuine Office provides customers access to Office updates, templates, and certain downloads. Using genuine, properly licensed software ensures customers can get support from Microsoft or a trusted partner. Finally, customers using genuine Office are best equipped to keep IT systems protected from spyware and malware that often comes embedded in counterfeit software.

## *Office Genuine Advantage Notifications Experience*

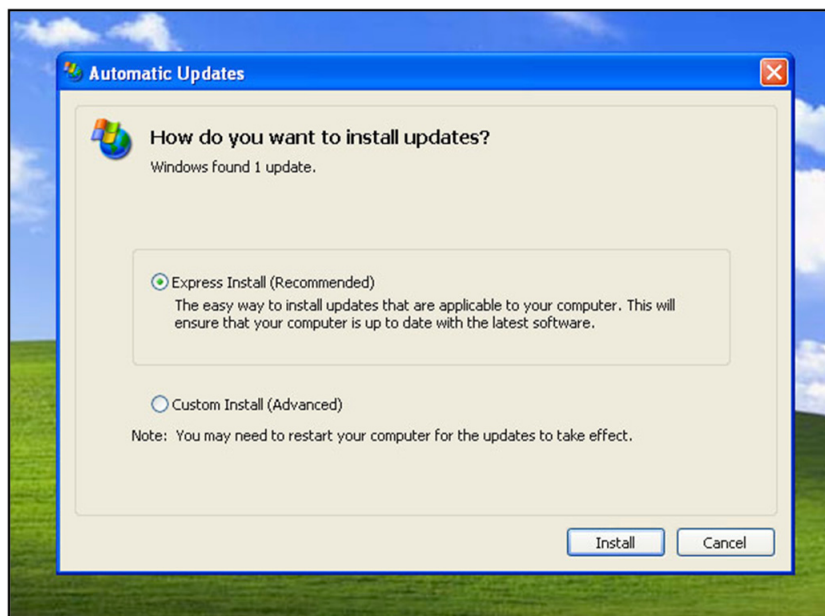
OGA Notifications is a software application that is downloaded to customers' computers as a recommended download through Microsoft Update.

### **Download Experience**

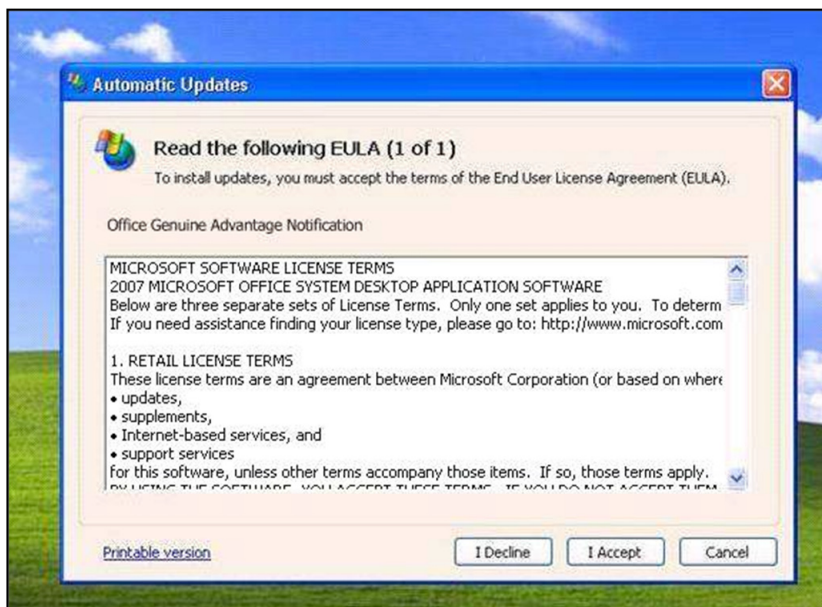
Step 1: The user receives a System Tray invitation to download and install updates..



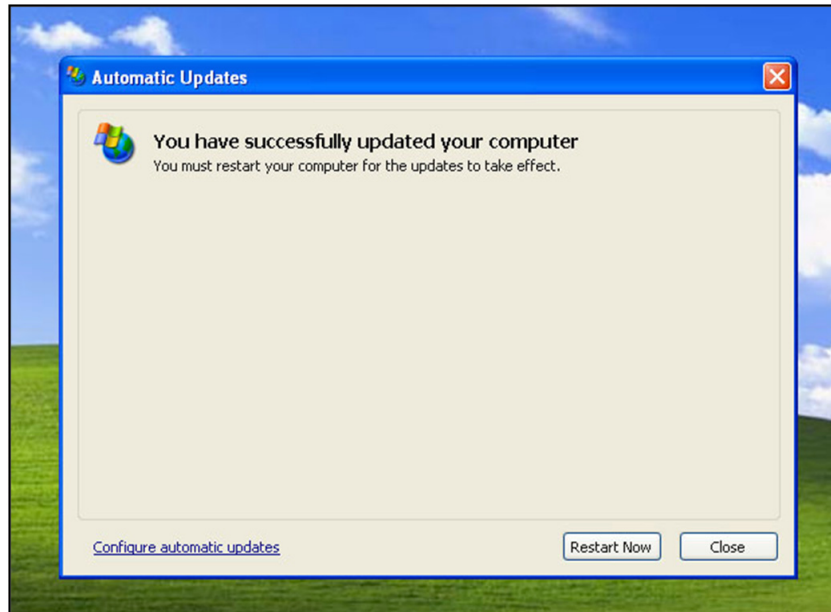
Step 2: The user can select “Express Install” or “Custom Install”. Both result in essentially the same OGA Notifications download and install experience.



Step 3: The user is prompted to review a supplementary End User License Agreement (EULA) that describes OGA Notifications. If the user declines, the download is canceled. If the user accepts, the download continues.



Step 4: After OGA Notifications has been downloaded and installed, the user must restart his or her computer.

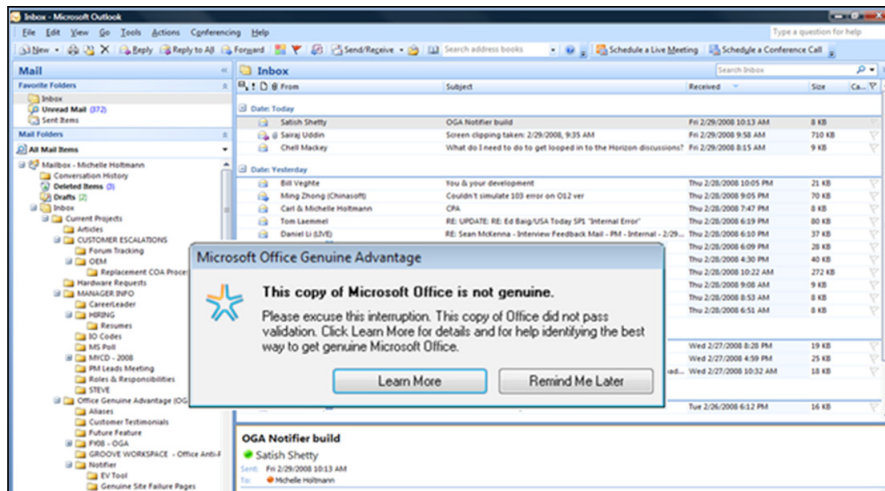


### Notification Experience

Once installed, OGA Notifications automatically validates the user's installation of Office software and alerts the user if he or she is using a non-genuine version of Office. For users running non-genuine Office software, a series of notifications occurs that encourages the user to purchase genuine Office software.

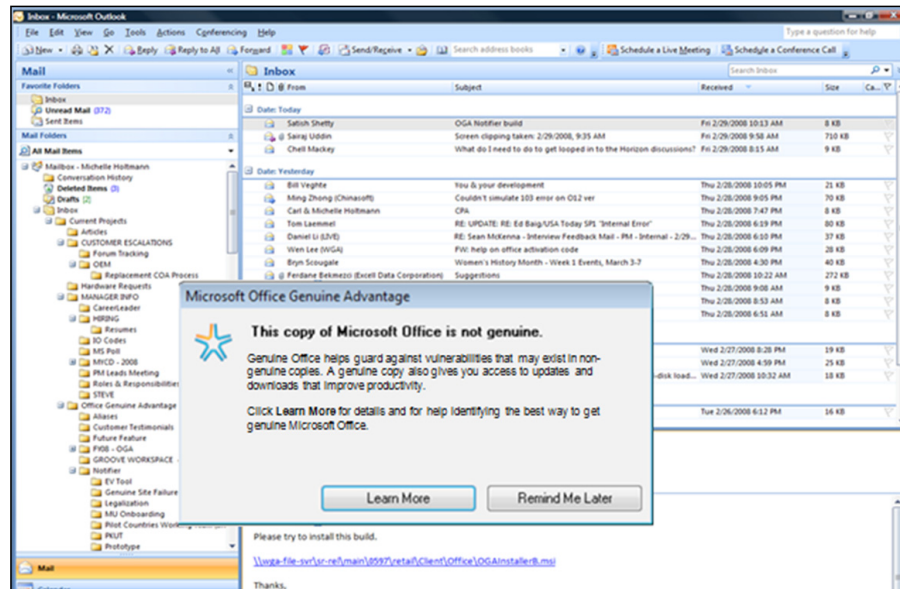
For the First 14 Days After Installation of the OGA Notifier:

A dialog box appears each time an Office application is launched, and appears two hours later while the application remains open. The dialog box is presented a maximum of two times in each 24-hour period.



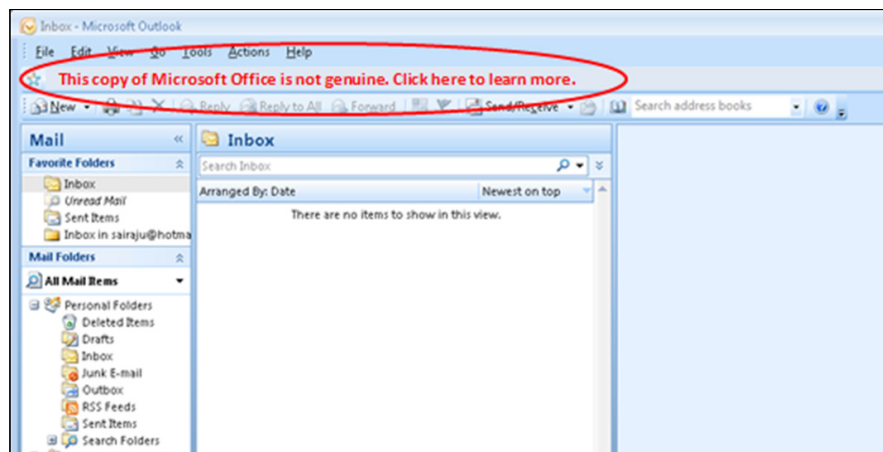
On Days 15 Through 30:

A dialog box that highlights the importance of using genuine Office appears each time an Office application is launched, and appears two hours later while the application remains open. The dialog box is presented a maximum of two times in each 24-hour period.



After 30 Days (for Office XP or Office 2003 Users):

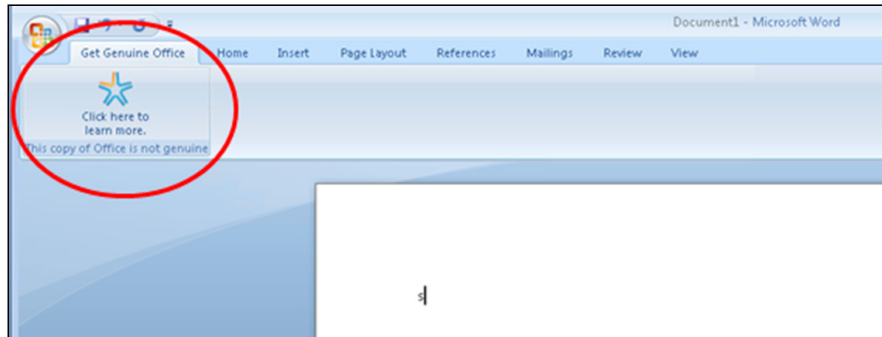
The user's Office applications are marked "not genuine" beneath the Standard menu.





After 30 Days (for Office 2007 Users):

A tab is inserted into the 2007 ribbon. It is the first tab that is displayed every time an Office application is started.



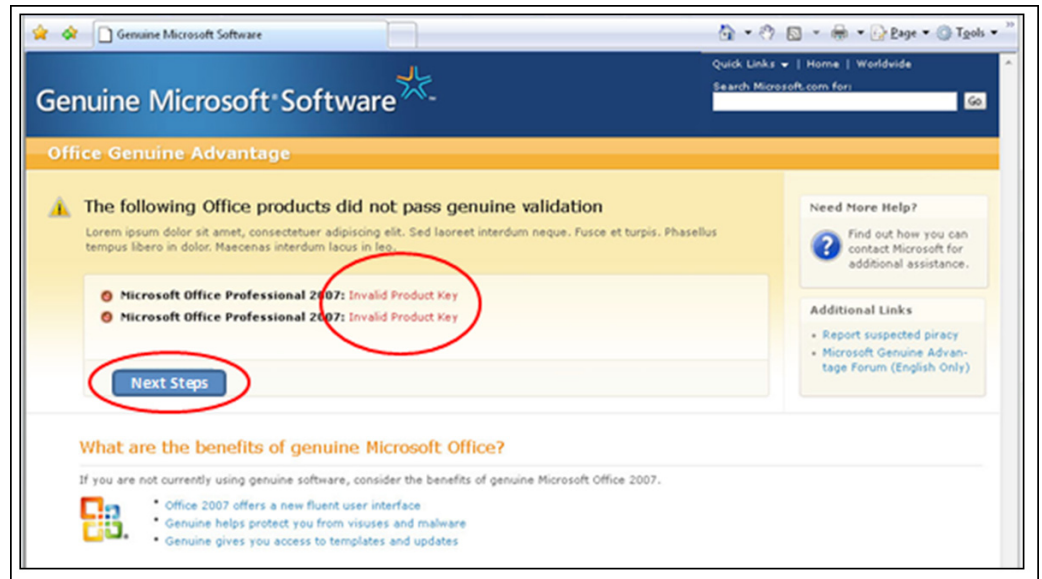
This tab notes "This copy of Microsoft Office is Not Genuine." The tab will not impede the users' ability to work on documents, but it will inform the user that a copy of Office is not genuine.

### *Instructions for Customers to Validate Office*

If customers are concerned about whether their copy of Office is counterfeit, they should visit [www.microsoft.com/genuine](http://www.microsoft.com/genuine) to assess their genuine status. See below for screenshots of the validation process.

If customers have already installed notifications and their copy of Office has been deemed non-genuine, they should click the "Learn More" or "Click here to learn more" buttons that are located in the notifications dialog box or tab, or they should visit [www.microsoft.com/genuine](http://www.microsoft.com/genuine). Any of these actions will open the OGA Web site.

The OGA Web site presents the validation results for the copies of Office software installed on the customers' computers that are non-genuine. Displayed to the right of the non-genuine Office products that were found are the reasons why the software was deemed to be non-genuine. Customers can select the "Next Steps" button below the validation results for step-by-step guidance on resolving validation failures.



When customers click the "Next Steps" button, the following messaging will be displayed on the Web page:

"Below is a list of the products that did not pass validation and instructions for addressing each product. Recommended approach:

- If a single product did not pass validation, take actions outlined below to get genuine Office
- If multiple products did not pass validation, identify your most needed Office product or suite and take actions outlined below to get genuine Office. Uninstall other, non-genuine Office products that are preventing you from passing validation."

As outlined above, if multiple products did not pass validation, customers should uninstall the applications that are least important to them. After those software applications are uninstalled, the OGA Web site will display the reason why any remaining installations of Office did not pass validation. The reason for not passing validation will determine the next steps to take in order to acquire genuine software.

Following are explanations of common reasons that an installation of Office may be deemed to be non-genuine, along with recommended actions a customer can take to remedy the situation:

#### *Unactivated*

Problem: The validation process could not be completed because a copy of Microsoft Office on this computer has not been activated.

**Solution:** Customers should activate Office. This process is started by opening any Office application. The activation wizard will then walk customers through the steps required to activate Office. During this process, customers will need to provide a genuine product key. For additional instructions, or if there are problems activating Office, customers should visit knowledge base article 828958 (<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;828958>). To learn more about the benefits of product activation, visit <http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?LinkId=71144&clcid=0x409>.

If customers are unable to activate Office using the activation wizard, a copy of Office on the customer's computer may be counterfeit or may have been installed incorrectly. Customers should contact the business from which they purchased Office, purchased the computer with Office pre-installed, or had the computer serviced.

#### *Incorrect Time Settings*

**Problem:** Validation may not have succeeded because:

- The time set on the customers' computer may be off by more than 24 hours from the local time, or
- The OGA validation tool is unable to communicate with the Microsoft validation servers at this time. Try again later.

**Solution:** To resolve date and time settings:

- Customers should right-click the clock displayed on the Taskbar and choose Adjust Date/Time from the menu.
- Next, they should verify that both the time of day and year are set correctly.
- If customers need to adjust the date and time settings, they should click Start and then click Control Panel. Next, customers should open Date and Time (or for Windows Vista® operating system users, open Clock: Language and Region), set the correct time of day and the year, and then attempt to validate Microsoft Office again.

#### *License File Settings*

**Problem:** The validation process could not be completed. Necessary files may have been tampered with. The validation tool is unable to verify whether the copy of Office on this computer is genuine.

**Solution:**

**Step 1:** Step 1: It is possible that the customers have updates that require them to restart their computer before they can complete installation. This may be causing the validation problem. It is recommended that customers restart their computer, visit <http://www.microsoft.com/genuine>, and then re-validate Office.

Step 2: (if the computer continues to fail validation after completing Step 1): If customers are running Windows XP or Windows 2000:

- They should click the "Start" button.
- Next, click "Run"
- Type: [Username]\Application Data\Office Genuine Advantage\data
- Delete the file: data.dat
- Go to <http://www.microsoft.com/genuine/> and click the Validate Office button.

If they are running Windows Vista:

- Click the "Start" button.
- Type: [Username]\Office Genuine Advantage\data
- Delete the file: data.dat
- Go to <http://www.microsoft.com/genuine/> and click the Validate Office button.

Note: Customers must have administrator rights in order to delete the data.dat file. If they do not have administrator rights, they should contact their administrator for support.

#### *Invalid Product Key*

Potential Problem 1: The product key used to install Office has been identified by Microsoft as misused, stolen, or invalid. A copy of Office installed on this computer may be counterfeit, improperly licensed, or incorrectly installed.

Potential Problem 2: The product key used to install Office is restricted to certain countries and/or regions. Customers in this local region are blocked from using this key. Customers can learn more about which countries and/or regions are allowed to use a particular product key by visiting <http://www.microsoft.com/office/geo>.

Potential Problem 3: The product key used to install Office has been identified by Microsoft as a key that was issued to a large, corporate customer. This key is reserved for the exclusive use of that customer and cannot be used to install other copies of Microsoft Office.

To resolve any of the three problems above, customers should attempt these solutions in the following order:

Solution 1: Customers should contact the business from which they purchased Office, purchased their computer with Office pre-installed, or had the computer serviced. Customers should ask the reseller for its help to ensure that the copy of Office that was purchased or installed is genuine.

Solution 2: If customers suspect that they are the recipient of counterfeit software, they should complete a report to see if they qualify for a complimentary copy

of Office Professional. On the OGA Web site, customers should click the link underneath Option 1 called "Request a complimentary copy of Office".

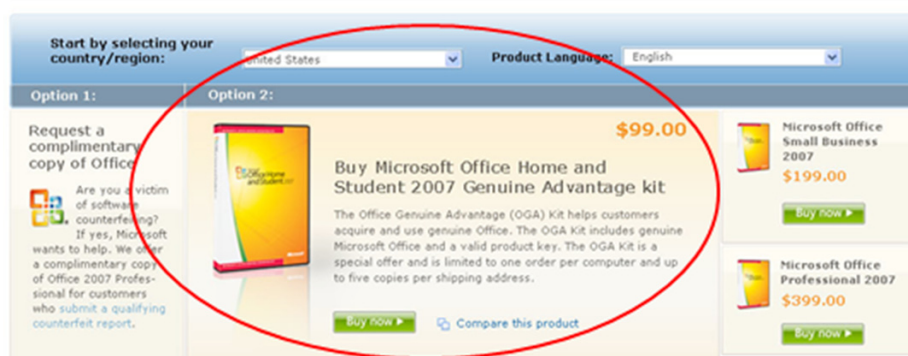
#### Get genuine Microsoft Office



Customers will then be taken to the Genuine Office Complimentary Offer Web site. This first page outlines the requirements of the complimentary offer. Customers will also be asked for software information and a shipping address. All counterfeit-software information is sent to the Microsoft Legal department and used in efforts to curb software counterfeiting.

Solution 3: Customers can purchase a new copy of genuine Office by taking advantage of special offers or promotions that may be running in their country periodically. The special offers are accessed under Option 2 on the OGA Web site.

#### Get genuine Microsoft Office



### Planning for Office Genuine Advantage Notifications

First, to keep software and data as secure as possible from the risks of counterfeit, Microsoft recommends that customers address any software or licensing deficiencies. Specifically, customers can:

- Proactively validate Office software at <http://www.microsoft.com/genuine>. This allows you to assess if any copies of Microsoft Office cannot be validated as genuine
- Use Software Asset Management (SAM) to ensure you are not under or

over-licensed. Customers can save money and better track assets with proper management practices. Customers should talk to their Microsoft Account Manager for more information about SAM.

Second, now is the time to take action to ensure all copies of Microsoft Office are genuine. In some customer organizations, a genuine volume license key can be improperly applied, causing Office to appear non-genuine. Microsoft can help customers ensure their key is properly applied throughout the organization. The Enterprise Key Swap Tool allows a customer to enter its genuine key on one administrator terminal, and then to push this genuine key to all client machines on the network. This centralized approach to updating software keys is far easier than touching each individual machine. Ask your Microsoft Account Manager for more information about the Key Swap Tool.

Customers who want to purchase genuine software should contact their local Microsoft partner for information about special promotions on genuine Microsoft Office.

Finally, each customer should establish a clear policy on Office Notifications. The best policy depends on corporate practices, and whether the corporate network is centralized or decentralized:

- Centralized: Software updates are controlled and distributed by an IT Administrator. In this case, since notifications come as an update through Microsoft Update, the IT Administrator should download and distribute to users to confirm they are using genuine software
- Decentralized: Software updates are downloaded and installed by individual users. In this case, the organization should clearly communicate to end users a policy for downloading and installing Office Notifications

Microsoft customers should contact their Account Manager or Technical Specialist with questions or requests for support. Office Notifications is an important tool for helping customers ensure their software is genuine, so they can avoid the risks of counterfeit, and enjoy the confidence and benefits that come with using genuine Microsoft Office.

### *Frequently Asked Questions*

Q. What is Office Genuine Advantage (OGA)?

A. OGA is part of the Microsoft commitment to protect its customers and partners from counterfeiters through education, engineering, and enforcement of policies and laws. OGA differentiates the value of genuine Office software from counterfeit software, thus enabling customers to enjoy the capabilities they expect, have confidence that their software is authentic, and access ongoing improvements and updates that help them do more with their Microsoft Office software solutions.

Q. Why would a customer want to determine if their Microsoft Office software is genuine? What's in it for them?

A. OGA enables customers to enjoy all the capabilities they expect, gives them confidence that their software is authentic, and provides them with ongoing improvements and updates that help them be more productive. With OGA, customers can obtain downloads, functionality add-ins, templates, learning tools, and more to realize even greater value from their software. Additionally, customers are eligible to obtain access to the latest product updates and enhancements to keep their software current, including access to sample files and tutorials to improve their knowledge and expertise when using Office. Furthermore, customers that discover they have been sold a non-genuine version of Office can provide proof of purchase, send in their counterfeit product, and file a counterfeit report, and Microsoft will provide them with a genuine copy of Office free of charge. This offer is limited to one free copy per address.

Q. What is unique about Office Notifications? What are the customer benefits?

A. Office Notifications helps educate customers about whether or not their software is genuine – and specifically, why their software is classified as non-genuine, if applicable. Where possible, notifications will point customers to OGA Web pages that offer step-by-step guidance to address the situation and promote special offers on genuine software.

Q. Which suites will be impacted by Notifications?

A. All Office XP, 2003, and 2007 suites are impacted.

Q. Will customers face prosecution if they receive notifications that their copy of Office is not genuine?

A. The OGA validation process does not collect information that can be used to identify or contact a user. OGA is not designed to “catch” customers running non-genuine software; rather, it is designed to inform customers if their software is not genuine, so they can resolve the situation and enjoy the benefits of genuine software.

Q. Can customers remove Notifications permanently?

A. Customers will be invited to opt-in to the program. Only users who accept the license terms will have notifications installed on their computers. Once installed, participants will have the option to suppress notifications for a period of time; however, customers will not have the option of uninstalling notifications once it is installed.

Q. What happens to customers that have mistakenly purchased a counterfeit version of Office?

A. Microsoft advises customers that learn that their copy of Office is not genuine to take the following steps:

- Learn more about how to recognize genuine Office at [www.microsoft.com/genuine](http://www.microsoft.com/genuine).
- Return to the reseller that provided the product to seek redress.

- Purchase a copy of genuine Office from an authorized Microsoft reseller, or directly from Microsoft.
- Fill out a counterfeit report at [www.microsoft.com/genuine](http://www.microsoft.com/genuine) if they suspect they've been victimized and the reseller will not help. Customers who wish to do so may be eligible to receive a replacement copy of Office. To learn about eligibility, customers should visit [www.microsoft.com/genuine](http://www.microsoft.com/genuine).

Q. Isn't Microsoft unfairly burdening customers who have done nothing wrong?

A. No, theft and fraud are everyone's problem because customers do not receive the same quality product and the associated benefits they paid for. Additionally, theft and fraud increase the cost of doing business and, therefore, the cost of the products that customers buy. Microsoft is committed to protecting consumers and software resellers from counterfeit software and other forms of software piracy while at the same time protecting its intellectual property.

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[2] The Risks of Obtaining and Using Pirated Software; a report by IDC; John F. Gantz, Christian A. Christiansen, Al Gillen; October 2006, <http://download.microsoft.com/download/7/6/9/769E42E0-68C4-4826-838B-0F801DB2EFC2/IDC%20White%20Paper%20on%20Risks%20of%20Pirated%20Software.pdf>

[3] There's Nothing Like the Real Thing: Genuine Software Is a Win-Win for Customers, Microsoft and Partners, a report by Yankee group, Laura DiDio, January 22 2007, [http://download.microsoft.com/download/3/6/3/363e4976-3abd-4eab-b2e2-a643342bc869/Yankee\\_Group\\_Piracy\\_Research\\_WhitePaper.pdf](http://download.microsoft.com/download/3/6/3/363e4976-3abd-4eab-b2e2-a643342bc869/Yankee_Group_Piracy_Research_WhitePaper.pdf)

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