



# Small Business Ethics



## Sub Out Your Work, Not Your Ethics

(NAPSA)—In an era where the spotlight shines brightly on corporate ethics, governance and social responsibility, companies of all sizes are instituting ethics policies for their employees. This is definitely a step in the right direction, however, many of these policies forget to encompass the extended organization—namely subcontractors.

Subcontractors not only represent their own business, but also the firm that hired them. Therefore the choices they make are critical. For example, companies may use legal software but are they compromising their ethics by subbing out parts of the project to companies that are not using authorized software? To ensure that subcontractors are compliant, companies need to explicitly incorporate language into their subcontractor agreements. They should never try to circumvent ethics and software management policies by making additional copies of their legal software to accommodate even a short-term project by a subcontractor.

According to Sandy Boulton, director of Piracy Prevention at Autodesk, the world's leading software and services company for the building, manufacturing, infrastructure, digital media and wireless data services fields, "While criminal software piracy is a high-profile problem, the majority of copyright infringement problems occur in companies where employees illegally copy or share software needed to do their jobs.



**An increasing number of companies are making sure their subcontractors are highly ethical.**

Many smaller companies are project-driven and therefore copy software for short periods to accommodate consultants."

On the flip side, subcontractors should not accept projects that involve the use of software they do not have or cannot afford to purchase. They can include the licensing of the software in their project proposal or incur the expense themselves as a cost of doing business. Subcontractors who pay for their own software licenses should consult a CPA about depreciating the cost.

Let us not forget that companies (and their extended teams) caught using unauthorized software pay the price through large fines, attorney's fees, damaged reputation, bad publicity, and low company morale. For free resources to help manage your software licenses and to institute ethics policies, visit [www.autodesk.com/piracy](http://www.autodesk.com/piracy) or call 1-800-NO COPIES.