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Less Unlicensed Software on Russian Computers, Report Says

By The Moscow Times

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The share of unlicensed software installed on Russian computers edged down slightly from last year.

Sixty-seven percent of the country's software was unlicensed in 2009, down from 68 percent last year, according to a report by International Data Corp. and Business Software Alliance.

The value of illegal software in the country stood at $2.62 billion last year, the report said, down significantly from a 2008 estimate of $4.2 billion.

Spending on IT dropped 27 percent in 2009, pushed down by the global economic slowdown, while computer shipments fell 23 percent, the report said. But an expected increase in piracy to accompany the leaner times did not materialize.

"Despite the complicated situation in the world economy over the last year, measures taken

over the past few years by the Russian government, law enforcement and rights holders were effective, and this helped maintain the trend of decreasing piracy," Georg Herrnleben, BSA's Eastern Europe director, said in a press release.

In 2009, law enforcement agencies uncovered 7,261 crimes connected with violating intellectual property rights and investigated 5,669 cases, of which charges were filed for 3,430.

"The level of piracy ... indicates that there are still many companies in Russia that are either unaware of the risks involved with using unlicensed software or disregard it," Herrnleben said.

According to data from IDC, for every $100 spent on legal software in 2009, another $75 was spent on pirated programs.

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