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Subject: "shareware" (Re: Cleaning up net.sources.mac)

Posted by [bart](#) on Fri, 18 Oct 1985 16:18:27 GMT

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References:

Organization: Reed College, Portland, Oregon

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In article [jww@sdcsvax.UUCP](#) (Joel West) writes:

>  
> Recently, however, I've noticed that the net is becoming a distribution  
> channel for profit-making software enterprises. That's right, I'm talking  
> about  
> SHAREWARE  
> (aka freeware, though the software is neither shared nor free)  
>  
> I think it is commendable that some people will spend their time developing  
> software that they have no intention of profiting from (macput, kermit,  
> vt52.da). This spirit of cooperation -- particularly when source is  
> included or available -- typifies the net at its best.  
> .....

> However, it appears that net.sources.mac is now being filled with  
> "shareware". Since I don't see Microsoft or Lotus using it for  
> distribution, I must conclude that the software there is:

- > \* Not worth enough to support conventional distribution
- > channels -- either in testing, documentation, or support; or
- > \* The author thinks he can get others to do his work for him

> for free.

Although I don't buy the author's generalized flame about "freeware is lousy and worthless" -- as others have said, it CAN be some of the best stuff out there -- what I do buy is that the rules under which USENET operates say specifically "no commercial messages". I guess where I would draw the line (and I think where Joel West tried to) is at the difference between "If you like this program and would like to see more like it, please send me some money" (polite and relatively non-commercial -- one computerist to another) and "This program is COPYRIGHT 1985 by SueWare Inc. If you use it without sending us our purchase price of \$75, not only are you utter slime with zero redeeming qualities, we'll track you down and take you for every cent you have!". Not that there isn't a place for this kind of message -- it's just that its place is in commercial software, which isn't supposed to be SOLD (which is obviously what is happening in these cases) over USENET.

For those of you who are writing shareware that you intend to post over USENET, try to keep in mind that there's no conceivable way you can MAKE everyone on the net who uses your toy send you money -- so if you're impolite enough to aggravate them, you're only hurting yourself...

SHAREware forever,  
BUYware never,  
Bart Massey  
...tektronix!reed!bart