

Awareness of intellectual property rights protection remains high

The Intellectual Property Department (IPD) announced today (March 26) the results of the Survey on Public Awareness of Intellectual Property Right Protection and the Survey on Business Attitudes to Intellectual Property. The results revealed that the awareness of intellectual property (IP) rights remains high among the general public and business establishments in Hong Kong. The surveys were conducted by a marketing research company commissioned by the IPD.

Survey on Public Awareness of Intellectual Property Right Protection

The survey showed that out of the 1 001 respondents, 89.3 per cent of them knew that IP included copyright, patents, trademarks and registered designs. A majority of them (94.6 per cent) considered it necessary to protect IP rights in Hong Kong.

More than one-third of Internet users (36.0 per cent) claimed that they definitely or probably would pay for downloading songs/movies/computer software/games/e-books from authorised websites. The percentage was higher compared with the last survey in 2010 (29.7 per cent). The top three reasons for paying for downloading copyright works from authorised websites were similar to the last survey, namely, "respect IP rights" (52.7 per cent), "for better quality" (24.9 per cent) and "give support to creative industries (artists, singers, etc.)" (18.7 per cent).

The survey also revealed that only 8.5 per cent of respondents would often or sometimes buy pirated or counterfeit goods. The result was similar to the last survey (8.4 per cent).

More than two-fifths of respondents (42.5 per cent) had heard about the "No Fakes Pledge" scheme, which was higher than 34.5 per cent in the last survey. Among those who were aware of the scheme, 81.5 per cent of them considered it helpful in building the confidence among consumers and tourists in shopping in Hong Kong and consolidating the city's status as a shoppers' paradise.

A total of 63.4 per cent of respondents considered that the promotional activities conducted by the IPD were very or quite effective in raising the awareness of Hong Kong citizens on protecting IP rights, which was similar to the last survey (63.9 per cent). Most of the respondents (76.2 per cent) thought that TV was the most effective channel to place advertisements promoting the protection of IP rights. Compared with

the last survey, a higher percentage of respondents perceived that school or the Internet were the most effective channels to place advertisements promoting the protection of IP rights.

Regarding public attitudes towards the long-term development of IP rights, respondents believed that IP protection could help the development of local creative industries (73 per cent of the respondents) and the overall development of Hong Kong's economy (65.3 per cent).

The Director of Intellectual Property, Mr Peter Cheung, said, "It is encouraging to see that the awareness of IP rights protection in the digital environment is increasing and more general public will pay and download copyright works from authorised websites. We will keep up our efforts to further promote public awareness and respect for IP rights, which include promotions in schools and on the Internet."

Survey on Business Attitudes to Intellectual Property

The survey showed that out of the 1 001 respondents, 82.9 per cent of business establishments were aware that IP rights included copyright, trademarks, patents and registered designs. A majority of them (95.9 per cent) considered IP rights were valuable assets of a company and 94.8 per cent also considered it was necessary to protect IP rights in the business environment in Hong Kong.

More establishments (70.8 per cent compared with 58.0 per cent in the survey in 2010) were aware of the criminal liability that directors or partners may incur under the Copyright Ordinance if their companies possess pirated software for business use. More establishments (67.4 per cent compared with 36.6 per cent in 2010) were aware of the criminal liability that directors or partners may incur under the Copyright Ordinance if their companies frequently or regularly make copies of a large quantity of copyright works for business purposes. Furthermore, 44.0 per cent of establishments were aware that there were licensing schemes authorising copying of local newspaper articles and books for use in business, which was considerably higher than the 24.7 per cent in 2010.

The survey also interviewed establishments on the topic of IP trading. Most establishments (61.4 per cent) considered that IP trading was very or quite helpful in enhancing the development of Hong Kong's economy. Among those establishments in the IT and communications sector, 12.9 per cent of them would consider engaging in

IP trading in the coming 12 months.

About four-fifths of establishments (80.4 per cent) had seen the IPD's electronic media promotions/print advertisement/promotional materials in the past two years. 77.6 per cent were aware of IPD promotions on TV, which was higher than the 65.3 per cent in the previous survey. A total of 65.2 per cent of establishments considered the promotional activities conducted by the IPD in raising the awareness of Hong Kong businesses on the protection of IP rights were very or quite effective, which was similar to 66.6 per cent in the last survey.

Regarding the long-term development of IP rights, the majority of establishments considered that the protection of IP rights was very or quite helpful to enhance the development of local creative industries (82.3 per cent of the establishments), the creation of business opportunity and wealth (76.0 per cent) and the overall development of Hong Kong's economy (72.4 per cent).

"A markedly higher proportion of establishments are aware of the criminal liability that directors or partners may incur under the Copyright Ordinance. This shows recognition of our promotion efforts. It is our responsibility to provide the necessary protection to Hong Kong investors to assure them that they can do business in a fair and free environment. We will continue to promote IP protection to the business community through different channels including electronic media and co-operation with business associations," Mr Cheung said.

Reports of the two surveys are available on IPD's webpage: http://www.ipd.gov.hk/eng/promotion_edu/survey.htm .

Ends/Tuesday, March 26, 2013