

Former Microsoft Employee Shared Company Secrets with Foreign Blogger

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After Colorado companies work to find innovative products and services, it is important to protect their trade secrets. If this information falls into the wrong hands, the company could lose profits, particularly in the technology industry. Thankfully, people who disclose trade secrets often face serious consequences.

In 2012, a former Microsoft employee allegedly shared proprietary copies of Windows 8 software with a European blogger. Because the man used Microsoft products to send the leaked items, Microsoft was able to collect evidence against him. He used a SkyDrive, a Microsoft product, to upload the documents; then he sent the links to the blogger, who received them through his Microsoft Hotmail account, which the company later searched.

Although the former employee pleaded guilty to stealing trade secrets with the intent of profiting, it is unclear whether the man profited from leaking the information. Nevertheless, he is facing serious penalties. He may serve a prison sentence, and it is likely that he will be forced to pay restitution to Microsoft. In addition to these penalties, he may also pay a fine of more than \$200,000. Because the French blogger is probably not a U.S. citizen, Microsoft may not be able to hold him responsible for illegally distributing the software.

Thankfully, people who steal trade secrets are often punished severely, but it is still important for companies to take preventative steps to protect their trade secrets. For help developing safeguards for their trade secrets, business owners may want to talk to an attorney who specializes in intellectual property.

Source: PC World, "[Ex-Microsoft Employee Pleads Guilty to Stealing Trade Secrets](#)," Stephanie Mlot, April 2, 2014

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