

Purchase of a digital product on Steam grants a license, not ownership - End User Dilemma

Legal Issues and Cyber Laws

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Introduction

- Software has become part of our life
 - Intangible objects
 - Ownership doesn't work like hardwares
 - Intellectual Property

That means it's protected by copyright laws

- End User confusion over license vs. ownership
- When you buy a game... do you actually own it?

Case Summary

- Steam adds a note by saying games are **just licenses**
- History
 - Games like The Crew, Transformers Cybertron removed
 - Discovery content removed from PS network
- California's AB 2426 introduced (Sep 2024)
- Effective date: Jan 1, 2025

- License vs. ownership confusion
 - Misleading - Confusing
- Software is copyrighted work
 - It has IP laws
 - Which means limited access

- Intellectual property rights
 - Your idea = your work
 - Games, music, movies, tv shows etc

Key Stakeholders

- End-users
 - owners? or licensee holders?
- Digital platforms: Steam, Ubisoft, GOG, Epic Games etc.
- Lawmakers

Regulatory Developments

- California Law AB 2426 provides clear instructions
- Must explicitly mention while digital transactions
- Terms and Conditions must be followed

- Make Steam Push for DRM-free, offline-friendly content
- Digital platforms should've clarified earlier

Broader Implications

- Gamers might choose a different platform
- Now has greater transparency
- Users are now aware of licensing models that stores follow

Conclusion

- Software is not owned but licensed
- More clarity
- One step closer to protecting end user rights in the digital world

References

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