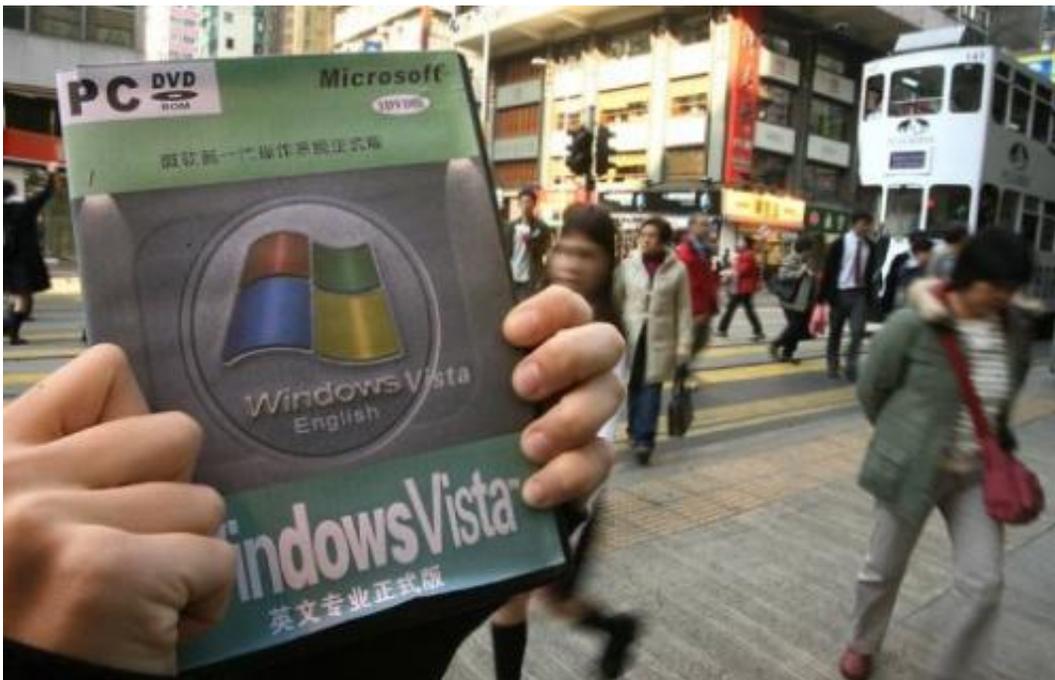


China piracy cost software industry \$20bn in 2010

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A pirated copy of Microsoft Windows Vista readily available in southern China is shown in Hong Kong, 2007. Piracy cost the global software industry more than \$20 billion in losses in the China market last year despite the increasing use of legitimate programmes, an official survey showed.

Piracy cost the global software industry more than \$20 billion in losses in the China market last year despite the increasing use of legitimate programmes, an official survey showed Thursday.

Pirated software is estimated to have cost the industry 130.9 billion yuan (\$20.1 billion) in 2010, up 1.55 percent from a year ago, according to the survey funded by the State Intellectual Property Office.

That accounted for nine percent of China's total [software market](#), down from 12 percent in 2009, according to the survey, which covered more than 4,800 individual and corporate respondents across the country.

"The use of legitimate software is increasing steadily," said the survey, conducted by Internet research firm Chinalabs.

The decline in the rate of piracy was due to factors including the emergence of homegrown, low-cost legitimate software, the increasing number of free programmes on offer and a more diversified [distribution network](#), it said.

Programming tools, industry-specific software, and Microsoft's Office package and similar products were the most often pirated, followed by software for web page design and security management, it added.

China's counterfeit and piracy market is the biggest in the world, and [copyright infringement](#) in the country has long been a sticking point in Sino-US relations.

The United States earlier this month said China was making progress on improving protection of [intellectual property rights](#) but voiced concern about Beijing's longer term commitment.

It kept the country on this year's "priority watch list" for weak protection of intellectual property rights.

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