
Student Privileges with Strings Attached^{1, 2}

William was delighted when he was selected for a very competitive internship at a consulting firm near his university. Many students had applied, and William was one of only two interns selected. William was immediately assigned to work with Timothy, a recent MBA graduate, on a major assignment for a new client, a company that created electronic games and sold them worldwide.

The client had commissioned William's consulting firm to do an industry analysis that included a study of the demographics of game users in key countries in Europe and Asia as well as in North America. From his own experience as a student, Timothy knew that William could access and download a series of reports on the demographics of game users in various countries around the world from one of the university's electronic resources, the E-Marketer Database. Because he was a current student, William could access the reports for free using his university electronic identification (EID) and password. If the consulting firm were to purchase the reports, they would cost about \$800 each, so the total expenditure would be thousands of dollars.

Timothy asked William to write his university EID and password on a notepad and give it to him, so that he could download the reports and any other university resources that they might need. It would only take a few clicks to download the reports to Timothy's computer desktop, and it would save an enormous amount of money.

Nonetheless, William did not feel comfortable with Timothy's request. In a marketing research course, William had learned that the university's licenses to use databases such as E-Marketer were very detailed and specifically restricted to educational uses by the university's students and faculty. Timothy's request was a direct violation of these licenses and William knew he did not want to participate.

What can William say, to whom, when and how?

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² This case was prepared by Professor Minette Drumwright, University of Texas-Austin. This case was inspired by interviews and observations of actual experiences but names and other situational details have been changed for confidentiality and teaching purposes.