Software Packaging, Protection, and Support

Issues

- Legal Protection
- Documentation
- Install pack
- Support and maintenance

Legal Protection

- Copyrights
- Trademarks
- Patents
- Trade secrets
- Agreements

Copyrights

- Name the application
  - Pick something short and you can live with
  - Be consistent
  - Name the exe
- Use the © sign or “Copyright” with name and year
  - e.g., Copyright 1999. Eric W. Stein. All rights reserved.
- Register your copyright for a nominal fee ($25)

Trademarks

- Secure a trademark for any name you feel has value
  - Includes company and product names
- Do a search for existing marks
  - Thompson and Thompson ($400)
  - University of XXXX ($10)
  - Web search via government
- Costs about $35 to register

Patents

- Patents cost about $5000-10,000 to get
- Applies to inventions mainly and to processes
- Not typical for software, but can apply
- Lasts 17 years
Trade Secrets

- Must not be common knowledge
- Must protect that knowledge
- Bind others to keep it a secret
  - employment contracts
  - confidentiality agreements

License Agreements

- Restricts rights:
  - to modify
  - to decompile source
  - to make copies
  - to resell
- Limits on:
  - liability
  - warranty

Product Documentation

- Document the software for:
  - Users (guide and reference manual)
  - Developers (source code)
- Include a tutorial
- Copyright your manuals
- Update the manuals as changes are made
- Use *.hlp or *.pdf format help guides

Other Documentation

- Disk labels
- Registration card
- Installation guide if necessary
- Sales literature
- Newsletter

Install Packs

- Use a commercial product such as Wise or InstallShield
- Test. Test. Test.
- Deploy via the Web or CD-ROM
- Test. Test. Test.

Support and maintenance

- Need to set up conditions for support in license agreement
- Can be a good source of revenue
- Usually a % of original sale
- Provide incentives to upgrade
Summary

• The completion of the software is only the beginning
• You need to:
  – copyright
  – document
  – license
  – install
  – support and maintain
• Consider the complete product life cycle