BSA Adds IBM to its Member List

By Christopher Barnett

The Business Software Alliance (BSA) recently [announced](#) that IBM has joined the software-industry organization as a new member. It remains unclear at this stage whether the new relationship will have an impact on future BSA software audits. Many BSA [members](#) tend not to play very prominent roles in the organization's license-enforcement efforts and instead work with the BSA mostly on efforts to promote the industry.

However, as with Oracle's recent addition to the BSA"s member list, it would not surprise me to see IBM included among lists of companies whose products must be included within the scope of BSA-initiated software audits. Its products also are commonly deployed by businesses of all sizes across many different industries, making them likely subjects of confidential tips that the BSA actively solicits from unnamed informants. And as with Oracle, the fact that IBM maintains an active, internal audit initiative does not mean that its products would be less likely to be included in BSA audits.

IBM products can be prohibitively expensive, and there are myriad different licensing metrics currently used by IBM. Therefore, the potential for audit exposure arising from IBM products is high. This would be an ideal time for companies with IBM product deployments to take a close look at those installations and to confirm that they all are being used within the scope of valid entitlements

About the author Christopher Barnett:

Christopher represents clients in a variety of business, intellectual property and IT-related contexts, with matters involving trademark registration and enforcement, software and licensing disputes and litigation, and mergers, divestments and service transactions. Christopher's practice includes substantial attention to concerns faced by media & technology companies and to disputes involving new media, especially the fast-evolving content on the Internet.

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