

Awareness of intellectual property rights protection remains high

The Intellectual Property Department (IPD) announced today (March 29) the results of the Survey on Public Awareness of Intellectual Property (IP) Right Protection 2020. The results revealed that the general public maintained a high level of awareness of IP rights protection and respect for IP rights.

A total of 1 000 members of the public responded to the survey. An overwhelming majority (92.9 per cent) considered it necessary to protect IP rights in Hong Kong. Over 87 per cent of them were aware that copyright, trademarks and patents are protected under the laws of Hong Kong. Most of the respondents believed that IP rights protection could, in the long run, help attract foreign investments (79.3 per cent) and the development of local creative industries (77.7 per cent).

The Director of Intellectual Property, Mr David Wong, said, "The IPD has all along been striving to raise the public awareness of IP rights at all levels through various educational and promotional programmes. Similar surveys have been commissioned by the IPD regularly since 1999 to gauge public awareness of IP rights protection in Hong Kong. The survey findings reveal that the awareness of IP rights protection and respect for IP rights remain high among the general public. We will keep up our efforts in promoting IP rights protection to underpin the development of Hong Kong as a knowledge-based economy."

In the survey, 92.8 per cent of the respondents said that they had seldom or never bought pirated or counterfeit goods, up from 89.7 per cent in the 2018 survey. Meanwhile, 86.2 per cent agreed that "it is morally wrong to buy pirated or counterfeit goods knowing that it is an infringement of IP rights". The percentage of respondents who agreed with this statement has been rising since 2014 (67.4 per cent).

On the channels through which pirated or counterfeit goods were purchased, physical shops (32.9 per cent) remained the most frequently cited channel, followed by street stalls (32.4 per cent) and online shops/auction sites (24.5 per cent). However, when compared with the findings of previous surveys, there has been a declining trend in respect of physical shops (47.3 per cent in 2016) whereas a continuous increase is observed for online shops/auction sites (10.4 per cent in 2016).

With online shopping becoming more popular, 83.9 per cent of the respondents who purchased products with brand(s) or logo(s) online would pay attention to whether the products were genuine, which reflected a significant increase from the results in 2018 (67 per cent).

With regard to the use of copyright content, 57.2 per cent of the respondents indicated that they "definitely will" or "possibly will" pay

authorised websites for listening to songs, watching movies online or downloading songs/movies/computer software/games/e-books, representing a continued upward trend since 2008 (21 per cent). The top three reasons cited for making a payment were the same as the findings in the 2018 survey, namely "respect IP rights" (35.9 per cent), "give support to creative industries" (32.3 per cent), and "for better quality" (23.4 per cent).

On the attitude of using copyright content, 80.1 per cent of the respondents agreed that "it is morally wrong to listen to music or watch movies/TV shows online knowing that they were pirated versions", which is noticeably higher than the percentage in the 2018 survey (70.2 per cent).

The "No Fakes Pledge" Scheme has been rolled out by the IPD and a number of retail and industry associations, where "No Fakes" stickers will be displayed in shops to help shoppers distinguish reliable traders selling genuine goods. The survey revealed that 77.3 per cent of the respondents had heard of the scheme, which is a record high since 2008 (50.1 per cent). Among those who were aware of the scheme, 87.7 per cent considered the scheme helpful in building confidence among consumers and tourists in shopping in Hong Kong, and strengthening Hong Kong's reputation as a "shoppers' paradise".

Similar surveys have been commissioned by the IPD regularly since 1999. The previous survey was conducted in 2018. Report of the latest survey is available on the IPD's webpage (www.ipd.gov.hk/eng/promotion_edu/survey.htm).