

Computer traders banned for selling counterfeit goods

Alan Gould (53) and Kelley Stewart (48) are each banned for 12 years from directly or indirectly becoming involved, without the permission of the court, in the promotion, formation or management of a company.

The pair, both from Manchester, were directors of GEN-X IT LTD, a company incorporated in 2002 and sold computer hardware from premises in Dark Lane, Ardwick, Manchester.

Following complaints of trademark infringements, however, in 2007 the directors signed undertakings on behalf of all parties connected to GEN-X IT that they wouldn't deal with counterfeit products that hadn't been manufactured by Cisco or a licensed manufacturer.

By January 2016, GEN-X IT had entered into insolvency proceedings when it was uncovered that the computer trader had for three years bought and sold an estimated 55,000 counterfeit computer products that infringed on the intellectual property rights of Cisco. This was in breach of the undertakings they had previously signed.

Further investigations confirmed that Cisco had established that between January 2013 and January 2016 GEN-X IT bought the Cisco-branded products from a third party, who in-turn had purchased the counterfeit products from China. But these products were not authorised to be sold in the European Economic Area.

And in 2018 Alan Gould and Kelley Stewart accepted that they had infringed Cisco's trade marks and agreed to pay the vendor a seven-figure settlement penalty.

On 19 May 2020, the Secretary of State accepted disqualification undertakings from Alan Gould and Kelley Stewart after they did not dispute that they had caused or allowed GEN-X IT to trade with a lack of commercial probity. Their bans came into effect on 8 June 2020,

Neil Sheridan, Head of Global Investigations for Cisco's Brand Protection team, said:

We are grateful to the Insolvency Service for their perseverance in this case, the outcome of which should be a warning to anyone trading in counterfeit products of any sort.

We are committed to tackling both individuals and organisations that recklessly trade in counterfeit Cisco products and create significant risk to critical network infrastructure.

Rob Clarke, Chief Investigator for the Insolvency Service, said:

Both Alan Gould and Kelley Stewart were fully aware GEN-X IT was importing and selling computer products that infringed on Cisco's intellectual property rights, which was a flagrant breach of an undertaking promising they would stop.

Their conduct fell well short of what is expected of company directors. Alan Gould and Kelley Stewart's substantial disqualifications should serve as a stark warning to those who seek to gain a corporate advantage illegitimately that they could face a lengthy ban from limited liability trading.

Alan Gould is from Manchester and his date of birth is August 1967.

Kelley Stewart is from Manchester and her date of birth is May 1972.

GEN-X IT LTD (Company number: 04480097).

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings. [Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a range of restrictions.](#)

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