



Library/Database Use

You are working as an intern when your supervisor asks you to do a rush research project on reputation management strategies of executives who use social media. You know that you could do a fast, quality job using the University of Illinois Library resources, since it has excellent databases and you are already familiar with how to use them effectively. What do you do?

Thought question: What if your supervisor specifically suggests you use your access to the University's databases because the company doesn't have access to the same quality databases? Does that change your view of the situation?

Takeaway Lessons:

- 1) **Intellectual property is still property.** The databases subscribed to by the University Library are subject to restrictions and your access is provided while you are a university student, not while you are serving as an employee of a company.
- 2) **Getting caught.** Many of the database vendors use sophisticated tracking and auditing systems to monitor that usage is appropriate and legal. The likelihood of getting caught using the database outside the licensed terms is high, and the consequences could be high to the University and to your employer.

Issues

Misuse of resources (theft of services)
 Determining limits on appropriate usage
 Looking good to your boss
 Getting the company in trouble
 Costing the university money or access
 Telling your boss it will take you longer

Resources

Company Code of Conduct
 Mentor
 Colleagues
 University librarians (ok to use?)
 Parents
 Company Ethical Hotline (Anonymous)

Rules and Regulations

Intellectual property laws
 Company regulations about

Questions

How can you determine appropriate use of the university databases?
 Does the company have access to the same databases?
 Is there another way to do the research?
 Does the university provide a reference service to any state citizen? Would they assist the company if asked to help on the question?
 Would it be legitimate for any company employee to go to the university library to use the databases on site?
 If so, is it also ok to dial into them?

Options

Use the university's databases and risk getting caught
 Ask for access to company research tools
 Call the library for advice
 Ask your boss for guidance
 Call the company ethics hotline

Based on 2MC suggested by Honors student, 2010. Developed by Gretchen Winter and C.K. Gunsalus