

InfoTech: Dear Adobe - an open letter of complaint

Dear Adobe, I have paid for software which your system is designed to prevent me activating. What you think is for your protection is actually for my frustration. Now the "trial period" has expired, I cannot use the software I have paid for. And it's all because your systems don't work.

I am a customer. I am a customer who has paid you money. I am a customer who has paid you money for software that you are preventing me from using.

Actually, paying you money was difficult - your systems rejected my UK credit card unless I gave you a UK address. But I don't live in the UK, I live in Malaysia.

So, I used the address of one of our group companies, and was able to download Macromedia (remember them? Dealing with them was nice) FlashPaper 2.

Shortly after I bought the software, my PC was trashed by a total disk failure. I didn't need the software for several years, then when I did need it I found that the back up of the download was trashed, too.

After several attempts to find out from your website how to get a replacement, which I never did, I phoned the UK number - where someone was extremely helpful and talked me through the process, even going so far as to send me my order number and serial number by e-mail.

That was the only pleasant experience of this whole nightmare.

The software launched in trial mode. I have tried, repeatedly, to activate it but the activation link in the software is dead. I know I have the correct serial number because there is a big green tick next to it.

There is an option to activate by phone. I called the activation number given. It has been disconnected.

I went to your website to find alternatives: it gave me a different telephone number for customers in Malaysia. An automaton asked me to input my serial number.

I did.

Repeatedly.

It repeatedly told me that my number has an incorrect number of digits.

It doesn't.

After several tries, the system transferred me to an operator who will assist me, it said.

He didn't.

In fact, he said he couldn't. Your system, he said, had transferred me to an office that could only deal with enquiries from the USA and Canada. He could, he said, give me a number in Malaysia. Given that I had explained all of the above, it does not inspire confidence that he wanted to put me back to the very system that had sent me to him in the first place.

So he decided to give me a number in the UK. I don't want to phone the UK from Malaysia when the only reason I am doing so is that your system doesn't work. So I told him so, and I asked him why the machine in Singapore (for that is where the Malaysian freephone number diverts to) transfers me to someone whose only response is to tell me to phone someone else. He recited from a script. He kept saying the same things over and over, robotically. "I give you UK number. I cannot help you." He flatly refused to answer my question as to why I was transferred to someone who could only tell me to get lost and to put me to even more work than I

had so far suffered.

I swore at him. Well, not at him exactly, more about his ****ing stupid script." He hung up.

So, I wrote, using the reply button, to the nice man who had sent me the registration details in the first place.

But your system is designed to prevent me doing that. This was your reply:

Adobe recently received an e-mail, from this e-mail address, that we are unable to process. Additional actions may be required to fulfill your particular comments or request. We have provided some information (below) to help you reach the appropriate Adobe contact.

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Please DO NOT REPLY TO THIS E-MAIL, as the e-mail address used to send you this e-mail cannot respond to any issues or requests. To help you address your particular question or comment, please visit the applicable sites, below:

Contacting Customer Service:

<http://www.adobe.com/support/contact/>  
<<http://www.adobe.com/support/contact/>>

Product Information:

<http://www.adobe.com/software/>  
<<http://www.adobe.com/software/>>

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Thank you for your continued interest in Adobe.

Best regards,

Adobe, Inc.

<http://www.adobe.com><<http://www.adobe.com/>> <<http://www.adobe.com/>>

I am rapidly losing my continued interest in Adobe.

So, Mr Adobe, if there is such a person, this letter is for you. I've tried for several days, in many ways to contact your company so that I can use the software I have paid for. It is impossible unless, I assume, I spend even more time trying to understand your utterly muddled website and make yet more phone calls to dead numbers, machines that can't count, diversions that send me to people that can't help, etc.

Perhaps one of your staff will read this. And if so, find time to let me know how to activate this software in the face of such total obstruction by your systems.

And yes, to contact me please use the Feedback Form on this site.

Because when you do, it will reach me. And, like every other form that comes into our office, it will receive prompt and proper attention.

Or, if you feel like providing some customer service, you could call. The numbers are at the foot of this page. Just remember: I'm in Malaysia. We are at GMT +8 hours.

Regards

Nigel Morris-Cotterill

Updates:

1) article modified: the copy of Adobe's email had corrupted on first publication and has now been corrected (24 March 2009 01:25)

2) Within two hours of this open letter being published, a senior member of Adobe's team had made contact, asking for the product registration and with a plan and undertaking to assist.