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Microsoft Responds to Accusations That WGA Reports Canceled Installations

There is nothing unusual with the WGA telemetry

Microsoft has issued a formal response to media reports that its Windows Genuine Advantage Notification anti-piracy tool contacts the company servers when the users cancel the WGA installation. The clarification on the matter at hand was provided due to the past history of WGA and the customers' concerns about the data that the WGA tool is sending out. Alex Kochis, a WGA senior licensing manager, stated that it is a common Microsoft procedure applied to all updates to send out telemetry upon installation or cancellation and that the latest refresh of the WGA package makes no exception to this rule. "First, all downloads that flow through Windows Update return success/failure telemetry. This is because of the large scale of distributions over Windows Update. When sending out an update package to potentially millions of customers it's important to gather basic data on successful installations, install failures and user rejections or cancellations at any point in the process. Second, this event is one time only. Also, if the system isn't connected to the Internet nothing will be sent nor will it be if an attempt to send fails," Kochis explained. Microsoft is using the data collected exclusively to improve the updates delivery process. Outside the efforts to improve the updating system and the delivery methods, Microsoft is not using personal customer information in any way. At the bottom of the article you will be able to view an example of the XML telemetry that Microsoft returns when a user hits cancel on the WGA installation. "For completeness (and for our lawyers) I'd like to point out that disclosure of this type of install telemetry is made in the Windows Update [privacy statement](#). All the information that is sent as a result of WGA Notifications being installed is covered by WGA-specific disclosures such as the EULA presented in the installation wizard and our privacy statements. Our commitment on privacy is oft-stated and we do not use any of the information collected through WGA to identify or contact any user," Kochis added.