

Macromedia Product Activation A Case Study

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The problem

- Unlicensed software use takes many forms
 - Contributory/Internet
 - Channel/Reseller
 - Fraud
 - End-user piracy

- End users and compliance
 - 94% believe that piracy is an issue for the industry, but:
 - 47% do not read or understand license agreements
 - 63% do not equate “sharing” with piracy
 - 20% expect to be trusted to “do the right thing”

* Macromedia customer survey, May 2003



Macromedia's Licensing Principles

- Make it easy to comply with the license
 - License should match customer use patterns
- Create a great user experience
- Put the customer in control of their license
- Build a flexible solution that can evolve



- Many types of software



Desktop

- Activation addresses a subset
 - Mac & Win Desktop products
 - Shrinkwrap & ESD (resale & direct)
 - Both standalone products and Studio
 - Primarily perpetual licenses



Activation Business Case

Costs

\$

Client & Server
Development

\$

Hardware & Software,
System Support &
Maintenance

\$

Customer Support,
Employee Education

\$

?

Benefits

\$

Increased Compliance &
Customer Education

\$

Operational Efficiencies

\$

New License Models

\$

Business Intelligence



- **Primary goals**
 - Keep existing customers happy and in compliance
 - Build a supported, sustainable, long-term solution
 - Reduce and deter “casual copying”
 - Gain operational efficiencies
 - Increase business intelligence

- **Secondary goals**
 - Pave the way for new license models
 - Secure pre-release software

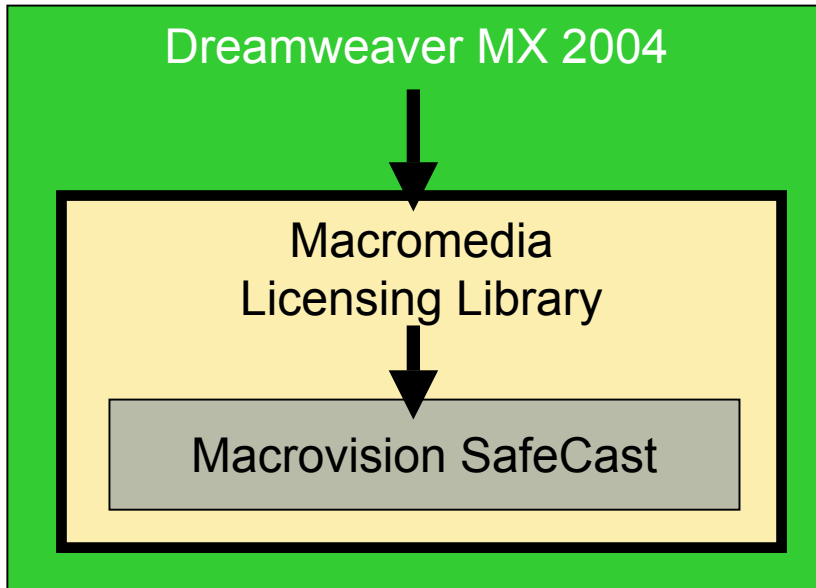


Primary requirements included:

- Ease of use
- Anonymity and privacy
- License Transfer
- Consistency across products and platforms
- Globalized
 - support for all regions and languages
- Single product build (try/buy)
- Single SKU & serialization scheme
- 24x7 support



- Cross-platform (Mac/Win)
 - Consistent interface across products
 - Single try/buy software build
-






The Internet Activation Experience



Macromedia Product Activation [Close]



About Activation
Activation is completely anonymous: No personal information is required.
You can activate your software any time within the first 30 days after you first launch it. Not ready to activate yet? Use the Trial mode.
Read Macromedia's privacy policy to learn what data is sent during activation.

? [Activation Help](#)
👤 [Privacy Policy](#)

Welcome to Macromedia Fireworks

I have a serial number and want to activate Macromedia Fireworks.
Enter your serial number to automatically activate Macromedia Fireworks; it takes only a few seconds.
Need a serial number? [Buy one online.](#)

I want to try Macromedia Fireworks. (30 days remaining)
There are 15 days left in your trial period. When it ends, you must activate Macromedia Fireworks to continue using it.

📞 [You can also activate by telephone.](#)

[Continue](#)

Activate now

Activate later (trial period)

Details and help links

Activate by phone



Demo – serialization

Macromedia Product Activation



Enter your serial number

[Where's my serial number?](#)

Need a serial number?
Buy one online using your web browser.

Type your serial number into this screen to activate your software.

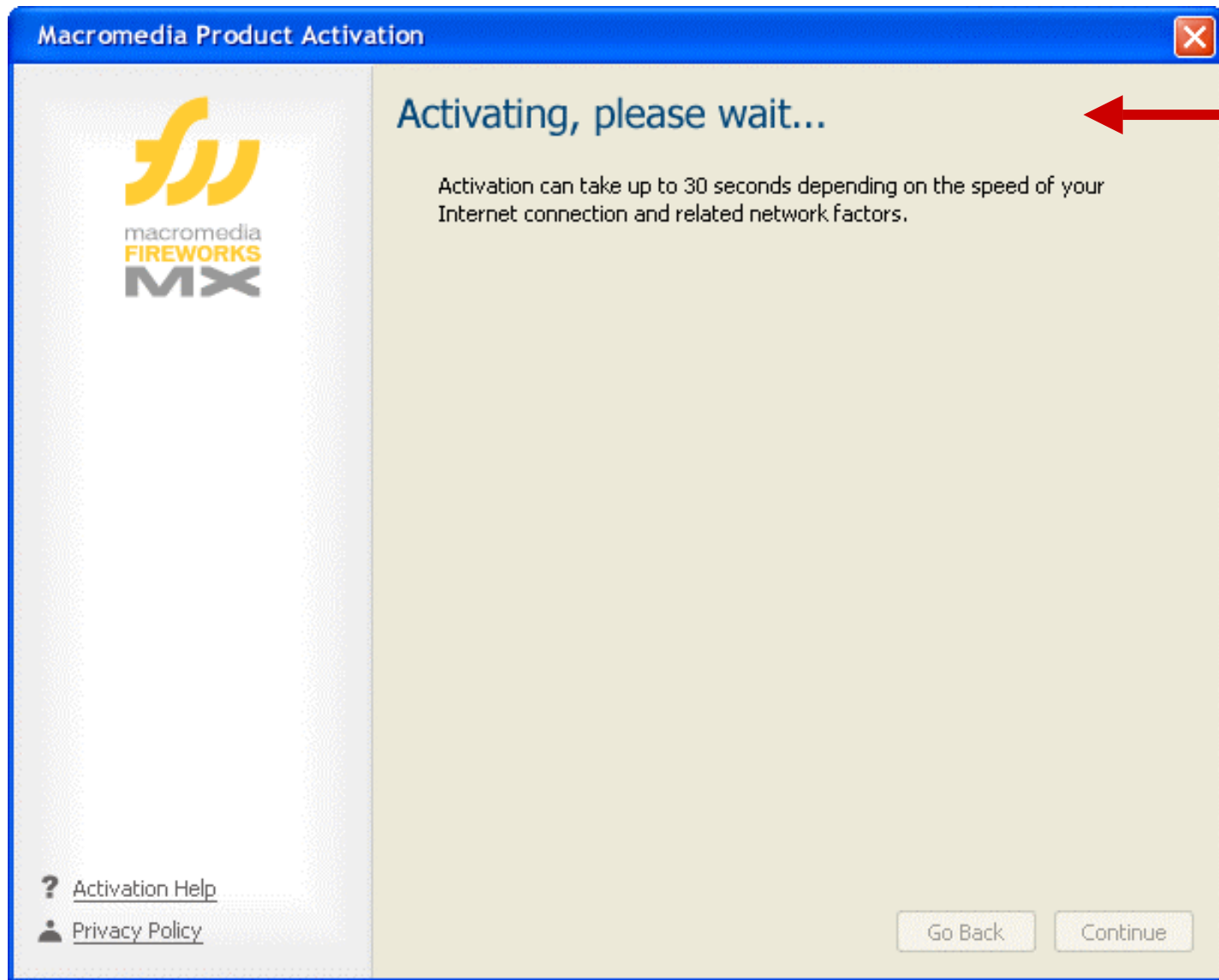
[? Activation Help](#)
[Privacy Policy](#)

Enter serial number

Or, buy a license online



Demo – activating




← Normally takes < 10 seconds



Demo – done!

Macromedia Product Activation



Activation vs. registration
Activation is anonymous and required to verify your product license. No personal information is requested or collected.
Registration is voluntary and gives you access to customer support and product updates.

[? Activation Help](#)
[Privacy Policy](#)

Activation is complete
You have successfully activated your software.

Register Macromedia Fireworks.

First name:

Last name:

E-mail:

Location:

Tell me about product updates and special offers from Macromedia

← That's it!

← Now that anonymous activation is complete:

Register your product

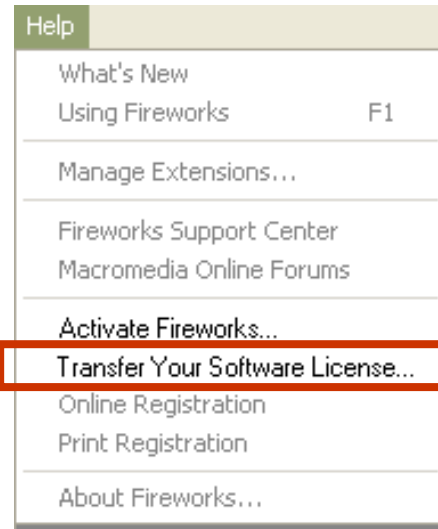
← Sidebar explains activation vs. registration



The License Transfer Experience



Demo – License Transfer



Choose Transfer License from the Help menu



Demo – License Transfer

Macromedia Product Activation



Transferring a license

If you installed this software as part of a Studio, all of the Studio software will be deactivated simultaneously so you can reactivate it on another computer.

You can transfer your license a limited number of times.

[? Activation Help](#)
[Privacy Policy](#)

Transfer your software license

You should only transfer your license if you plan on upgrading your computer or moving this software to a new computer. Transferring your license will immediately deactivate the software on this computer so that you can activate it on the upgraded or new computer at your convenience.


Transferring a license requires an Internet connection. Once you transfer your license, you won't be able to run the software until you reactivate it.

Click to transfer



Demo – License Transfer

Macromedia Product Activation



License transfer is complete

You have successfully transferred your license.

You can now reactivate your software on another computer. Click the Close button to quit the program.

[? Activation Help](#)
[Privacy Policy](#)

Close

Done!

The image shows a Windows-style dialog box titled "Macromedia Product Activation". The window has a blue title bar with a close button (X) in the top right corner. The main content area has a light beige background. On the left side, there is a vertical grey bar containing the Macromedia Fireworks MX logo. The logo consists of a stylized orange 'f' and 'w' above the text "macromedia FIREWORKS MX". The main text in the center reads "License transfer is complete" in a dark blue font, followed by "You have successfully transferred your license." in a green font. Below this, a smaller black font message says "You can now reactivate your software on another computer. Click the Close button to quit the program." At the bottom left of the dialog, there are two links: "? Activation Help" and "Privacy Policy". At the bottom right, there is a "Close" button. A red arrow points from the word "Done!" on the right towards the "License transfer is complete" text.




The Phone Activation Experience



Demo – phone activation

Macromedia Product Activation



**macromedia
FIREWORKS
MX**

Need a serial number?
Buy one online using your web browser.

[? Activation Help](#)
[Privacy Policy](#)

Activate by Telephone


Enter your serial number to begin the phone activation process.
Choose your location and language to display the telephone number.

[Where's my serial number?](#)

Choose your language and location.

Location:

Language:

 [You can also activate over the Internet.](#)

← Enter your serial number

← Choose your location and language to display the proper phone number

← Or, buy a license online



Demo – phone code entry

Macromedia Product Activation [Close]



Telephone activation worksheet

Call a number below and follow the instructions:

Toll-free: **1 (800) 555-1212**
Toll: **1 (451) 555-1212**

When prompted, use your touchtone phone to enter the first five groups of numbers:

A	B	C	D	E
06202	33442	66202	45202	0623

When prompted, use your touchtone phone to enter the next nine groups of numbers:

F	G	H	I	J
06202	33442	66202	45202	06233
K	L	M	N	
06202	33442	66202	45	

Enter the confirmation number that the automated phone system gives you. Don't worry — if you miss a number, it will be repeated.

O	P	Q	R	S
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

[? Activation Help](#)
[Privacy Policy](#)


[You can also activate over the Internet.](#)

- ← Dial the phone
- ← Enter first group
- ← Enter second group
- ← Type the confirmation code



Demo – done!

Macromedia Product Activation ✕



Activation vs. registration
Activation is anonymous and required to verify your product license. No personal information is requested or collected.
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[? Activation Help](#)
[Privacy Policy](#)

Activation is complete

You have successfully activated your software.

Register Macromedia Fireworks.

First name:

Last name:

E-mail:

Location: ▼

Tell me about product updates and special offers from Macromedia

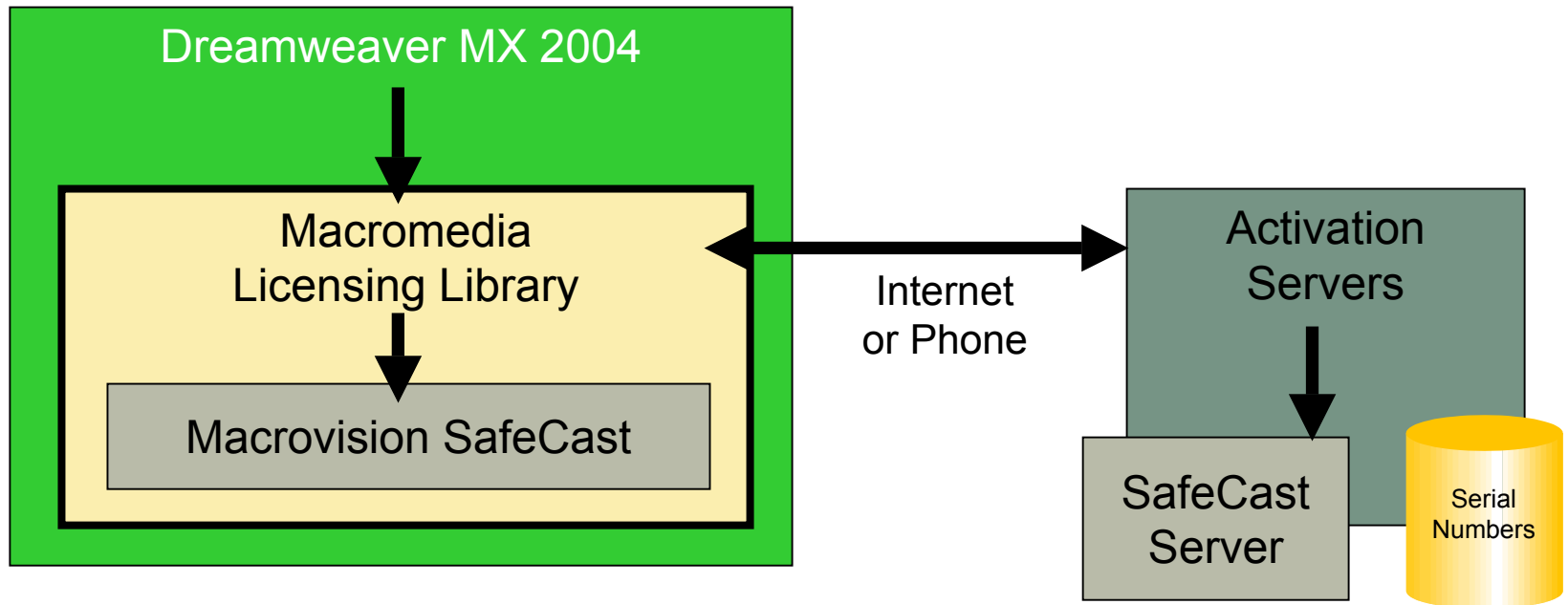
← That's it!

← Now register your product



Building it – The Server

- Fast
- Robust
- Flexible





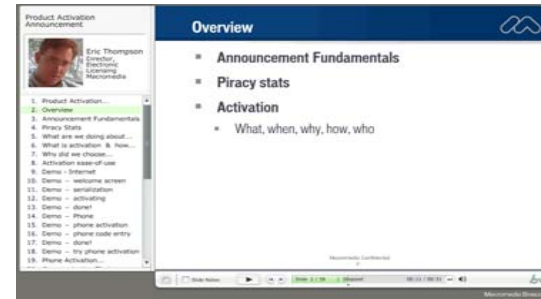
Flexibility is key

- Scope business rules
 - By product (default)
 - By license type (default)
 - By individual serial number (custom)
- Parameters used to manage license distribution
 - # of Installs
 - # of Reinstalls
 - # of License Transfers
 - # of Platform Transfers
 - Duration or Expiration Date
- Balance user experience and support costs
 - Restrictive business rules induce customer service calls
 - Lenient business rules allow extra installations



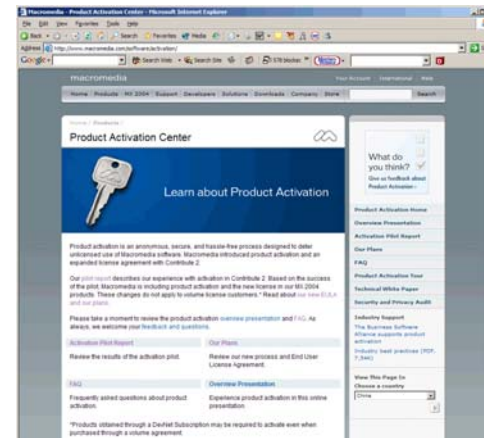
Releasing It

- Prepare the company
 - Worldwide employee training and testing
 - Support organization training



Macromedia Breeze

- Prepare customers
 - Activation Web site
 - Overview Presentation
 - FAQ
 - Customer Feedback Form
 - Security Audit
 - Pilot program
 - Community Management



Macromedia.com



Challenges... just a few:

- Customer and Communications
 - Obtaining realistic customer feedback
 - Changing the license agreement
 - Gathering and paring down international business requirements
 - Preparing the company for vitriol
 - Worldwide employee education on eLicensing
 - A new style of PR

- Development and Operations
 - Selecting and engaging a service provider
 - Securing international toll-free phone numbers
 - Geographically separated development teams
 - Establishing a single consistent, usable interface across different products
 - SafeCast 1.0 for Macintosh
 - NIH / 'Black box' from product teams' perspective



- System is working well
 - 99.99% activation success rate
 - More than 99% of customers use Internet activation or automated phone activation
- Customer feedback
 - Mixed, but mostly negative, as expected
 - Almost all customers are satisfied with new EULA

“I think activation is a good solution for preventing piracy. Thank you for allowing programs to be installed on two computers, I depend on both of mine to get the job done.”

“I use my desktop at work, my desktop at home, and my laptop. I fork over the dough to purchase your product (which btw is a LOT), and I find out LATER, that I can only use it on 2 of my @!#\$ing computers!!!! WTH It's MY freaking program, I PAID FOR IT. LET ME USE IT!!!”

- Analysis of activation data shows some patterns of abuse
 - Massively pirated serial numbers
 - “3rd, 4th, and 5th” machines
 - Keygen'd serial numbers



Regular

- Client clock is off from real time by > 48 hours
- Trial period expired too soon
- Customer reads request code incorrectly over phone

Very Infrequent Edge Cases

- Primary hard drive is RAID
- Intel HyperThreading BIOS changes
- Removable primary hard drive
- Customer uses emulation software (VMware, Wine, etc.)



- Create dedicated licensing teams
 - Cross-company project team
 - Development team and integration teams
 - End-to-end QA team

- Make sure the solution meets customer needs
 - Fixing problems post-ship is next to impossible
 - Customers don't read EULA
 - Prepare for 2% of customers to complain loudly regardless

- Communicate with the customers
 - Point to the facts on your web site
 - Do not argue or engage with the 2%



Lessons Learned

- Don't underestimate international & regional issues
 - Order int'l phone numbers early due to lead times
 - Avoid UIFN phone numbers
 - Triple-check legality of data collection in each region
 - Right-to-privacy is perceived differently across cultures
- “Uncrackable” protection is not a realistic goal
 - Set expectations accordingly
 - Focus on compliance
- It's good to have friends
 - Activation Best Practices

Thank you

Questions?

