

# Game Devs Want Warez Pirates To Switch Sides [1]

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Last week, *Syndicate*, the latest game from Starbreeze studios, was released to the public by publisher EA. The game was immediately made available on the Internet but the swarthy pirates examining the files on the disc were met with an interesting item. In a direct message to those cracking their copy protection, Starbreeze included a cool job offer via a traditional pirate-formatted text file.



[2]To members of the warez Scene, street dates for video games are viewed as a challenge. Whatever the official launch date pirates want to beat it, and when the new EA-published game *Syndicate* hit the streets last week, the race to get the Xbox 360 version online had already been lost by the title's creators.

This release of *Syndicate*, a remake of titles from the 90's, is written by Sweden-based Starbreeze studios and in common with every software creator in the country, they will be acutely aware of the nation's close links to the demo, cracking and piracy scenes. In a nod to these rivals, Starbreeze hid away a cool little easter egg on the disc of the more piracy-prone PC version of the game.

The file, which was found by Redditor MikkelManDK [3], is titled *Syndicate-SBZ.nfo* and initially looks like the calling cards left by most game copy-protection crackers. A closer look, however, shows a different picture.





After the description of the game plus a suspiciously easy set of ‘cracking’ instructions – 1. Insert disc, 2. Play – Starbreeze take the opportunity to directly address those members of the warez Scene who spend their time removing copy protection from their games and putting them on the Internet.

“Are you bored with watching from the sidelines? Ready to make the switch?” the company begins. “Do you have considerable talents in any of the following areas? Art, modeling, texturing, sound design. Programming. Game design?”

“If you meet one or more of those criteria, and want to be a part of the fun, email us at [jobs@starbreeze.com](mailto:jobs@starbreeze.com) today!”

Although it’s been less than a week since launch, TorrentFreak was interested if this unconventional method of recruitment had been a success. We asked Starbreeze if there had been any applicants but unfortunately received no immediate response, possibly because employment is a bit of a sore point <sup>[4]</sup> with the dev at the moment.

However, it is not unprecedented for one-time games crackers to switch sides. This writer personally knew three individuals who jumped from the 1980’s Commodore 64 demo scene to land decent jobs at Ocean <sup>[5]</sup>, Imagine <sup>[6]</sup> and distributor Mastertronic <sup>[7]</sup>.

But there are more famous examples.

In the 1990’s (and as can be seen from the video embedded below, 50 secs in), an individual known as SS Captain roamed the cracktro <sup>[8]</sup> high seas with a group called Katharsis.

Two decades on he’s better known as Marcin Iwinski, CEO of CD Projekt.

1. <http://torrentfreak.com/game-devs-want-warez-pirates-to-switch-sides-120228/>
2. <http://torrentfreak.com/images/starbreeze-logo.jpg>
3. <http://eu.reddit.com/user/MikkelManDK>
4.  
[http://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/40380/Starbreeze\\_lays\\_off\\_25\\_just\\_days\\_before\\_Syndicates\\_release.php](http://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/40380/Starbreeze_lays_off_25_just_days_before_Syndicates_release.php)
5. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ocean\\_Software](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ocean_Software)
6. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imagine\\_Software](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imagine_Software)
7. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mastertronic>
8. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crack\\_intro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crack_intro)