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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

rents to consumers. PC Rental Agent, when installed on a rented computer, enables Showplace to disable the computer remotely. Showplace disables the computer when it is reported lost or stolen, or when a consumer is late making payments, has stopped communicating with Showplace, or has otherwise violated the rental contract. PC Rental Agent also enables Showplace to remotely install and activate an add-on program called Detective Mode. Using Detective Mode, Showplace can surreptitiously monitor the activities of the computer's user, including by using the computer's webcam. Through Detective Mode, Showplace can also secretly gather consumer's personal information using fake software registration windows.

4. Showplace installs PC Rental Agent on computers it rents to consumers prior to the consumer taking possession of the computer. The presence of PC Rental Agent is not detectable to a computer's user and the computer's renter cannot uninstall it.

5. Showplace can remotely install and activate Detective Mode on any computer with PC Rental Agent. Once activated, Detective Mode can log the keystrokes of the computer user, take screen shots of the computer user's activities on the computer, and photograph anyone within view of the computer's webcam. Detective Mode gathers this information and transmits it to Showplace, unbeknownst to the individual using the computer. Showplace does not tell the computer user about the activation of Detective Mode.

6. Using Detective Mode, Showplace has gather

to competition; indeed, in this context, where rent-to-own stores have alternate effective methods of collection, e.g., using PC Rental Agent to remotely disable the computer, there are no legitimate benefits to respondent or to the public

9. Showplace has also used another feature of Detective Mode that allows it to cause a user's computer to display a fake registration window, purportedly for Microsoft Windows or other software. The fake registration window prompts the computer user to enter a name, address, email address, and phone number. The computer user must enter the requested information to close the window. A screenshot of one such fake software registration window appears below.



10. No actual software is registered as a result of a consumer providing the requested information; instead, Detective Mode captures the information entered in the prompt boxes and sends the data to Showplace. In numerous instances, Showplace has used this information to find, require payment for, or repossess a computer.

11. Consumers who respond to the fake prompt screen and provide the requested contact information are deprived of the ability to control who has access to their contact information and how they are contacted.

VIOLATIONS OF THE FTC ACT

COUNT I

Unfair Gathering of Consumers' Personal Information

12. Through the means described in Paragraphs 3 through 11, respondent has installed monitoring software on rented ct 10.85

