

Case Study | Disguise

Picture credit Sam Shapiro

A clear view on licensing and protection with Wibu-Systems

The magic behind some of the world's most fascinating events and shows is made possible with the security and versatility of CodeMeter.

The Challenge

With its technology relying on a unique combination of software and hardware, Disguise required an IP protection and licensing solution that could cover both ends of the spectrum: The means to secure against counterfeiting and monetize the proprietary know-how used by event designers for music shows, theater performances, corporate events, films, and broadcasts – while keeping the solution lean and nimble enough for the fast-paced and often iterative work done in the business.

The Solution

Disguise went with a multi-pronged solution built around CodeMeter from Wibu-Systems: The software used by designers is encrypted and licensed with CodeMeter, and users can choose their license containers between hardware-based CmDongles for more mobility in their work or software-based CmActLicenses for simpler logistics. As a second layer, the work created on the Disguise software is watermarked and secured against unauthorized use on non-Disguise hardware. For the real experience, users run their work on the dedicated hardware, with CodeMeter licensing built in.

The Success

With CodeMeter's easy and smooth integration in the Disguise

ecosystem and with a choice of license models and license containers available, the solution adopted by Disguise has created a dynamic and powerful tool for designers in the field that safeguards their IP and generates new business models for rental companies: Designers can now run their work on the Disguise hardware they need without having to go all-in and buying the sophisticated hardware themselves.



James Bentley, Head of Software Engineering, Disguise

"We develop the software that the designers and producers of live events use to design their shows. Thanks to CodeMeter, we're always sure that they use the correct configuration. Tampering just isn't possible. The same goes for selling upgrades, which is very easy with CodeMeter. This all provides peace of mind, and we know that our intellectual property isn't at risk."



The Company

Originally created by London-based design studio United Visual Artists, Disguise provides the world's first integrated production system for video professionals, creating compelling visualizations of your ideas. From theaters to concert tours, from architectural installations to broadcast events, from sporting to projection mapping events worldwide, the Disguise solution has introduced a new way of working and is behind some of the world's most high-profile and complex shows, including the G20 summit 2013, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee 2012, Eurovision, and touring acts like Madonna, Robbie Williams, Ariana Grande, and U2.



Video has become central to live events. Whenever you attend a concert by your favorite artist, chances are that Disguise's technology is behind the visual spectacle. The company counts on Wibu-Systems to efficiently provide its software and hardware with the correct licenses that protect their IP and secure the design builds that designers exchange with their clients.

Disguise is the platform that allows creatives and technologists to imagine, create, and deliver spectacular live visual experiences. Combining the leading experience production software with powerful media server hardware, Disguise empowers brands, artists, and production houses to tell stories that inspire their audiences. The strength of Disguise lies in this combination of its powerful software and the performance of its dedicated hardware.

But the company's success also presents a major challenge: Protecting its intellectual property. Looking to shield its software and hardware from unauthorized use and counterfeiting, Disguise found an answer in CodeMeter by Wibu-Systems. Disguise offers its users plenty of choices. There is an option to use a CmDongle, which carries a valid license and acts as an electronic copy-protection device. When connected to a computer, it decrypts the software's functionality.

Alternatively, a software-based license container is offered and preferred by many users. The use of software license containers benefits everyone: A customer who purchases the software can start using it right away without waiting for a dongle to arrive in the mail. This also saves time for Disguise, as they do not have to worry about the logistics of packing and shipping dongles.

The protection works in two steps: With their license, designers can create entire shows, but everything is watermarked at this stage,

which results in the impossibility to use this version during an actual show. It's only with dedicated Disguise hardware, which is often provided by the many rental companies in the event industry, and a built-in license powered by CodeMeter, that the live show can take life.

The licenses are built into the Disguise hardware, and Wibu-Systems manages use in a smart way. An example of this is RenderStream, one of Disguise's solutions. This involves infrastructure that seamlessly integrates the Disguise hardware, software, content engines, and camera tracking, connecting the stage with the production's virtual set.

Over the years, Disguise has released many different types and versions of its software and hardware, and there are now many thousands of sets or machines in circulation. With CodeMeter, the company can be sure that their users can only access the correct, tamper-proof configurations. The same goes for selling annual renewal and upgrades, which is very easy to do with CodeMeter.

Wibu-Systems also provides support at another point in the process: The Firm Security Box is integrated in the build server, where it takes care of encrypting every build that's created and prevents unencrypted rogue builds from appearing. As builds are typically sent back and forth and adjusted, e.g. at the request of artists, CodeMeter makes a real difference in terms of the time saved while keeping everything safe.



About Wibu-Systems:

WIBU-SYSTEMS AG (WIBU®), a privately held company founded by Oliver Winzenried and Marcellus Buchheit in 1989, is an innovative security technology leader in the global software licensing market. Wibu-Systems' comprehensive and award winning solutions offer

unique and internationally patented processes for protection, licensing and security of digital assets and know-how to software publishers and industrial manufacturers who distribute their applications through PC-, embedded-, mobile- and cloud-based models.

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