

## Acceptable and Fair Use Policy

**Note:**

*The below is the Acceptable and Fair Usage Policy for ESA Partner customers using Bitco Internet services. By signing our Master Rental Agreement – Voice & Data Connectivity & Hosted PBX contract you agree to the below terms and conditions. By signing this agreement the customer agrees and acknowledges that they have been made aware of the Bitco Fair Usage Policy. The Bitco Fair Usage Policy should also be considered as if specifically incorporated herewith and also remains in force and applicable towards the customer. All queries related to payments, disputes or cancellations for Bitco Internet needs to be directed to ESA Partner by contacting us on 021 552 5233 or [info@esapartner.co.za](mailto:info@esapartner.co.za).*

### General Notice

By accessing this website, or by contracting with us for service, you agree, without limitation or qualification, to be bound by this policy and the terms and conditions it contains, as well as any other additional terms, conditions, rules or policies which are displayed to you in connection with this service/website.

The purpose of this Acceptable and Fair Use Policy is to comply with the relevant laws of the Republic; to specify to customers and users of our service/website what activities and online behaviour are considered an unacceptable use of the service/website; to protect the integrity of our network and to specify the consequences that may flow from undertaking such prohibited activities.

This document contains a number of legal obligations which you are presumed to be familiar with. As such, we encourage you to read this document thoroughly and direct any queries to ESA Partner's customer services/legal department at 021 552 5233 or [info@esapartner.co.za](mailto:info@esapartner.co.za).

BitCo respects the rights of our customers and users of our services to freedom of speech and expression; access to information; privacy; human dignity; religion, belief and opinion in accordance with our constitution. We undertake not to interfere with any of those rights unless required to do so by law; unless those rights are exercised for unlawful purposes; or unless the exercise of those rights threatens to cause harm to another person or affect the integrity of our network.



## Unlawful Use

BitCo's services/website may only be used for lawful purposes and activities. We prohibit any use of our website/network including the transmission, storage and distribution of any material or content using our network that violates any law or regulation of the Republic. This includes:

1. Any violation of local and international laws prohibiting child pornography; obscenity; discrimination (including racial, gender or religious slurs) and hate speech; or speech designed to incite violence or hatred, or threats to cause bodily harm.
2. Any activity designed to defame, abuse, stalk, harass or physically threaten any individual in the Republic or beyond its borders; including any attempt to link to, post, transmit or otherwise distribute any inappropriate or defamatory material.
3. Any violation of Intellectual Property laws including materials protected by local and international copyright, trademarks and trade secrets. Moreover, BitCo cannot be held liable if you make any unlawful use of any multimedia content accessed through the search facility provided by BitCo's network, or otherwise available through access to our network, whether for commercial or non-commercial purposes.
4. Any violation of the individual's right to privacy, including any effort to collect personal data of third parties without their consent.
5. Any fraudulent activity whatsoever, including dubious financial practices, such as pyramid schemes; the impersonation of another subscriber without their consent; or any attempt to enter into a transaction with BitCo on behalf of another subscriber without their consent.
6. Any violation of the exchange control laws of the Republic.
7. Any activity that results in the sale, transmission or distribution of pirated or illegal software.
8. Failing to respond to a request by a recipient of unsolicited mail to be removed from any mailing or direct marketing list and continuing to send unsolicited mail following such a request for removal.

Where any user resides outside of the Republic, permanently or temporarily, such user will be subject to the laws of the country in which s/he is currently resident and which apply. On presentation of a legal order to do so, or under obligation through an order for mutual foreign legal assistance, BitCo will assist foreign law enforcement agencies (LEA) in the investigation and prosecution of a crime committed using BitCo's resources, including the provisioning of all personal identifiable data.

## Prohibited Activities

The following sections outline activities that are considered an unacceptable use of BitCo's services/network/website and also detail the guidelines for acceptable use of certain facilities/services, as the case may be.



## Threats to Network Security

- Any activity which threatens the functioning, security and/or integrity of BitCo's network is unacceptable. This includes:
- Any efforts to attempt to gain unlawful and unauthorised access to the network or circumvent any of the security measures established by BitCo for this goal;
- Any effort to use BitCo's equipment to circumvent the user authentication or security of any host, network or account ("cracking" or "hacking");
- Forging of any TCP-IP packet header (spoofing) or any part of the header information in an email or a newsgroup posting;
- Any effort to breach or attempt to breach the security of another user or attempt to gain access to any other person's computer, software, or data without the knowledge and consent of such person;
- Any activity which threatens to disrupt the service offered by BitCo through "denial of service attacks"; flooding of a network, or overloading a service or any unauthorised probes ("scanning" or "nuking") of others' networks;
- Any activity which in any way threatens the security of the network by knowingly posting, transmitting, linking to or otherwise distributing any information or software which contains a virus; Trojan horse; worm, lock, mail bomb, cancelbot or other harmful, destructive or disruptive component.
- Any unauthorised monitoring of data or traffic on the network without BitCo's explicit, written consent.
- Any unsolicited mass mailing activity including direct marketing; spam and chain letters for commercial or other purposes, without the consent of the recipients of those mails.

## Public Space and Third Party Content and sites

In reading this Acceptable and Fair Use Policy or in signing a service contract with BitCo, you acknowledge that BitCo has no power to control the content of the information passing over the Internet and its applications, including e-mail; chat rooms; news groups; or other similar fora, and that BitCo cannot be held responsible or liable, directly or indirectly, for any of the abovementioned content, in any way for any loss or damage of any kind incurred as a result of, or in connection with your use of, or reliance on, any such content.

Our services also offer access to numerous third party webpages. You acknowledge that we exercise absolutely no control over such third party content, or sites and in such cases, our network is merely a conduit or means of access and transmission. This includes, but is not limited to, third party content contained on or accessible through the BitCo network websites and web pages or sites displayed as search results or contained within a directory of links on the BitCo network. It remains your responsibility to review and evaluate any such content, and that any and all risk associated with the use of, or reliance on, such content rests with you.



Access to public Internet spaces, such as bulletin boards, Usenet groups, chat rooms and moderated forums is entirely voluntary and at your own risk. BitCo employees do not moderate any of these services, or your communications, transmissions or use of these services. We do not undertake any responsibility for any content contained therein, or for any breaches of your right to privacy that you may experience as a result of accessing such spaces.

## **Unsolicited, Spam and Junk Mail**

Spam and unsolicited bulk mail are highly problematic practices. They affect the use and enjoyment of services by others and often compromise network security. BitCo will take swift and firm action against any user engaging in any of the following unacceptable practices:

1. Sending unsolicited bulk mail for marketing or any other purposes (political, religious or commercial) to people who have not consented to receiving such mail;
2. Operating or maintaining mailing lists without the express permission of all recipients listed;
3. Failing to promptly remove from lists invalid or undeliverable addresses or addresses of unwilling recipients or a recipient who has indicated s/he wishes to be removed from such list;
4. Using BitCo's service to collect responses from unsolicited e-mail sent from accounts on other Internet hosts or e-mail services, that violate this Acceptable and Fair Use Policy or the Acceptable and FairUse Policy of any other Internet service provider;
5. Including BitCo's name in the header or by listing an IP address that belongs to BitCo in any unsolicited email whether sent through BitCo's network or not;
6. Failure to secure a customer's mail server against public relay as a protection to themselves and the broader Internet community. Public relay occurs when a mail server is accessed by a third party from another domain and utilised to deliver mails, without the authority or consent of the owner of the mail-server. Mail servers that are unsecured against public relay often become abused by unscrupulous operators for spam delivery and upon detection such delivery must be disallowed. BitCo reserves the right to examine users' mail servers to confirm that no mails are being sent from the mail server through public relay and the results of such checks can be made available to the user. BitCo also reserves the right to examine the mail servers of any users using BitCo's mail servers for "smarthosting" (when the user relays its mail via a BitCo mail server to a mail server of its own or vica-versa) or similar services at any time to ensure that the servers are properly secured against public relay. All relay checks will be done in strict accordance with BitCo's privacy policy.

BitCo provides a spam and virus filtering system to protect customers from unsolicited mail and viruses. The customer acknowledges that this system might incorrectly identify a valid message



as spam or as a virus and consequently this message might not be delivered to the customer. The customer acknowledges and agrees that BitCo shall without limitation have no responsibility for, or liability in respect of any data lost as a result of this system.

BitCo reserves the right to examine incoming or outgoing mail to the extent necessary to determine if it is classified as spam.

## **Protection of Minors**

BitCo prohibits customers from using BitCo's service to harm or attempt to harm a minor, including, but not limited to, by hosting, possessing, disseminating, distributing or transmitting material that is unlawful, including child pornography.

## **Privacy and Confidentiality**

BitCo respects the privacy and confidentiality of our customers and users of our service. Please review our privacy policy which details how we collect and use personal information gathered in the course of operating this service.

## **User Responsibilities**

Customers are responsible for any misuse of BitCo's services that occurs through the customer's account. It is the customer's responsibility to ensure that unauthorised persons do not gain access to or misuse BitCo's service.

BitCo urges customers not to reply to unsolicited mail or "spam", not to click on any suggested links provided in the unsolicited mail. Doing so remains the sole responsibility of the customer and BitCo cannot be held liable for the Customer being placed on any bulk mailing lists as a result.

Where the customer has authorised a minor to use any of the BitCo's services or access its websites, you accept that as the parent/legal guardian of that minor, you are fully responsible for: the online conduct of such minor; controlling the minor's access to and use of any services or websites; and the consequences of any misuse by the minor, including but not limited to transactions entered into by the minor using such access.

BitCo cannot be held liable for any business dealings you have with any third parties on the Internet, including any vendors, or advertisers found on, or through, the BitCo network. Further, BitCo assumes no responsibility whatsoever for any charges you or any user of your account



incurs when making purchases or other transactions in this manner. Further, the responsibility for ensuring compliance with all applicable customs and exchange control laws in connection with any such transactions shall be the customer's.

## **Uncapped Acceptable and Fair Use Policy**

To ensure the quality and availability of our Internet services BitCo has implemented several systems to ensure fair use on all uncapped Internet products. BitCo at its own discretion makes use of [bandwidth shaping and / or throttling](#) to slow down Internet speeds where a customer's behaviour is determined to be excessive or is affecting the experience of other customers on BitCo's network.

During peak network traffic times BitCo may also block bandwidth intensive protocols such as peer-to-peer or network news transfer to ensure the user experience of other customers on BitCo's network is not effected.

In the event of abusive customer behaviour being detected, BitCo reserves the right to immediately suspend the account of a customer whose usage is affecting BitCo's network.

If found that the same user continuously effects the user experience of other customers on the BitCo network or continues to bypass warnings or systems put in place by BitCo to stop abusive behaviour, then BitCo reserves the right to immediately terminate the account of that customer and the customer agrees to pay any and all applicable fees that may be due on termination (normal cancellation fees will apply if the customer abuses the link). It is the responsibility of the customer to ensure they have the appropriate package for their type of use.

We reserve the right to establish policies, rules and limitations, from time to time, concerning the use of any service. You must comply with any bandwidth or other limitations we may impose, in our reasonable discretion. Failure to comply with these rules may result in your service being restricted, suspended or terminated, in our reasonable discretion.

## **ISPA membership and Code of Conduct**

BitCo confirms that in compliance with section 72 of the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act 25 of 2002, BitCo is a member of the Internet Service Providers' Association (ISPA) and has adopted and implemented the association's official Code of Conduct, which can be viewed at <http://www.ispa.org.za/code>.



## Notice and Take-down Procedures

BitCo confirms that it has a procedure in place for the notice and take-down of illegal material. In compliance with section 77 of the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act (No. 25 of 2002) BitCo's designated agent for this process is the Internet Service Providers' Association. ISPA can be reached at 010 500 1200 or [takedown@ispa.org.za](mailto:takedown@ispa.org.za). The notice and take-down procedure can be viewed at <http://www.ispa.org.za/code>.

Customers are also notified of the content and procedures of the ISPA Code of Conduct which may be used against any Internet service provider who fails to comply with the code of conduct. We urge you to familiarise yourselves with this code.

## Complaints and procedures

It is the customer's responsibility to familiarise himself or herself with the procedure set out below and report any cases of violation of this Acceptable and Fair Use Policy to BitCo's designated complaints handling agent.

Please note that BitCo cannot handle complaints concerning networks or users that do not have service contracts with us or our affiliates, or are outside of our control.

In order for BitCo to thoroughly investigate the complaint and take appropriate action, all complaints must be in writing, via fax or e-mail and contain as much information as possible, including, but not limited to:

- The origin of abuse or offence, including the website, full mail headers, relevant logfile extracts etc;
- Any contact details for the source of the complaint;
- A brief explanation why the incident is considered to be an offence.

BitCo discourages anonymous complaints being made via this service, and urges complainants to supply their name and contact details to us. Such information will not be released, except where required by law enforcement. Anonymous complaints will however be acted upon as long as sufficient detail as outlined above is supplied.

## Action following breach of the Acceptable and Fair Use Policy

Upon receipt of a complaint, or having become aware of an incident, BitCo may take any of the following steps:



- In the case of a network, inform the user's network administrator of the incident and request the network administrator or network owner to deal address the incident in terms of this Acceptable and Fair Use Policy and the ISPA Code of Conduct;
- In severe cases suspend access of the user's entire network until abuse can be prevented by appropriate means;
- In the case of individual users, warn the user; suspend the user's account and/or revoke or cancel the user's network access privileges completely;
- In all cases, charge the offending parties for administrative costs as well as for machine and human time lost due to the incident;
- Assist other networks or website administrators in investigating credible suspicions of any activity listed in this Acceptable and Fair Use Policy;
- Institute civil or criminal proceedings;
- Share information concerning the incident with other Internet access providers, or publish the information, and/or make available the users' details to law enforcement agencies.
- 

## **Reservation and Non Waiver of Rights**

BitCo reserves the right to amend or alter this policy at any time, and without notice to you.

BitCo reserves the right to take action against any individuals, companies or organizations that violate any of the prohibited activities set out herein, or engage in any illegal or unlawful activity while accessing our services, to the fullest extent of the law.

BitCo reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to act against other types of abuse not listed in this document and to investigate or prevent illegal activities being committed over our network.

BitCo reserves the right to monitor user and network traffic for site security purposes and prevent any unauthorised attempts to tamper with our site or cause damage to our property.

BitCo reserves the right to suspend, revoke or cancel BitCo's services to the customer/user if the safety and integrity of BitCo's resources are placed at risk in continuing to provide service to the subscriber/user.

BitCo reserves the right to remove any information or materials in whole or in part, that, in BitCo's sole discretion, is deemed to be offensive, indecent, or otherwise objectionable.

BitCo does not undertake to guarantee the security of any data passing through its networks. Although BitCo will provide a "best effort" service, including regular updates on computer viruses and other threats to security of data, it is the responsibility of the communicating parties to safeguard their data, and BitCo cannot be held liable for any loss or damage arising as result of the failure to do so.





BitCo does not waive its right to enforcement of this Acceptable and Fair Use Policy at any time, or prejudice its right to take subsequent action, should BitCo fail, neglect or elect not to enforce a breach of the Acceptable and Fair Use Policy at any time.