

\$47,300 fine for forging manuals

A 37-YEAR-OLD woman was yesterday fined \$47,300 and given a three-month jail sentence suspended for two years for possessing forged computer manuals.

Truong Kha-sick, co-owner of a computer products shop in the Golden Shopping Arcade in Sham Shui Po, was charged with four counts of infringing copyright of computer manuals and the sale of goods with forged trademarks. Some 946 computer manuals worth \$141,900 were involved.

The court was earlier told that officers of the Customs and Excise Department raided four premises on 22 February 1990 and seized items including counterfeit computer manuals and diskettes.

Subsequent investigations revealed the four premises were all linked and at one stage or another owned or operated by the defendant.

District Court Judge Hartmann said information technology development was vital to Hongkong and forgery damaged Hongkong's reputation.

He said the Court of Appeal felt the damage from offences to Hongkong was better judged in the size of the transaction rather than the profits involved.

The Court of Appeal's guideline was that the fine of such offences should be 40 per cent of the value of goods seized.

Considering the defendant's guilty plea which shortened a trial which would otherwise have taken more than a month, the court granted the defendant a discount in the fine.

Judge Hartmann said an additional jail sentence was necessary to ensure the defendant and others involved in such acts got the message.

The defendant was sentenced to three months' imprisonment suspended for two years for each of the four sentences which would run concurrently.