



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
September 27, 2005

## **U.S. ATTORNEY CHARGES** **STAR WARS MOVIE THIEVES &** **Academy Award Screener**

*Los Angeles* - - The United States Attorney for the Central District of California today handed down charges in several important cases of movie theft. The U.S. Attorney's office charged eight people who were involved in the theft and illegal distribution of *Star Wars Episode III - Revenge of the Sith* before the movie opened worldwide. Another individual who received a copy of an Academy Award "screener" and illegally distributed it was charged with copyright infringement.

**"The charges handed down today by the U.S. Attorney prove that forensic markings on screeners and early copies of movies are doing their job in locating movie pirates,"** said Chairman and CEO of the Motion Picture Association of America, Inc. (MPAA) Dan Glickman. **"The Star Wars Episode III Revenge of the Sith movie pirate network today got a taste of just how serious a crime movie piracy is. There will be no sequel in their charade."**

Albert Valente of Lakewood, CA. who stole a copy of *Star Wars Episode III Revenge of the Sith* from the post-production facility where he worked and illegally distributed it to others, agreed to plead guilty to a felony criminal copyright charge. Valente loaned the copy of *Star Wars Episode III Revenge of the Sith* to Jessie I. Lumada of Long Beach, CA. where it changed hands between six other individuals including Ramon G. Valdez of Long Beach, Michael J. Fousse of Monrovia, CA., Dwight Wayne Sityar of La Crescenta, CA. and Stephani Relko Gima of Los Angeles, Joel de Sukan Dimanno of Los Angeles and finally to Marc D. Hoaglin of Huntington Beach, CA. who uploaded the film onto the Internet May 18, the day before *Star Wars* opened in the movie theaters. Hoaglin is being charged with a felony under the recently enacted Family Entertainment Copyright Act. He could be sentenced with as much as three years in prison. The other seven individuals are being charged with misdemeanors that carry up to one year in federal prison.

In the screener pirate cases, Ronald Redding of Linthicum Heights, MD. plead guilty to charges of illegally distributing *Million Dollar Baby* which was given to him to “screen” for voting on the Academy Awards.

**“As we approach the next Academy Award season it is important to recognize protecting intellectual property is something in all of our interests as an industry,”** said Glickman. **“In a survey of screeners released 16 out of 32 studio titles that had been sent out as Academy Screeners had been pirated and that is 16 too many. If people want to continue to see quality movies, we have to protect them from pirates.”**

The average motion picture costs \$98 million to make and market. Less than 60% of those movies ever recoup their original investment. The average BitTorrent network has up to 2.5 million users a day. The movie industry is the only industry with a positive balance of trade in countries with which it does business. Copyrighted industries are responsible for an estimated \$626 billion of the total gross domestic product.

The Motion Picture Association is engaged in an all out effort to root out Internet movie thieves and make them pay the consequences of illegally downloading and swapping movies on-line. It has hundreds of investigators looking into these kinds of cases worldwide and has already been successful in shutting down several BitTorrent type sites. As part of its anti-piracy effort, the MPAA and its member companies have brought lawsuits against many Internet movie thieves across the United States and plan to continue such action.

**About the MPAA:** *The Motion Picture Association of America, Inc. (MPAA) serves as the voice and advocate of the American motion picture, home video and television industries from its offices in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. These members include: Buena Vista Pictures Distribution; Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc.; Paramount Pictures; Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc.; Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation; Universal Studios from Universal City Studios; and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.*

# # #

**For more information, contact:**

MPAA Los Angeles  
Kori Bernards  
Michelle Greeno  
818-995-6600

MPAA Washington, D.C.  
John Feehery  
Gayle Osterberg  
(202) 293-1966