



NEWS RELEASE

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AUSTRALIANS ASKED TO CONSIDER “WHAT ARE YOU REALLY BURNING?”

Film and television industry launches appeal in new national campaign

Sydney/Hong Kong – Australia’s film and television industry have united to launch the ‘What are you really burning?’ campaign today, which challenges Australians to think about the damage being done to Australia’s film and television businesses by illegal file sharing and purchasing of pirated films and TV shows.

The campaign, which includes three 20-second trailers and posters adapted from the promotional material for the films “Happy Feet”, “Kenny” and “Wolf Creek”, is being rolled out in over 2,000 DVD rental and retail stores and cinemas nationally. The trailers, voiced by actor Barry Otto, show movie posters going up in flames, while the message prompts Australians to consider the negative consequences of piracy on jobs, on our entertainment industry, and on the future investment in Australian films and television shows.

“We’re calling on people to stop and think before they accept a pirated DVD, or starting to download an illegitimate digital copy,” said Adrienne Pecotic, Executive Director of the Australian Federation Against Copyright Theft (AFACT), which is driving the broad-based campaign via the Intellectual Property Awareness Trust.

“Piracy puts at risk the jobs of over 50,000 people working in our film and television industry, from actors and film crews through to your local community cinema and DVD store business,” said Ms Pecotic. “The negative economic effects on the industry are staggering: in 2005, the film and television industry lost over \$230 million in revenue to piracy, and over 47 million illegal DVDs flooded the market, almost matching the 52 million legitimate copies in circulation.”

"This is a major endeavor by the Australian industry and one that has our fullest support" said Mike Ellis, Senior Vice President and Regional Director, Asia-Pacific for the MPA. "I hope through this campaign, Australians will recognize the damage piracy causes to their fellow man."

Australia’s film and television community have banded together to support the campaign, including “Happy Feet” director George Miller, who said: “Piracy basically robs the work of incredibly hardworking and talented people in the film industry... and it is too easy to burn, it only takes a few minutes to burn a film and that work is lost.”

The writer and director of Australian independent film “Kenny”, Clayton Jacobson added: “We’ve seen it up close. Piracy hurts independent guys too, not just movie stars and studios. Our work is being swallowed up by strangers whose film work is limited to putting the “Kenny” disc in one machine and a blank disc in another. Piracy makes it harder for us to keep working in Australia.”

The AFACT IP Awareness Trust was established in 2005 and is funded by Australian film distributors, exhibitors, DVD replicators and rental and retail stores – all of whom are greatly affected by film piracy in Australia. Key sponsors include the Australian Visual Software Distributors Association, the Motion Picture Distributors Association, Independent Cinema Association of Australia, Greater Union, Hoyts, Village Cinemas and Video Ezy. Supporting sponsors include Brazin Group, Regency Media, Technicolor, Sonopress and Summit Technology.

Piracy in Australia

An independent report conducted by L.E.K. Consulting indicates that movie piracy cost the Australian film industry an estimated \$233 million in potential revenue in 2005. The illegal distribution of unauthorised copies of movies rose from 4% in 2000 to around 10% of the legitimate market in 2004. Police across Australia have more than doubled the number of illegal discs seized in 2004 compared to 2003. Discs comprise mostly DVD-R copies as DVD-R technology has increased its share of the pirate optical disc market. In addition Australian Customs seized over 40,000 pirate DVDs imported into Australia in 2004, a 185% increase compared to the 14,000 seized by Customs in 2003.

Police jurisdictions recognise organised crime involvement in film piracy. Organised crime links to movie piracy in Australia were first uncovered following a raid on Malaysia-linked movie pirates in 2002.

Piracy in Asia

A comprehensive study aimed at producing a more accurate picture of the impact that piracy has on the film industry including, for the first time, losses due to internet piracy, recently calculated that the MPA studios lost US\$6.1 billion to worldwide piracy in 2005. About US\$2.4 billion was lost to bootlegging*, US\$1.4 billion to illegal copying* and US\$2.3 billion to Internet piracy. Of the US\$6.1 billion in lost revenue to the studios, approximately \$1.2 billion came from piracy across the Asia-Pacific region, while piracy in the U.S. accounted for \$1.3 billion.

In 2006, the MPA’s operations in the Asia-Pacific region investigated more than 30,000 cases of piracy and assisted law enforcement officials in conducting nearly 12,400 raids. These activities resulted in the seizure of more than 35 million illegal optical discs, 50 factory optical disc production lines and 4,482 optical disc burners, as well as the initiation of more than 11,000 legal actions.

**Bootlegging: Obtaining movies by either purchasing an illegally copied VHS/DVD/VCD or acquiring hard copies of bootleg movies.*

**Illegal copying: Making illegal copies for self or receiving illegal copies from friends of a legitimate VHS/DVD/VCD.*

**Internet piracy: Obtaining movies by either downloading them from the Internet without paying or acquiring hard copies of illegally downloaded movies from friends or family.*

About AFACT: *AFACT works closely with industry, government, police and educational institutions to address copyright theft and protect the interests of the film and television industry as well as the interests of Australian movie fans.*

AFACT acts on behalf of the 50,000 Australians directly impacted by copyright theft including independent cinemas, video rental stores and film and television producers across the country. AFACT has its own anti-piracy hotline: 1800 251 996.

About the MPA: *The Motion Picture Association (MPA) represents the interests of major motion picture companies in the global marketplace. On behalf of its member companies, the MPA conducts investigations around the world, assists with the criminal and civil litigation generated by such cases, and conducts education outreach programs to teach movie fans around the world about the harmful effects of piracy. The MPA directs its worldwide anti-piracy operations from its headquarters based in Los Angeles, California and has regional offices located in Brussels (Europe, Middle East and Africa), São Paulo (Latin America), Montreal (Canada) and Singapore (Asia-Pacific). The MPA's anti-piracy activities have helped to transform entire markets from pirate to legitimate, benefiting video distributors, retailers, and foreign and local filmmakers alike. The MPA member companies include: Buena Vista International, Inc.; Paramount Pictures Corporation; Sony Pictures Releasing International Corporation; Twentieth Century Fox International Corporation; Universal International Films, Inc.; and Warner Bros. Pictures International, a division of Warner Bros. Pictures Inc.*

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