



**NZFACT** NEW ZEALAND FEDERATION AGAINST COPYRIGHT THEFT



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **MPA INVESTIGATION WITH AUTHORITIES LEADS TO ONE OF NEW ZEALAND'S BIGGEST PIRACY HAULS**

### **Nineteen Thousand Illegal DVDs and VCDs Seized from Herbal Medicine Shop That Doubled as Pirate Movie Distributor**

Auckland, Encino – On Tuesday, December 20, the New Zealand Customs Service, New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs and the New Zealand Federation Against Copyright Theft (NZFACT), representing the Motion Picture Association (MPA), raided a Chinese herbal medicine store in Auckland suspected of illegally importing herbal medicines and illegally distributing pirated optical discs containing copyrighted movies.

During the raid, investigators discovered and seized more than 19,000 pirated DVDs and VCDs, nearly all of which were infringing MPA member company titles. The seizure was the largest of pirated optical discs in New Zealand this year and one of the largest ever in the country. In addition to 18,000 pirated DVDs infringing MPA member company titles, around 1,000 of the discs were found to be infringing Asian movie titles.

The shop owners, a 25-year-old husband and wife, were Chinese nationals and had owned the premises for three years. The husband was reportedly in China at the time of the raid and will be barred from returning to New Zealand. The wife agreed to leave New Zealand permanently before the end of the year as part of a deal with authorities to avoid criminal charges.

The raid was part of the MPA's "Operation Big Broom" anti-piracy enforcement operations, scheduled to run through January 2006 in 14 countries and territories across the Asia-Pacific region. By cracking down on the availability of illegally pirated movies in retail shops and markets and from street vendors during the important New Year holiday season, when many new movies are released, the operation is designed to protect sales of cinema tickets and legitimate home video products such as DVDs, VCDs and VHS videotapes. Previous operations have yielded seizures of millions of pirated optical discs, and hundreds of arrests.

“The success of these enforcement operations indicates firstly that the problem of video rental shop piracy is not insignificant, and secondly that concerted industry and government action can and will make an impact on illegal copyright theft,” said Tony Eaton, Director of Operations of NZFACT. “Piracy has a direct impact on jobs and revenues in the local film production and distribution industries, and it costs society in terms of lost tax revenues and lost investment opportunities.”

### ***Piracy in Asia***

The MPA estimates that its member companies lose an excess of US\$896 million in potential revenue annually in the Asia-Pacific region alone. In 2004, the MPA operations in the Asia-Pacific region investigated more than 25,500 cases of piracy and assisted law enforcement officials in conducting nearly 12,000 raids. These activities resulted in the seizure of approximately 49,000,000 illegal optical discs, and the initiation of more than 8,000 legal actions.

***About NZFACT:*** The New Zealand Federation Against Copyright Theft was established in 2005 by the Motion Picture Association to protect the film industry in New Zealand from the adverse impact of copyright theft. NZFACT works closely with its members, government and enforcement authorities to protect the New Zealand film and television industry, retailers and movie fans. NZFACT members include: Village Roadshow Limited; 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. NZFACT works in association with the Motion Picture Association, which represents the interests of the film industry across the world.

***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 Encino, 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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