



NZFACT NEW ZEALAND FEDERATION AGAINST COPYRIGHT THEFT



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AUCKLAND POLICE SEIZE 20 DVD-R BURNERS IN RAID ON SUPPLIER OF PIRATED FILMS

NZFACT Investigation Of Illegal Market Sales Leads To Arrest of Couple

Auckland, Encino – On November 10, officers from the Auckland Police Department and New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs, with support from Motion Picture Association (MPA) representatives the New Zealand Federation Against Copyright Theft (NZFACT), raided the home of a Howick couple that was being used as a pirate optical disc manufacturing and distribution facility.

Officers arrested the couple and seized 20 DVD-R burners, three computers, 400 pirated DVD-Rs and a catalogue of around 1,200 pirated movie titles the pair were offering for sale to their customers.

The list included dozens of titles that had not yet been released in New Zealand by the copyright holders, including MPA member companies. Also seized were discs infringing Sony PlayStation 2 games that had not yet been released in New Zealand, and pornography.

The raid resulted from a month-long NZFACT investigation of illegal market sales that had resulted in the nationally televised “sting” and arrest of a Otahuhu market vendor who under questioning led police to the Howick man and woman, one of whom was due in court only four days later in relation to the seizure a year earlier of pirated DVDs.

The Auckland arrests were New Zealand’s first for copyright offenses since an amendment of The Copyright Act that increased maximum penalties from three months imprisonment and/or a NZ\$1,000 (US\$679) fine to five years imprisonment and/or a fine up to NZ\$150,000 (US\$101,859).

The seized burners were capable of producing as many as 1 million pirated DVD-Rs in one year, yielding revenues of as much as US\$8,000,000, assuming the burners were in operation ten-hours-a-day, seven-days-per-week.

“The discovery and closure of a commercial piracy operation of this size is a big win for law enforcement in the war against illegal market sales in New Zealand,” said Mike Ellis, Senior Vice President and Regional Director, Asia-Pacific for the Motion Picture Association. “In combination with New Zealand’s significantly increased penalties for copyright theft, these arrests and seizures send a very strong message that the crime of piracy generates serious consequences.”

The recent formation of NZFACT marked the motion picture industry’s response to increased movie piracy in New Zealand. NZFACT works closely with New Zealand government agencies to monitor and enforce the country’s copyright laws in relation to motion picture piracy, and is in the process of extending its relations with local film and copyright industry organizations in support of intellectual property rights protection and education initiatives.

Piracy in Asia-Pacific

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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