



Creative industries and search engines partner to reduce piracy

- *New voluntary code of practice on search results*
- *UK initiative is an important step towards reducing the availability of pirated content*
- *BPI, Motion Picture Association and Alliance for Intellectual Property (representing a wide range of rights holders); Google and Bing*
- *Ongoing collaboration and measurement of progress key to efforts*

Monday 20th February, 2017 (London): A first-of-its kind initiative aimed at reducing the availability of infringing content accessed through online search has been agreed in the UK between representatives of rights holders and major search engines.

Following a Government-chaired series of roundtables, a voluntary code of practice ('code') will kick-start collaboration between the parties to demote links to websites that are dedicated to infringing content for consumers in the UK. The code will accelerate the demotion of illegal sites following notices from rights holders, and establishes ongoing technical consultation, increased co-operation and information sharing to develop and improve on the process. It will also enable new practices to be adopted where needed.

The parties want to work together toward ensuring consumers have easy access to legal content and are not being inadvertently led to the infringing websites which proliferate online and risk to expose them to malware. A core aim is to ensure that users who are looking for legitimate content are much less likely to get presented with links to infringing content. There will also be collaboration to improve autocomplete suggestions which can lead users to infringing search results.

The Intellectual Property Office (IPO) has led the discussions, with the assistance of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Ofcom has supported the discussions by examining in detail the way that search results are presented to internet users, and the group has explored possible techniques and metrics that can help UK consumers avoid illegitimate content more easily.

This agreement will run in parallel with existing anti-piracy measures aimed at reducing online infringement. These include court ordered site blocking, work with brands to reducing advertising on illegal sites and the *Get it Right from a Genuine Site* consumer education campaign, which encourages fans to value the creative process and directs them to legal sources of content.

Geoff Taylor, Chief Executive BPI and BRIT Awards, said:

"Successful and dynamic online innovation requires an ecosystem that works for everyone – users, technology companies, and artists and creators. BPI has long campaigned for search engines to do more to ensure fans are directed to legal sources for music or other entertainment. There is much work still to do to achieve this. The Code will not be a silver bullet fix, but it will mean that illegal sites are demoted more quickly from search results and that fans searching for music are more likely to find a fair site.

"This initiative is a world-first. We are grateful for the support from UK Government both for this code and for the "Get It Right" campaign that encourages fans to support the artists they love. We look forward to working with Google, Microsoft and our partners across the creative industries to build a safer, better online environment for creators and fans."



Stan McCoy, President & Managing Director, Motion Picture Association EMEA, added:

“Pirate websites are currently much too easy to find via search, so we appreciate the parties’ willingness to try to improve that situation. We look forward to working on this initiative alongside many other approaches to fighting online piracy, such as the “Get it Right” campaign that aims to help educate consumers about the many ways to enjoy film and television content legally and at the time of their choosing. We are grateful for the Government’s involvement and support on this issue.”

Eddy Leviten, Director General, Alliance for IP, said:

“The Alliance has been present throughout the discussions and has consistently made the case for a collaborative process that works for all rights holders and creators and starts to help the UK’s intellectual property generators to promote and sell their works without unfair competition. Whilst there is still a lot of work ahead I would like to thank Ministers, past and present, and officials at the IPO, DCMS and Ofcom for their help in getting us to this crucial stage.”

ENDS –

For media enquires contact

Eddy Leviten	+44 (0)7768 057 464	eddy@allianceforip.co.uk
Gennaro Castaldo	+44 (0)7801 194 139	gennaro.castaldo@bpi.co.uk
Peter Jones	+44 (0)20 7025 2319	peter.jones@lexcomm.co.uk (for MPA)

Notes to Editors

1. The creative industries [contribute £87 billion](#) each year to the UK economy (about £10m per hour), generate £20 billion in exports, employ nearly 2 million people directly and represent the fastest growing sector of the UK’s economy.
2. [Research from the Intellectual Property Office](#) found that 15 per cent of internet users – 6.7 UK internet users – are still accessing copyright infringing content. The three month period from March to May 2016 saw copies of films, TV programmes and music tracks accessed 24 million, 27 million and 78 million times respectively from illegal sources online.
3. Pirate websites pose direct risks to consumers; [research has shown](#) that as many as 1 in 3 pirate sites have been found to carry harmful malware.
4. [Research](#) shows that 74% of consumers used a search engine as either a discovery or navigational tool in their initial viewing sessions on domains with infringing content.
5. Since 2011, when it began its programme of notifications to search engines to remove links to infringing content in their search results, the BPI has sent over 450 million notices to Microsoft’s Bing (183,333,358) and Google (274,807,342) combined. Such notices are critical for removal of infringing content, and will continue to play a critical role in the parties’ efforts to demote content.
6. Under the Alliance for IP umbrella, the following members have indicated agreement:
 - ACG
 - ACID
 - Association of Authors Agents
 - BASE



- British Brands Group
- BSA
- Educational Recording Agency
- Entertainment Retailers Association
- FDA
- PPA
- Premier League
- Publishers Association
- PLS
- PRS for Music
- UK Cinema Association
- UKIE
- UK Music



About the Alliance

The Alliance for Intellectual Property represents over 20 trade associations from across the creative, branded and design sectors with a collective interest in ensuring that IP rights are valued in the UK and that a legislative regime exists which enables the value and contribution of these rights to be fully realised. Members include representatives of the audio visual, music, games and business software, sports rights, branded manufactured goods, publishing, retailing and design sectors.

www.allianceforip.co.uk

About the BPI – *Promoting British Music*

The BPI is the record labels' association that promotes British music and champions the UK's recorded music sector. Its membership comprises more than 380 independent labels and the UK's three 'major' music companies, which collectively account for around 80 per cent of domestic music consumption and one in six artist albums sold worldwide. The BPI certifies the Platinum, Gold and Silver Awards Programme, co-owns the Official Charts, organises The BRIT Awards – which has raised more than £16 million for music education and wellbeing charities, including the BRIT School – and is also home to the Mercury Prize.

<https://www.bpi.co.uk/default.aspx>

About the Motion Picture Association

The MPA is the international trade association for the major companies that invest in, produce, distribute and market film and TV content in the UK. These companies are Disney, 21st Century Fox, Paramount Pictures, Sony Pictures, Universal and Warner Bros. MPA companies are significant inward investors into the UK and several have a strong permanent presence in the UK – including owning major production companies and facilities.