

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **BIGGEST EVER ANTI-PIRACY CAMPAIGN LAUNCHES FOLLOWING TWO FEDERAL COURT DECISIONS TODAY TO BLOCK INFRINGING WEBSITES**

#### **Campaign aims to educate Australians about dangers of Malware on pirate sites**

Friday 18 August 2017 - Creative Content Australia (CCA), an industry organisation committed to raising awareness about the value of copyright and the impact of content theft on the screen industries, has today launched Australia's biggest ever anti-piracy consumer campaign.

The launch follows today's ruling by the Hon. Justice John Nicholas ordering ISPs to block **42** websites found to be primarily engaged in facilitating access to copyright-infringing content (Roadshow Films Pty Ltd & Others).

Orders were also made today, in a separate case lodged by Foxtel in the Federal Court, to block a further **17** infringing websites.

Since the first site-blocking orders were made in December 2016, the Federal Court has ordered **65** piracy sites to be blocked, and over **340** domains.

The court decision validates the creative industry's contention that pirate sites infringe copyright and negatively impact copyright holders' ability to recoup their investment in film and television content.

CCA's new industry campaign – '*The Price of Piracy*' – alerts consumers to the increased online risks posed by streaming or downloading pirated content from the remaining sites.

Content links on infringing sites have become the number one method of propagating malware on the internet<sup>1</sup>, with one in three sites exposing users to malicious software<sup>2</sup> that can steal personal information like addresses, bank details, credit cards and passwords, and facilitate identity theft.

Ransomware – spreading globally in pandemic proportions – can lock a computer and encrypt files so they become inaccessible until a ransom is paid. Research also shows nearly 40 percent of Android VPNs – often used by pirates to circumvent blocks to access pirate sites – are affected by malware<sup>3</sup>.

The campaign is unprecedented in its scale, coverage and industry support, involving the production, distribution, exhibition, television and online sectors. Two TV spots featuring leading Australian actor Bryan Brown – a 30-second and a 15-second version – will screen in most cinemas, with significant presence on free-to-air and subscription television and on selected websites.

Creative Content Australia's 2016 research reveals that, despite the proliferation of legal content options, 21 percent of Australians aged 18-64 admit to pirating content at least once monthly. The level of piracy amongst 12-17s is at 26 percent while the number of Australians aged 12-13 who stream or download from pirate sites has increased significantly: from 14 percent in 2014 to 23 percent in 2016.

Graham Burke, Chairman of Creative Content Australia, applauds the latest Federal Court judgement, saying, "Site-blocking has been very effectively implemented around the world and proven to reduce the theft of screen content as well as increase the use of legal sites. The thieves who run pirate sites contribute nothing to

---

<sup>1</sup> The Association of Internet Security Professionals – '*Illegal Streaming and Cyber Security Risks: A dangerous status quo*' - 2014

<sup>2</sup> 2015 study by Cybersecurity firm RiskIQ

<sup>3</sup> M. Ikram, N. Vallina-Rodriguez, S. Seneviratne, M. Ali Kaafar, V. Paxson - Data61,CSIRO, UNSW, ICSI, UC Berkeley – '*An Analysis of the Privacy and Security Risks of Android VPN Permission-enabled Apps*' 2016

Australia - they employ no-one and pay no taxes here. Of the enormous profits they earn, not one cent goes back to the original creators of the content.”

An Incopro study of the site blocks already introduced into Australia after the December 2016 and February 2017 Federal Court decisions has shown a 71.7 percent decrease in the overall usage of the blocked sites.

Creative Content Australia’s Executive Director Lori Flekser added: “We are proud to bring this new campaign to Australians. Consumers, often unwittingly, bear significant costs of illegal streaming - not only will they suffer from diminishing investment in the content they love to consume but pirate sites are amongst the most hazardous places on the internet.”

This finding is consistent with usage patterns identified in other countries where usage decreased by around 70 percent initially.

In ‘*The Price of Piracy*’ spots, Bryan Brown draws attention to the high price consumers might pay by compromising their personal data when accessing screen content from online pirate sites and reminds Australians they can watch films and TV shows legally - on the big screen, on high quality DVDs, pay TV or online.

“We are honoured Bryan Brown agreed to work with us on this campaign and hope it will lead to a reduction in piracy rates in Australia”, said Burke. “He is supported by numerous producers, directors, writers, actors and the thousands of industry professionals who believe that piracy undermines their ability to develop sustainable careers.”

\*\*\*\*\*

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

- Preview ‘*The Price of Piracy*’ campaign featuring **Bryan Brown** (30 sec) at [www.thepriceofpiracy.org.au](http://www.thepriceofpiracy.org.au)
- Preview the 2-minute ‘Making Of’ ‘*The Price of Piracy*’ spots, including interview segments with **Curtis Hill (Director)** at <https://vimeo.com/219052476>

For broadcast quality versions, email [comms@creativecontentaustralia.org.au](mailto:comms@creativecontentaustralia.org.au) and we’ll send them.

Creative Content Australia **Chairman, Graham Burke** and **Executive Director, Lori Flekser** are available for interviews. A pre-recorded statement from **Graham Burke** is available at <https://vimeo.com/229992805> (for broadcast files, email [comms@creativecontentaustralia.org.au](mailto:comms@creativecontentaustralia.org.au) and we will send).

Images at: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/30x3xubdqr58p6/AAayuWfYa83HCoQslp7Y6J0Aa?dl=0>

Nineteen statements from creative industry practitioners below (\*indicates available for interview).

**About Creative Content Australia:** [www.creativecontentaustralia.org.au](http://www.creativecontentaustralia.org.au)

**Creative Content Australia** is a not-for-profit industry initiative that promotes the value of creativity by raising awareness, understanding and appreciation of copyright and the impact of piracy on the screen industries, through research, consumer awareness campaigns and educational resources for Australian schools.

**Media Enquiries:** Di Campisi - [comms@creativecontentaustralia.org.au](mailto:comms@creativecontentaustralia.org.au) / 0425 269 129

\*\*\*\*\*

**STATEMENTS FROM INDUSTRY PRACTITIONERS**

**Emile Sherman\*** - Producer *Lion, The King’s Speech*

“*Lion* has been embraced by paying audiences all around the world. But millions of people have streamed or downloaded it from pirate websites without paying. While *Lion* drew on the best creative talent from across borders, it is at heart an Australia story. These independent films are as much at risk from online piracy as studio blockbusters, by jeopardising investment in the already very risky business of film production. And, while

many consumers don't consider the impact of piracy when accessing films online without paying, they are now putting themselves at risk from the malware, ransomware and spyware that infests piracy sites."

**Curtis Hill\*** - Director of *The Price of Piracy* campaign spots featuring Bryan Brown

"The livelihoods of so many hard working people in this industry depend on a future without piracy. It's pretty worrying to think that if piracy continues at this rate, I may not have a future in this industry. This isn't a media-beat-up; it's a real problem. It's affecting the amount of stuff being made and it's affecting people's livelihoods".

**Simon Bush\*** - CEO, Australian Home Entertainment Distributors Association

"This campaign, following the court mandated piracy site blocks, is incredibly important. Mothers and fathers don't understand the risks associated with what seems like harmless film piracy by their kids. Notwithstanding the ethical questions about ripping off content that hasn't been paid for, the campaign highlights the real online dangers we are exposing our children to by often turning a blind eye or worse, encouraging. It must stop."

**Peter Tonagh** – CEO, Foxtel

"Foxtel supports this campaign because we believe that a combination of education, fast and affordable access to content and effective regulation are essential to protect Australia's creative industries. The good news is that this approach appears to be working. In 2016 Australia was the number one country for piracy of *Game of Thrones*. This year following successful site blocking cases and heavy publicity for Foxtel Now, reports suggest that Australia did not make the top ten for piracy of the first episode of season 7. I'm confident most Australians want to do the right thing and this campaign will further encourage them to do so."

**Kingston Anderson\*** – CEO, Australian Directors Guild

"Australian film and TV directors, working locally or globally, are considered amongst the best in the world. Their skills and talents make them the key creative drivers of screen production - critical to the creation of great screen content. Yet, 50 per cent of the ADG's full members earn less than \$25,000 p/annum. In order to continue to contribute to culture, diversity and economic growth in Australia, it is imperative that directors be allowed to make a living from their work. Screen piracy undermines this and threatens the jobs of the 47,000 Australians working in the creative sector. Great content is readily and widely available and the directors of Australia urge the public to seek out legal services for the movies and TV shows they love to watch."

**Marta Dusseldorp** - Actor

"I've been an actor for 25 years and I have loved every minute of making, sharing and developing Australian stories to strengthen and empower our voice both here at home and around the world. This can only happen when audience demand and appreciation equates to a reasonable profit for investors and the creatives of these shows. When a TV show airs, the people who invest and make that story look at how the audience embraces it, to see if it succeeds critically and economically. When these stories are stolen, the official viewer numbers are lower and hence the overall enthusiasm is dampened and the show's survival is threatened. In the past it might have been hard to watch your favourite show. Now it is easy to find, to pay what it is worth, enjoy, and also contribute to the success of our stories. Together we need to build and nurture a vibrant local storytelling industry. Please don't steal our future stories. Your choice makes a difference. "

**Ben Grant** - MD, Goalpost Pictures

Goalpost has been making films and TV shows since the 1990s and has seen digital technology revolutionise content distribution. Our business models have evolved with this change. Our industry wants to remain viable and continue to produce Australian product. Illegal viewing via downloading and streaming threatens our business models and our ability to keep making quality Australian productions. Sadly our film *The Sapphires* was #46 on the Top 100 most pirated films from the 2015 American Film Market Report. Season 1 of our show *Cleverman* was #2 on the piracy charts behind *Game of Thrones* in 2016. Whilst this shows that many people

are accessing our shows, piracy is simply not good news for us as it directly threatens our ability to share our successes with the creatives who made the show and severely limits our ability to fund future work.

**Carmel Travers\*** - Producer

“Behind every film and television show in Australia sit scores, sometimes hundreds, of individuals who’ve invested time, energy and money in creating and telling those stories. Most of those people do what they do out of a passionate determination to tell Australian stories, to make sure our children grow up watching Australians on screen, hearing Australian voices, and breathing life into great Australian creative ideas. It’s a tough industry – always has been. But piracy robs everyone in the industry of the right to a commercial return for their labours. It erodes the capacity of an Australian producer to bring to life iconic characters like *The Magic Pudding*. By illegally downloading content, everyone who does so is banging another nail in the coffin of an already tough industry. If we want a viable Australian screen industry, the pirating of content needs to be called out for what it is – theft.”

**Zoe Angus** - Director, MEAA Equity, the union for Australian performers

“It is not only film and TV producers who are hurt by copyright infringement and piracy. It is stealing from Australian actors and performers whose livelihood is dependent on re-sales and licensing of the productions they appear in. For those reasons, MEAA Equity supports this important new campaign by Creative Content and urge audiences and consumers to think twice before illegally copying or downloading other people’s work.”

**John Jarratt** – Actor/Producer/Director

“We know that people who pirate films and TV often don’t think about the effects of their actions on people like me who make their living from this business, or people who invest in the business so productions can be financed, but maybe they’ll think twice when they realise just how bloody dangerous these pirate sites can be. This malware can infect your computer, steal your passwords and account information, even rip off your identity. The people who run these sites are hard-core and they mean business. Seems a pretty big risk to take, especially when you can access content for the cost of a beer. Or maybe it’s karma.”

**Matthew Deaner\*** - CEO, Screen Producers Association

“For Australian producers, the value of their business is the value of their copyright. Piracy jeopardises business sustainability, placing local jobs at risk. Long-term effects of piracy mean less Australian content gets made. In a tight market, piracy pushes producers to the wall. It’s a simple choice for consumers: support local business or support content thieves. Screen Producers Australia fully supports the “Price of Piracy” campaign.”

**Elizabeth Trotman\*** - CEO, StudioCanal Australian & New Zealand

“StudioCanal is an independent distributor. We spend time working with local and international creative teams to develop feature films. The impact of piracy is felt all the way along the chain – from the writers, producers and directors who develop the screenplay and raise finance, the crews and actors who bring it to life and the distributors, like us, and exhibitors, who deliver it to audiences. Piracy compromises potential revenue and makes it harder to fund projects and take risks. The industry will tend to finance project guaranteed to sell - that impacts the ability to tell Australian stories and make quality films, because they are often the risky ones.”

**Guy Gross\*** - President Australian Guild of Screen Composers

“Australia has a vibrant original film music community with a large number of composer’s making a living from their original works. The cornerstone of which is the concept of copyright, without which their works would simply not enjoy protection from theft. Furthermore, as part of the wider film making community, composers depend on a financially viable film and TV sector and protection of the end product, the very movies themselves, is essential to their on-going employment.”

**Jan Sardi** - President, Australian Writers’ Guild/ Screenwriter of *The Notebook*, *Shine*, *The Secret River*

“*The Price of Piracy* consumer campaign is a timely initiative and a reminder to consumers that illegal downloading and streaming of content they have not paid for is stealing, plain and simple. Stealing content has a direct impact on writers and the other key creatives involved by denying them valuable royalties that they

would otherwise be entitled to from paying audiences. Piracy also has an indirect impact on our ability to tell our unique stories, with production companies and funding bodies less likely to commission and support new Australian works in future.”

**Jason Ballantine** – Editor, *The Great Gatsby*, *Wolf Creek* and *IT*

“I’m a film editor and I sometimes hear the argument that piracy only affects wealthy “Hollywood” elites. In reality, the thousands of cast and crew who work on films are reliant on a healthy film and television production industry. Piracy not only undercuts the revenue of films and TV shows, it also severely impacts the ability to secure financing for future projects. When fewer films are made, there is less work for ordinary people like me. We want to continue to work on films that bring joy to audiences around the world.”

**Lucy Gaffy** – Director, *Doctor Doctor*

“Like many of us, there was a time in my life when I often saw film piracy as a victimless crime. But as I now move up through the industry as an emerging filmmaker, I can see and have experienced the very real consequences of this activity. Whether it is a huge international production or a small local indie, it is SO VERY TRUE that every click is compromising our ability to tell our stories and bring our work to the world, as audiences become accustomed to the work itself having no value. That’s not good for anyone.”

**Marcus Gillezeau\*** - Producer, Firelight Productions

“Not everybody who makes a film is part of a large corporation. I’m an independent filmmaker who spends years developing and creating projects. The assumption that everyone in the film industry is rich is so wide of the mark. Crews are diverse – drivers, florists, the mechanic who runs generator – everyday working-class people. The revenue from my film *Storm Surfers 3D* was heavily impacted by people downloading and not paying. Often they were fans - that was really disappointing, as they know what went in to making that film. It's affecting not only my wife and I who produced it, but also the dedicated team who spent seven years working with us on it and, in some cases, even risked their lives to make the film surfing giant waves.”

**Masa Yamaguchi \*** - Actor and Stuntman

“I’m an actor and a stuntman and have worked on both large international films like *Hacksaw Ridge* and *Wolverine*, as well as local productions like *The Railway Man*. Contrary to the general belief, I’m neither overpaid, nor am I rich. In fact, I have to supplement my freelance acting roles by working as a personal trainer. The residuals I earn from those films are critical to my ability to have a home, feed a family and school my kids. Every single illegal download or stream is lost revenue for me. I wish all those people who profess to love films, but refuse to pay for them, could see the impact that has on my ability to make a reasonable living.”

**Scott Seddon** – President, Independent Cinema Association & cinema owner

“The people who run the pirate sites aren't doing it as a community service. They do it because it’s profitable. They make millions of dollars from the spam, malware, ransomware and advertising for pornographic sites being marketed to your family. At the same time, they put at risk the jobs of thousands of Australians, especially many for whom cinema is their first workplace experience. Most Australians want to see their local cinema continue to provide a place to escape to see a movie, as well as to see the many thousands of jobs in Australian cinemas continue. You can help by accessing movies legitimately – from TV, subscription services and legal websites – or see it first on the big screen at your local cinema.”