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SEIZING 93 BURNERS, MPA AND TAIPEI POLICE PRESSURE OPTICAL DISC PIRATE SYNDICATES

Nearly 2,000 Burners Seized By Police In Past 15 Months

Hong Kong, Encino – On March 18, the Motion Picture Association (MPA) and the Taipei City Police raided a pirate CD-R lab in Ping Chen City in Taoyuan County, seizing 93 optical disc burners and arresting two women and a man on suspicion of infringing Taiwan's Copyright Law. The lab was suspected of supplying significant numbers of pirated discs to a network of street vendors throughout northern Taiwan.

The battery of seized burners, including 63 CD-R burners 30 DVD-R burners, was capable of producing 4,536,000 pirated CD-Rs and 648,000 pirated DVD-Rs in one year, assuming the burners were in operation ten-hours-a-day, seven-days-per-week. Pirated discs seized in the raid infringed the copyright on 156 MPA member company titles.

In Taiwan, the majority of pirated movies are individually burned onto optical discs with CD-R or DVD-R burners. Burner labs can contain dozens of burners, capable of producing millions of pirate CD-Rs or DVD-Rs per year. This year, MPA joint operations with law enforcement agencies throughout Taiwan have netted seizures of more than 224 optical disc burners and resulted in the arrest of 21 individuals involved with unauthorized manufacturing activity.

The continued growth of DVDs as a medium for delivering pirated motion picture content was manifested in a 443% increase in burned DVD-Rs seized in the Asia-Pacific region in 2004 compared to 2003. In 2004, 1,775 optical disc burners were seized in MPA operations in Taiwan, representing 56% of total MPA seizures in the Asia-Pacific region.

In response to the reduced cost of entry into the motion picture piracy business via CD-R and DVD-R burners, and the increased influence of organized criminal gangs with global manufacturing and distribution networks, the MPA sharply increased its investigation activities in Asia-Pacific, and conducted over 25,500 investigations in 2004, a 65% increase over 2003. These investigations resulted

in nearly 12,000 raids and over 8,000 criminal legal actions.

“The Taiwan government has clearly demonstrated its commitment to protecting intellectual property rights,” said Mike Ellis, Senior Vice President and Regional Director, Asia-Pacific for the Motion Picture Association. “The tremendous volume of optical disc burner seizures recorded by Taiwanese law enforcement agencies over the past 15 months sends an unmistakable signal to organized criminal gangs that copyright theft will be vigorously prosecuted.”

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 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), Mexico City (Latin America), Montreal (Canada) and Hong Kong (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.; Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios 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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