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FORTY DVD-R AND CD-R BURNERS SEIZED IN RAIDS ON PIRATE INTERNET OPERATIONS IN TAIWAN

MPA and Law Enforcement Agencies Cooperate to Identify, Interdict Piracy

Hong Kong, Encino – On October 11 and 12, the Foundation for the Protection of Film and Video Works (FVWP), representing the Motion Picture Association (MPA), joined Taiwan’s IPR Police Task Force and Ministry of Justice Investigation Bureau (MJIB) in three raids on pirate optical disc manufacturing and distribution facilities in Kaohsiung City and Taichung County, seizing a total of 40 DVD-R and CD-R burners and arresting three men on suspicion of infringing Taiwan’s Copyright Law.

Also seized during the raids were five computers, two hard disks and around 21,000 pirated optical discs infringing dozens of MPA member company titles. The three facilities were suspected of selling significant numbers of pirated discs via the Internet to customers throughout Taiwan.

The seized burners, comprising 27 CD-R burners and 13 DVD-R burners, were capable of producing as many as 1,944,000 pirated CD-Rs and 280,800 pirated DVD-Rs in one year, yielding revenues of as much as US\$2,637,905, assuming the burners were in operation ten-hours-a-day, seven-days-per-week.

“The ‘burn-on-demand’ business model enabled by optical disc burner technology requires little capital investment and has become preferred by pirates,” said Mike Ellis, Senior Vice President and Regional Director, Asia-Pacific for the Motion Picture Association. “The success of these raids underscores the effectiveness of the cooperation between the MPA and Taiwan’s law enforcement authorities in the battle against copyright theft that so badly damages creative industries and the people who rely on those industries for their livelihoods.”

In Taiwan, it is frequently the case that 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. In 2004, 1,775 optical disc burners were seized in FVWP/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.

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 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.; 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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