THE 'BOGUS FEATURES' LURKING BEHIND PIRATE FILM AND TV SITES

- *97% of the most visited illegal film and TV sites contain malware or credit card scams*
- *3 in 4 people experienced problems with their device after visiting pirate websites*
- *Mum and actress Zoe Lucker warns of the dangers of these 'hidden extras' which can open the door to cyber criminals*

LONDON 30 APRIL 2014: New research released today reveals the unwanted and sometimes risky 'bogus features' that often come with using pirate websites. A study which analysed 30 of the most frequently used illegal film and TV sites in the UK[1] found that 90% contained malware and other 'Potentially Unwanted Programmes' (PUPs) designed to deceive or defraud unwitting viewers.

The rogue sites are also rife with credit card scams, with over two thirds (67%) of the 30 sites containing credit card fraud. In total, just one of the 30 pirate sites monitored over a two week period showed no signs of malware or credit card fraud.

The study, carried out for FindAnyFilm.com by leading intelligence analysts Intelligent Content Protection (Incopro), reveals the extent of malware hidden on pirate sites. Most commonly the malware is disguised behind innocent looking 'Play' buttons which viewers unwittingly click on thinking it will play the film or TV show, but which actually trigger the malware or other programmes to start downloading onto the device.

What are 'bogus features'?

- Malware and PUPs are broad terms used to describe a variety of nasty computer programmes that can be both difficult and costly to remove and can be used to run cyber scams.
- The most popular type of malware, found on 10 of the sites studied, installs pop-up ads on people's devices. These are not just annoying for the user, but are actually part of a scam designed to generate revenue for site owners from click-throughs and can lead to other types of malware being installed.
- A more dangerous type of malware, found on five of the pirate sites, are known as 'rootkits' which fully expose a user's data to the cyber scammer and allow them to access the device remotely.

New research from ICM, commissioned alongside the website study, revealed just how easy it is to fall victim to such scams. Of those people who have unwittingly or intentionally visited a pirate website, more than three quarters (77%) experienced unwanted extras including downloading malware, spyware, other viruses and pop-up ads as a result. More worryingly, almost one in five (17%) lost

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[1] According to Alexa rankings the top 30 sites account for 43% of the estimated traffic to the top 250 unauthorised websites

personal data or had personal information stolen and 14% were exposed to unwanted or explicit material such as pornography or violence.

As the research reveals that families are most at risk of the dangers of using pirate websites, actress and mum, Zoe Lucker, is warning parents not to get hoodwinked by unofficial films and TV shows posing as the real deal.

Working with FindAnyFilm.com to raise awareness of the problem, Zoe Lucker commented: "As a parent I know how much my kids love to watch their favourite films and TV shows online, but I was shocked to find out just how easy it is to put your online safety and security at risk without even knowing. It's why I'm urging parents to learn how to access film and TV content online safely and legally, and check out the tools and help that are available, such as FindAnyFilm.com."

Kieron Sharp, Director General, Federation Against Copyright Theft (FACT) said: "There's a lot of work being done to block and take down these sites but it's important to have your wits about you when watching film and TV online. You could end up getting far more than you bargained for when clicking on a link to watch a film or TV programme if it's from an unauthorised site. Not only are you putting your personal security at risk, by using pirate websites you could be helping fund the organised criminal gangs who run these sites as a front for other cyber scams."

The five biggest offenders most commonly encountered after accessing film and TV from unofficial sources:
1) **Annoying pop-up ads:** Nearly 2 in 5 (39%) experienced pop-up adverts which are difficult to get rid of and can be used to generate revenue from click-throughs as part of an online scam
2) **Viruses:** 1 in 3 (32%) downloaded a virus on to their device, often leading to their devices being unusable or having to be fixed
3) **Malware:** More than a quarter (28%) accidentally downloaded malware on their device
4) **Stolen data:** Almost 1 in 5 (17%) lost personal data or had personal information stolen
5) **Illicit material:** 14% were exposed to material such as pornography or violent images

Liz Bales, Director General, The Industry Trust for IP Awareness, added: "We know parents are very concerned about online security. The majority of people do the right thing and access film and TV online legally from the wealth of official services, but our research shows it's easy to be misled by sites posing as the real deal. It's why the industry is committed to guiding parents and young people to sites where they can watch their favourite content safely and legally."

DCI Andy Fyfe, Head of the Police Intellectual Property Crime Unit (PIPCU) at City of London Police, said: "It is very important that the public recognises the dangers of visiting illegal websites and so we welcome the Industry Trust's current campaign to raise awareness on this issue. PIPCU is committed to combating intellectual property crime and we are working closely with the creative and advertising industries to disrupt illegal websites through the work of our Operation Creative and Operation

Ashiko. People need to know that by visiting copyright infringing websites they are running the risk of having their personal details stolen and used fraudulently, as well as exposing their computer to malicious malware and viruses. Consumers can easily avoid these risks by making sure they only use legitimate websites to access content such as films, music and books and by regularly updating their antivirus software."

Top tips to avoid hidden malware:

- **Start by visiting FindAnyFilm.com** – a one-stop shop where you can find all films, all above board, all in one place. The website shows films in all formats where they're available legally.

- **Beware of multiple 'Play' or 'Download' buttons on a site** – they are designed to trick you into potentially downloading unwanted software onto your computer. If you're uncertain, close the page and head to FindAnyFilm.com or TheContentMap.com to find a verified legal site.

- **Don't be fooled by well-known brands and logos** – pirate sites often use tactics to look like official sites such as incorporating well known payment services, carrying adverts from global big name brands and promoting themselves through social media channels, so look for a website name you know and trust.

- **Update your anti-virus** – keep your anti-virus and anti-spyware/adware software up-to-date but be aware that this will not protect you from every threat.

- **Don't hand over credit card details unless you know the site** – Sites may provide a secure (https) connection when asking for your credit card details but can still be a scam site. Only hand them over if you're certain the site is trustworthy.

For more information about watching films safely and legally, visit **www.FindAnyFilm.com**.

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Notes to editors

Methodology

- Incopro used The Alexa Rank to identify the top 30 most popular pirate websites in the UK in terms of traffic – equating to a 40% market share – and accessed five film and five TV shows from each analyse the prevalence of unwanted extras that consumers are subjected to.
- ICM surveyed 4,210 people aged 16+ between 4th-14th April 2014

About FindAnyFilm.com
FindAnyFilm.com is one of the UK's leading websites for film fans looking to watch, buy, download, stream or rent legitimate film. Operated by The Industry Trust for IP Awareness, the website offers 42,000 films across all formats, from cinema to DVD and Blu-ray, as well as download and streaming services. Visitors can search by title and talent, and can sort their results by format and price.

www.findanyfilm.com

About The Industry Trust for IP Awareness
The Industry Trust is the UK film, TV and video industry's consumer education body, promoting the value of copyright and creativity. Its consumer awareness programmes address the on-going challenge of film and TV copyright infringement by inspiring audiences to value great movie moments and choose to watch film, TV and video via legitimate sources. Industry funded, their work aims to engage three distinct audience groups: young people, 16-34-year-old men; and parents, providing extensive insight around audience attitudes and understanding of intellectual property. For more information on the Industry Trust's work, [visit www.industrytrust.co.uk](www.industrytrust.co.uk)

About FACT
The Federation Against Copyright Theft is the UK's leading trade organisation established to protect and represent the interests of its members' Intellectual Property (IP). Established in 1983, FACT works closely with statutory law enforcement agencies to combat all forms of piracy and members include global and UK film distributors, TV broadcasters and sport rights owners. The creative industries support 1.68 million jobs in the UK and account for over 5% of the UK economy. FACT's work is vital to ensuring that this important engine of the economy continues to flourish.
http://www.fact-uk.org.uk/