

26 October 2005

By: Tudor Raiciu, Technology and Science Editor



[BitTorrent Sends Its First Victim to Jail](#)

80% of the Chinese users back-off... but for how long?

The BitTorrent file-sharing system made its first victim, one Hong Kong user being convicted on the account of illegally distributing three films and thus infringing copyright. This is the first time a BitTorrent user is actually convicted. Chan Nai-Ming was found guilty of distributing "Miss Congeniality", "Daredevil" and "Red Planet" and he was arrested in January 2005. Illegally distributing copies of copyrighted material carries a maximum penalty of four years' prison and a fine of \$6,400 for every illegal copy. Even though Nai-Ming pleaded not guilty, he was convicted after a four-day trial and the sentence is expected on November 7th. Apparently, what happened to this unfortunate user has made a big impact on other Internet users. The arrest was made by the Hong Kong Customs Service, which said that it is happy with the result of the trial and that since the arrest took place, the use of the BitTorrent software had dropped 80 per cent. However, having users take a short break from illegally downloading multimedia content or pirated software will have little effect on the widespread Chinese piracy. Business Software Alliance estimated recently that 90 per cent of Chinese computers use pirated software.