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TorrentSpy Loses Legal Dispute against MPAA

The Hollywood studios find the judge's ruling a "significant victory"

Judge Florence-Marie Cooper, of the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, terminated the TorrentSpy case, ruling that the BitTorrent search engine infringed the MPAA copyright. In addition, TorrentSpy was criticized for destroying evidence which could be used in court. According to MPAA, the judge said that the evidence was "not deleted or modified negligently, but intentionally in direct response to the institution of this lawsuit". Among the removed details, we can mention forum posts related to pirated content, IP logs, and other type of content which could lead to pirated material, MPAA wrote in a public statement published on its webpage.

"The court's decision is a significant victory for MPAA member companies and sends a potent message to future defendants that this egregious behavior will not be tolerated by the judicial system", said John Malcolm, Executive Vice President and Director of Worldwide Anti-Piracy Operations for the MPAA.

"The court clearly recognized that defendants engaged in evidence destruction because they knew that such evidence would prove damaging to them. The sole purpose of TorrentSpy and sites like it is to facilitate and promote the unlawful dissemination of copyrighted content. TorrentSpy is a one-stop shop for copyright infringement and we will continue to aggressively enforce our members' rights to stop such infringement."

The Hollywood studios find the judge's ruling a "significant victory" for them, against one of the "most notorious pirate websites". MPAA first filed the case in February 2006, when it accused TorrentSpy for providing access to pirated content and infringing its copyright. As the case evolved, the plaintiffs even demanded private information about the users accessing the service, but the defendants quickly rejected their request. As TorrentSpy's servers are located in Netherlands, the website's officials always pointed to the country's laws, which do not require them to provide user logs and other sensitive details.