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Hollywood Cracking Down On Movie Piracy

Using Bay Area Technology

By Richard Hart

Apr. 4 - Entertainment companies are moving from copy protection to copy detection. The latest indication came this week, as record label EMI removed encryption from some of its online music. What's driving the change? Copyright cops are using better technology.

The men and women at BAY TSP are the Web version of undercover cops, posing as pirates, seeking copyrighted material. Their company issues one million take-down notices a month. And that's a sign that DRM (Digital Rights Management) isn't working well. Like the watermark on currency that hasn't stopped counterfeiting, digital protection is giving way to better detection.

Anthony Falzone, Center for Internet and Society: "I think we're moving away from an approach where rights holders lock up the content before the fact via encryption, more towards an approach where they're going to detect infringement after the fact."

Bay TSP does that using a technique to find not just the last perp to get a pirated movie, but the first one, who originated it. They use a cloaking technique to hide their own physical location. And now, DNA is appearing as the next step. Called VideoDNA by the wizards who developed it at startup company Vobile -- it's more than just a fingerprint of a movie.

A studio or network provides Vobile with a show. Vobile extracts a unique signature, much like a human DNA sequence. An Internet service provider receives a copy of the DNA, and uses it to filter content. The next time a pirate uploads the same movie...

Yangbin Wang, Vobile Inc.: "The VideoDNA will be immediately identified, whether that's a copyrighted material or not. And, then, based on that, the studio and the rights holder can decide whether they want to take down the piracy video, or replace it with a legal version and with ad-sponsored or the user can choose to pay."

Think of VideoDNA as the CSI of the Web, and Bay TSP as the undercover cops.

Mark Ishikawa, CEO Bay TSP: "We have lots of servers throughout the world, so you can never tell where we're coming from. A lot of pirates don't realize there are companies like ours out there until they receive a notice or a lawsuit."

LINKS:

Center for Internet and Society, Fair Use Project (FUP)
Fair Use Project
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Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA)
Serves as the voice of the American motion picture, home video and television industries.
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[MPAA's list of legal downloads](#)

