

Disney to encrypt Oscar screener DVDs

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Walt Disney Company is reportedly set to announce a deal to encrypt the DVDs it sends to the people who nominate people and pictures for Academy Awards.

The Los Angeles Times said Disney planned to announce Monday a technical partnership with a subsidiary of Dolby Labs aimed at preventing the discs from falling into the hands of movie pirates.

DVDs of films are routinely sent to Oscar voters for their consideration when compiling their nominees. The discs often go out well before they are available to the public, but the Times said Monday that the films routinely wind up on the Internet about the same time.

Dolby's Virginia subsidiary, Cinea Inc., uses a special player to run the encrypted DVDs, which are stamped with a unique watermark that identifies the individual user.

The Times said Cinea technology was tested last year with Academy voters, many of whom grumbled about having to set up the new 11-pound machines and, in some cases, received them late.

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