

Vudu Launching Peer-to-Peer Set-top Box for Movies

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A startup called Vudu has announced plans to develop a set-top box for downloading movies directly from major Hollywood studios.

If the system sounds like a TiVo for movies, it's pretty close. The company hired away its vice president of engineering and chief operating officer from TiVO Inc., which invented the personal video recorder, according to a report in The New York Times.

Vudu representatives declined interview requests from PC Magazine.

Can Vudu really ask you to pay for your neighbor's usage?

According to the company, Vudu's plans include direct access to 5,000 titles at the company's launch, said to be sometime this year. Vudu has signed license deals with The Walt Disney Studios, Lionsgate, New Line Cinema, Paramount Pictures, Twentieth Century Fox, Universal Studios, and Warner Bros. Entertainment, plus fifteen top tier independent and international film distributors.

According to the Times, the company will use peer-to-peer technology to transport movies in MPEG-4 format, upscaling them to a higher-quality format inside the box. The price of the box and the movies, as well as the launch date and exact feature set of the service has not been announced.

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