

# Fox CEO wants US to join France on Internet piracy

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Writer

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(AP) -- The chief executive of Fox Filmed Entertainment said Monday the U.S. should join France in cutting off the Internet connection of users who repeatedly download copyright-protected films.

CEO Jim Gianopulos said [Internet piracy](#) is the single biggest threat to the film industry worldwide, and independent films are the hardest hit.

"The bad news is that the Internet is big, and it's anonymous," Gianopulos told a news conference in Athens.

But he said Internet service providers can track down subscribers whose IP address - the unique number assigned to every computer that connects to the Internet - has been spotted downloading films illegally and issue warnings.

Gianopulos said punishing repeat offenders would help create "a level playing field" for filmmakers.

"If we can do that, it would be a big victory against piracy," he said, cautioning that taking away the small percentage of profit many films make threatens the industry.

Gianopulos said that it is equally important to inform young people about the problem of piracy.

"It is important to show them that there is a connection between what they're doing and theft, and what they're doing and people's jobs," Gianopoulos said. He was in Greece for a lecture, and talks with Greek film industry professionals.

France has already created what it says is the first government agency to track and punish online pirates.

The [European Parliament](#) initially opposed efforts by European Union governments to cut off a user's Internet connection without a court order - but the two sides reached a compromise this month and EU [lawmakers](#) and governments agreed on new rights for Internet.

Film and record labels have heavily lobbied the 27-nation bloc, demanding better enforcement of copyright rules to protect profits that are shrinking in the face of online file-sharing, in which people swap music files without paying.

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