

Downloading case to have 23,000 defendants

May 11 2011, by Katie Gatto

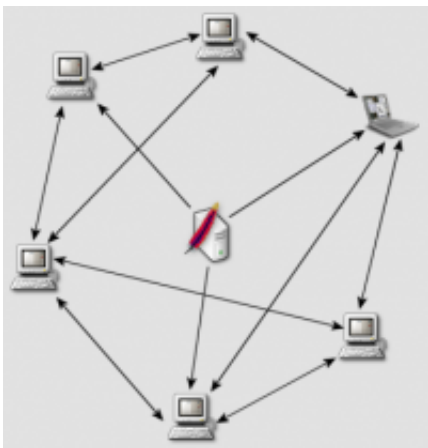


Image credit: Chaaps

(PhysOrg.com) -- How many of you remember the film *The Expendables*? It was an action flick, featuring some of the biggest names in blowing things up, and soon it will be known as the film that has created the largest illegal-BitTorrent-downloading case in U.S. history.

A [federal judge](#) recently gave the U.S. Copyright Group the right to subpoena the records of Internet service providers in order to see who downloaded the movie illegally. So, while 23,000 is the current expected number of defendants that number may increase by leaps and bounds as more downloads are found.

When an ISP gets a subpoena they will generally tell the account holder that their subscriber information is being shared with the Copyright

Group, pursuant to their investigations. So, if you are part of this suit, you will likely find out sooner rather than later. This is not the Copyright Groups only attempt to take legal action against bit torrents. One the whole, this group is taking legal action against roughly 140,000 BitTorrent downloaders, primarily for downloading B-movies and pornography.

Eventually, these kinds of suits will become a bigger [revenue stream](#) than the [films](#) sales themselves. Under the current U.S. [copyright law](#) damages of up to \$150,000 per [infringement](#) can be obtained. For a film that only grossed \$103,068,524 domestic, if this level of damages were paid, the dollar figure would well out pace film sales.

With subpoenas are expected to go out this week, one has to wonder if this is not a good time to not only forget about the bit torrenting, but also about feature films altogether. After all, if these users had wanted the film that badly, they could have bought it for roughly \$20 or rented it for \$6, and none of them chose to do so. That may speak to the quality of the film, as much as the ethics of the fans.

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