

Broadcasters win EU court block on Internet streaming

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A television screengrab shows the ITV logo, in London, on August 6, 2008. Television broadcasters won a significant battle Thursday when the European Court of Justice said they can block Internet platforms from streaming their output on the web.

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Judges at the Luxembourg-based court were ruling on a case that pitted Britain's commercial ITV network against Internet distributor TV

Catchup Ltd (TVC), which offers live streaming of programming free to online viewers.

TVC said its [subscribers](#) in Britain could only access ITV content if they had paid their license fee, a public broadcasting tax that funds the [BBC](#) but is also required for reception of the main commercial stations.

But the court said that transmission of broadcast material "must, in principle, be individually authorised by the author," or rights owner.

Major live-broadcast events such as football matches or high-impact reality TV shows are usually available online via a host of streaming outlets. It remains to be seen to what extent this ruling will prevent the continuation of that practice.

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