

Comcast rumored to be considering adding to Copyright Alert System

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(Phys.org) —Variety is [claiming](#) it has sources that confirm that Comcast is considering adding another feature to the Copyright Alert System (CAS) implemented last February by Comcast and other Internet Service Providers (ISPs). The new feature is said to be a pop-up that alerts users to the fact that they are attempting to download copyrighted material illegally and provides links to legitimate sites as an alternative.

The CAS is an initiative spearheaded by the Center for Copyright Information (CCI)—a group that came together to help fight pirating of [video content](#) such as movies and [television shows](#). After members agreed to terms, the CAS was implemented last February and is continuing to run. Also known as the "six strike" rule, the system tracks user download history and matches it with IP address provided by

content makers. When a user is suspected of downloading a file illegally, they are sent an email or other type of message. After six such messages (strikes) the ISP begins to limit bandwidth for the user as punishment. Thus far the system has been met with a lot of criticism, primarily from users who report being mistakenly targeted. In this new initiative, Comcast, the largest [cable company](#) in the U.S. appears to be researching ideas to help alleviate the problem of pirating by providing its customers with a legal alternative.

Thus far it appears that Comcast is working outside the boundaries set by the CCI, though the source at Variety suggests that the company is working with other [cable providers](#). The idea is simple: If a user goes to a site like BitTorrent and attempts to download a file that is known to have [copyright protection](#), a pop-up will be displayed suggesting alternative sites for downloading the file legally. Though simple in concept, implementing such a strategy might prove difficult. Which sites would be displayed in the pop-up, for example, or who would create and maintain the database of IP addresses, file names and the software needed for such a real time system? Currently, messages sent to users can take days or even weeks to be generated and sent. A real-time system that displays a pop-up screen would be a major upgrade.

To date, Comcast has neither confirmed nor denied that it is looking into implementing such a system, or any other addendum to the CAS.

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