

Press release: Search engines and creative industries sign anti-piracy agreement

The UK Intellectual Property Office (IPO) has helped broker a landmark agreement which will see search engines and the creative industries work together to stop consumers being led to copyright infringing websites.

Representatives from the creative industries, leading UK search engines, and the IPO developed a Voluntary Code of Practice dedicated to the removal of links to infringing content from the first page of search results.

The Code agreed on 9 February 2017 will come into force immediately, and sets targets for reducing the visibility of infringing content in search results by 1 June 2017.

Minister of State Jo Johnson MP will oversee the implementation of this Code of Practice, and the IPO will work with all parties to evaluate progress.

Jo Johnson, Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, said:

Search engines play a vital role in helping consumers discover content online. Their relationship with our world leading creative industries needs to be collaborative. Consumers are increasingly heading online for music, films, e-books, and a wide variety of other content. It is essential that they are presented with links to legitimate websites and services, not provided with links to pirate sites.

I am very pleased that the search engines and representatives of the creative industries have agreed this Code. I look forward to this valuable collaboration benefiting both the UK's digital and creative sectors.

Minister of State for Digital and Culture, Matt Hancock, added:

We are one of the world's leading digital nations, and we have a responsibility to make sure that consumers have easy access to legal content online. Pirate sites deprive artists and rights holders of hard-earned income and I'm delighted to see industry led solutions like this landmark agreement which will be instrumental in driving change.

As we build a more global Britain we want the UK to be the most innovative country to do business, and initiatives like this will

ensure our creative and digital economies continue to thrive.

Notes to editors

1. The UK Intellectual Property Office is responsible for Intellectual Property (IP) rights in the United Kingdom, including patents, designs, trade marks and copyright

2. Signatories of the Voluntary Code of Practice are:

- Google
- Bing
- BPI
- Motion Picture Association

Under the Alliance for IP umbrella, the following members have indicated agreement:

- ACG
- Association of Authors Agents
- BASE
- British Brands Group,
- BSA
- FDA
- PPA
- Premier League
- Publishers Association
- PLS
- UKIE
- Entertainment Retailers Association
- Educational Recording Agency