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INDUSTRY SHOWS UNITED FRONT AGAINST FILM THEFT

Representatives from the film and television industry spoke of their “unprecedented co-ordination” in tackling copyright theft at a seminar hosted by the Anti Film Theft Task Force last week.

The “Stealing the Show” seminar, which took place in London on 23rd April, noted the progress made to-date by the industry in stemming the tide of film theft. It attributed this to a united approach across industry sectors, from enforcement to government lobbying to consumer communications.

However, the panel emphasised the challenges that remain, including lobbying for government action to make camcording in cinemas a criminal offence, which was seen across the board as an urgent measure. They also recognised the substantial work that still needs to be done to change attitudes to copyright theft and encourage consumers to choose legal content.

Liz Bales, Director-General of the Industry Trust for IP Awareness and one of the seminar’s panelists, said: “The seminar signals of our growing co-ordination as an industry. We have made great strides in our approach to tackling copyright theft, but as this conference has shown, much still needs to be done. I am confident though that through our combined efforts the film and television industries can make further progress.”

John Woodward, CEO of the UK Film Council, said: "Every member of the industry has a crucial role to play in continuing the fight against copyright theft. Whether it be through striving to make the case for a camcording law to government by harnessing our full lobbying capability, or co-ordinating to make the case for legal download sites to the consumer. The important thing is to maintain our unity of approach."

The seminar was chaired by Simon Hewlett, MD of Universal Pictures Theatrical, and Rupert Gavin, CEO of Odeon UCI delivered the keynote address. Panel members included:

- Liz Bales, Director-General of the Industry Trust,
- Kieron Sharp, Director-General of FACT;
- Lavinia Carey, Director-General of the BVA;
- Thomas Dillon, VP and Deputy General Counsel of the MPA EMEA
- John Woodward, CEO of the UK Film Council