

From: Film Distributors' Association – August 2009

**UK FILM DISTRIBUTORS LAUNCH ANTI-PIRACY CAMPAIGN
ASKING CINEMA AUDIENCES TO BE VIGILANT AGAINST CAMCORDING**

On behalf of theatrical film distributors, **Film Distributors' Association** (FDA) this month launches a new series of messages in UK cinemas, thanking audiences for coming and appealing for their help in combating film theft.

Three 20-second spots have been produced for FDA. Each spot will play for three months in rotation immediately before the BBFC certificate that precedes the feature film, as an integral element of the release print.

The messages are presented by young UK actors – Martin Freeman, Jaime Winstone and Mathew Horne – who appear on screen and speak directly to the audience. The 'thank you' for supporting film and cinema in the UK is followed by an appeal to help prevent camcording and piracy. The spots end with the familiar logo of **Crimestoppers**, the UK-wide independent charity that allows people to pass on information about crime anonymously.

The first in the series, featuring Martin Freeman, will start to appear exclusively on UK cinema screens from Friday 7 August. The specific message is as follows: *"Thousands of people work in the UK film industry. And we'd like to thank all of you who pay to enjoy the latest releases. But a small minority damages cinema by camcording films and posting them online or making copies. With your help we can restrict piracy and enjoy the real thing. Thank you."*

Martin Freeman said: "I think people are becoming more and more aware that film theft isn't a victimless crime. It robs people working in the industry of the investment needed to make new films that we can all enjoy. Happily the UK public loves the cinema experience, and I'm delighted to have this chance to celebrate that and to thank them for their support."

Jaime Winstone said: "There are plenty of great films to enjoy, which is only possible because of the large majority who go and buy their tickets, so I'm proud to join the campaign to say thanks. When you take the time to look a bit more closely at the piracy trade, you can see the serious damage that film theft wreaks on various different communities – the people who make the original content, the local outlets that offer it to the public, the streets and websites where stolen copies are traded."

FDA President, **Lord Puttnam CBE**, said: "These engaging messages are part of a wider initiative which aims to restrict the damaging impact of digital film theft and to celebrate the vibrancy of film and cinema – two sides of the same coin. Many millions of people enjoy regular visits to the cinema but the industry, which employs around 38,000 people in the UK, doesn't take the hearts and minds of the audience for granted. My sincere thanks go to the talented creative team who brought this new campaign to life." Produced for FDA by Creative Partnership, the spots were directed by Theo Delaney.

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