

Court Castrates Mininova, The Pirate Bay Alternative

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BitTorrent file sharing suffered another setback on a global scale Wednesday when a Dutch court ordered Pirate Bay rival, Mininova, to remove all its copyrighted works or face millions of dollars in fines.



The decision by the Utrecht District Court comes a day ahead of the planned sale of The Pirate Bay to a Swedish software concern that hopes to transform the world's most notorious BitTorrent tracker into a pay-to-play site for content.

It was the second legal setback for the illicit file sharing scene since April, when the founders of The Pirate Bay were found guilty of facilitating copyright infringement and ordered to spend a year each in prison pending appeal. The ruling against Mininova and its millions of users is likely to bolster content owners' resolve to use the courts to protect their interests.

Mininova was seen by many as an alternative to The Pirate Bay. But recently, under legal threats Mininova began removing content upon receiving takedown notices.

The lawsuit against Mininova by Stichting Brein, a Dutch copyright group, also underscores that Europe, once viewed as a copyright scofflaw haven, is no longer tolerating rampant copyright infringement on such a massive scale.

The case is also important because, with last year's death of TorrentSpy, there are no U.S. torrent trackers even though the U.S. courts have never ruled squarely on the merits whether hosting a BitTorrent tracker or index is unlawful.

Testing those boundaries is isoHunt, a Canadian index being sued by the Motion Picture Association of America in a Los Angeles federal court. That case has been pending nearly three years. IsoHunt, another popular alternative to the The Pirate Bay, removes several hundred listings from its BitTorrent index each week upon requests from copyright owners.

Mininova co-founder Erik Dubbelboer said in an e-mailed statement to Threat Level that the site's operators were surprised by the decision, given that Mininova removes content upon request.

"We are obviously not satisfied with this ruling. The result of this ruling for Mininova is that we have to re-evaluate our business operations. At this time, we cannot determine what this will actually entail or imply. We will have to examine the verdict thoroughly first. We are considering to appeal this judgment."

See Also:

- [Pirate Bay 2.0: Pay Pirates to Become Consumers](#)
- [Pirate Bay Heads to Davy Jones' Locker](#)
- [Jury in RIAA Trial Slaps \\$2 Million Fine on Jammie Thomas](#)
- [IsoHunt Founder at Center of U.S. Torrent-Tracking Legal Battle ...](#)
- [TorrentSpy Won't Pay \\$111 Million Court Order, Lawyer Says ...](#)