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# BitTorrent Pirates Go Nuts After TV Release Groups Dump Xvid

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Some Internet piracy groups decided to implement some new
regulations and standards last week. Instead of releasing TV shows
in the Xvid/avi format, groups responsible for putting major TV shows
online switched to MP4/x264. Outraged by the lack of democracy,
some BitTorrent users are directing their anger at bewildered torrent
sites and even threatening to boycott releases. For those who
understand, the whole thing is pretty amusing.

Every now and again, the world's most famous piracy release groups get

together and have a big old meeting to decide how they'll carry out their future activities. At the top of the agenda is an item of utmost importance – how to change things around to ensure the highest levels of annoyance and inconvenience for BitTorrent downloaders.

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Ok, so the last sentence isn't true, but nevertheless that appears to be the current assessment of events according to some BitTorrent users. Worryingly, the interpretation from others is even more wide of the mark.



The problem stems back to a new document which details a set of standards TV show release groups such as LOL and MOMENTUM will have to live up to in order to comply with so-called 'Scene rules'. Not complying with the format means that a release group's work risks being 'nuked' — a term which means something has been rated second-class by their pirating peers.

The  $\underline{\text{document}}$  – 'The SD x264 TV Releasing Standards 2012' – is extremely detailed and covers all sorts of technical issues, but the main controversy stems from the adoption of the x264 codec.

"x264 has become the most advanced video codec over the past few years. Compared to Xvid, it is able to provide higher quality and compression at greater SD resolutions," the rule document begins.

"This standard aims to bring quality control back to SD releases. There are many standalone players/streamers such as TviX, Popcorn Hour, WDTV HD Media Player, Boxee, Xtreamer, PS3, XBOX 360, iPad, & HDTVs that can playback H264 and AAC encapsulated in MP4," the doc adds.

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The SD x264 TV Releasing Standards 2012 (2012-02-22)

TVx2642012 rules created by the following groups:

ASAP BAJSKORV C4TV D2V D1VERGE FTP KYR

LEAD LOL MOMENTUM SYS ILA YesTV

LT222 | Thanks to the x264 developers for their assistance in /\*\*T-LT222 | determining assistance in determining the best /\*\*T-LT222 | mix of encode settings.

From February 22nd and earlier in some cases, release groups including ASAP, BAJSKORV, C4TV, D2V, DiVERGE, FTP, KYR, LMAO, LOL, MOMENTUM, SYS, TLA and YesTV began releasing TV shows in the new format. Out went Xvid and avi, in came x264 and MP4.

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However, while the release groups want to move with the times, there are many people consuming their content who either don't or Ran't do the main people seem Follow us online: disappointed because their standalone Xvid Appropriately DVD players worth to the Dewide log sesin Downie

KickassTorrents

Some of and Peragriphs are polite enough, but show a misunderstanding of how the system works.

"LOL, why are all your new uploads MP4 format? How do we get hold of you? We need the AVI format back, really frustrating as most DVD players don't play MP4 format which means we are back to converting format to AVI - how 3rd world LOL," begins one user on popular torrent site EZTV.

"Hi there, I agree too please can you revert back to AVI as most DVD players cannot recognize MP4 format and this means I need to do conversion to AVI all the time for my grand mother and its quite painful," says another.

At worst, some of the comments show an embarrassing sense of entitlement and an attitude that those downloading for free are actually "customers" of these release groups and as such deserve to be treated better.

"F@#k LOL and their mp4's," is just one example of the aggression directed towards them.

But there are another set of users who don't understand where the releases come from at all and are instead directing their anger at the torrent sites - the equivalent of blaming Google for not listing the pictures people had hoped for in their image search.

"MP4 SUCKS AND IS A BULL SHIT FORMAT, AVI WILL ALWAYS BE KING, MORE TROUBLE THAN IS WORTH. TIME TO GET MY DOWNLOADS FROM A BETTER SITE THAT OFFERS AVI AND I KNOW A MAJORITY OF THE DOWN LOADERS WILL DO THE SAME," shouts an EZTV user.

"SO I THINK EZTV HAS A LIMITED LIFE SPAN LEFT IF THEY DO NOT TELL DOWN LOADERS TO GO BACK TO AVI IT IS PROBABLY ALL OVER FOR THIS SITE."

First off, these release groups aren't deliberately releasing TV shows to please the masses. They do it for their own entertainment and it's only when they leak out do the wider world get access to them. They are certainly not being put online to satisfy the needs of ALL CAPS MAN. Second, the torrent sites index other people's content, they tend not to be the originators of it.

Sure, some of the more friendly but bewildered comments of upset downloaders are pretty amusing to read, but the more aggressive ones highlight a more worrying trend.

Somewhere along the line a consumer appeared who not only wants everything super quickly and for free, but also believes that the same should be offered with Class A service. Should these things not be delivered, he feels it is his right to take his "business" elsewhere. Could this become the new consumer standard for service on the Internet?

At the moment this toughest breed of consumer appears to be in the minority but thanks to the law of supply and demand, even he will find his needs served. Already people are 'pirating' the MP4 releases and re-uploading them in the Xvid format to satisfy his needs.

In the meantime, no doubt LOL and LMAO will be doing what their acronyms suggest.

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"The Pirate Bay has been one of the most important movements in Sweden for freedom of speech, working against corruption and censorship.

Peter Sunde

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