

Media Release

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## **CHOICE claims shows digital ignorance**

**SYDNEY:** The Australian Visual Software Distributors Association (AVSDA) has today responded to claims CHOICE has made that the film industry is not responsive to consumer demands and making content available in a digital format.

AVSDA represents the \$1.3 billion Australian home entertainment film industry and its members include all the major Hollywood studios as well as major Australian independent distributors such as Roadshow Entertainment and Madman among others are committed to distributing content to Australian consumers in digital format.

Australia is fortunate to have a copyright regime and a Federal Government which balances the demands between copyright owners and producers and that of consumers. The ability to protect copyrighted works ensures that Australia can maintain a local film and TV production industry producing such works as Australia, Wolverine and The Green Lantern and offer a wide range of distributed catalogue films in DVD as well as embrace leading digital distribution models.

“CHOICE specifically says in its media release that “*Australia ranks poorly on global copyright list*” and comes in behind India, China and Indonesia, countries it must be said that have no respect for copyright and thus major domestic piracy problems and related organized crime and corruption issues,” AVSDA CEO, Simon Bush said.

AVSDA members have made their content available in digital distribution models in Australia through major online portals iTunes and BigPond among others and some business models in fact have allowed for managed copies to be downloaded and either burnt to DVD or moved to another portable device. One such business model is the availability last year in Australia of digital managed copies which allows for digital portability when purchasing a DVD.

This is in contrast to CHOICE claims which state:

*CHOICE says a particular area of concern is consumer rights to transfer and share copyrighted information for non-commercial purposes.*

*For example, current Australian laws do not allow any electronic to electronic format shifting or space shifting, such as ripping a DVD to play on your iPod. At present, a person who does so could be fined or found guilty of a criminal offence.*

This is in fact wrong. The Copyright Act 1968 does no such thing. What it does do is allow copyright owners who take advantage of technological protection measures on their works so as to prevent unauthorized and illegal copying. AVSDA members do allow for format shifting of works in an authorized and managed way.

“CHOICE needs to better understand the film and entertainment industry – and the Copyright Act - before trying to score easy headlines.

“The film industry remains committed to providing consumers choice and options for viewing content in as many ways as possible on whatever device they choose,” Mr Bush says.

Ends.

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