

Application of Motivational Factors for Uploading Films to websites Ulozto.net and Piratebay.org

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Abstract—This paper studies, maps and explains the interactions between downloaders and uploaders pertaining to the Internet film piracy. This study also covers several motivational factors that influence users to upload or download movies, and thus to engage in film piracy over the Internet. The essay also proposes a model that describes user behavior including their relationships and influences. Moreover, proposed theoretical interactions and motivational factors are applied to the real world scenario, using examples of a data storage webpage server Ulozto.net and webpage Piratebay.org gathering information about downloadable BitTorrents. Moreover, the theory is further supported by description of behavior of real Internet uploaders.

Keywords—Download, Film piracy, Internet, Motivational factors for uploading

I. INTRODUCTION

THE current global situation involving website Megaupload.com [1], [2] and the ACTA (Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement) [3], [4] inspired me in writing an article about the Internet uploaders and theoretical behavior of users performing activities such as upload and download of pirated films. This article builds upon my previous researches carried as part of my doctoral project at the Faculty of Management; University of Economics, Czech Republic. Motivational factors for uploading (see Section II), is based on my earlier findings of factors for uploading and downloading of pirated film products presented at the International Conference on Computer Science and Applications (ICCSA 2011) and published at its proceedings. [5] Since there are many motivational and influencing factors, this paper only covers factors closely related to the specific examples applied to real uploaders.

Section III describes the restructured and updated model of interactions between the Internet users pertaining to download and upload of film products. Such model is build upon my earlier essay presented at the PhD conference sponsored by the Faculty of Management. [6]

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Proposed theoretical interactions and motivational factors are applied to the real world scenario, using examples of the data storage webpage server called Ulozto.net and webpage Piratebay.org that gathers information about BitTorrents free to download. Motivational factors discussed in this article are thoroughly analyzed based on activities of Internet users called "The.Mayestro" and "Chinmay" that operate on mentioned Internet websites. Both users were randomly chosen; the only criterion was to have different users with the same uploaded movie.

II. MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS FOR UPLOADING

A number of motivational factors influence Internet users to upload pirated film products, i.e. any kind of data which contains whole or part of the movie (except for the official movie trailers or fan made movies). [5] However, this article only discusses those factors that pertain to the topic of this article.

A. Recognition factors

Local community recognition – final uploaded product includes pirate's name or nickname, by which he/she is recognized in the local Internet community

Global community recognition – various individuals or groups upload products recognizable in the whole pirate world, e.g. LAP, TARGET, TWiZTED, DVF, DoNE, etc. [7]

B. Profit factors

Collect website bonus points – Internet data storage webpage servers can offer bonus points for uploading data or downloading the uploaded data. The bonus points can be redeemed for various marketing products (e.g. toys, software applications etc.) or website credit for downloading. Such credit can be either bought for a certain fee or received for free as a gift from the server's operators. Therefore, people are directly motivated to upload data in order to collect the bonus points. [6], [8], [9]

Collect bonus points via fake products – uploading fake products that are later downloaded by other people bring bonus points to the uploader, however such behavior damages the uploader's reputation within the community, which usually results in him/her getting banned from the Internet websites [6], [10]

C. Attitude factors

Recommendation – to download and view the movie, i.e. informing the community (users) about movies worth watching

III. FILM UPLOADING AND DOWNLOADING - INTERACTIONS BETWEEN INTERNET USERS

The following figure describes behavior of downloaders and uploaders.

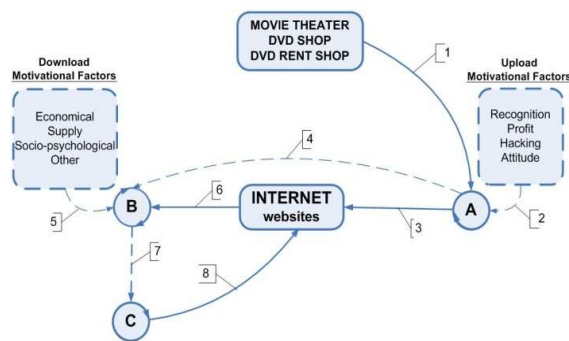


Fig. 1 Possible interactions between downloaders and uploaders

Suppose that person "A" buys a ticket to see the show called "Inception" in a movie theater or person "A" (hereinafter referred to as "uploader") buys the DVD/Blu-ray disc with that movie or rents such movie in the DVD rent shop. However, while watching the movie this individual also records it on his/her camera (the individual commits a crime of so called camcording) or the person could rip the original DVD/HDDVD/Blu-ray disc (Step 1; Fig 1). [7], [11]

Moreover, additional motivational factors also play a role in influencing the person "A" to obtain the film product and upload it to the Internet. (Step 2; Fig 1). [5] Uploading of the product that is in this case pirated, is shown as Step 3.

The "Internet websites" icon on Figure 1 represents the following two types of websites - Data storage webpage servers and webpages that offer BitTorrents to download. Data storage websites users provide users with possibility to upload data that can be easily downloaded by anyone. Moreover, providers of such websites are not liable for the uploaded data, as the server does not examine the contents of the files. However, if the servers' operators are noticed to possess illegal content of a file (or archive), the data is removed from the server. [10] However, the automatically generated link after the data upload might be also password-protected; therefore without the valid password the file itself is completely useless. Furthermore, uploaders and downloaders can also interact on the websites, as the sites contain forums for discussion.

The other type of webpage gathers information of so called Torrents (Bittorrents). Such BitTorrent software protocol works on principle of peer-to-peer file sharing that is used for distributing data over the Internet. Downloading a file from a single source server (as described in previous Section), does not work on this P-to-P principle. BitTorrent protocol allows users to join a several hosts to download and upload from each

other simultaneously. Therefore, the main difference is that downloader becomes an uploader at the same time. [12], [13]

A number of motivational factors lead the uploader to influence other people to download a product uploaded by him/her (Recognition factors, Profit factors, Hacking and Ripping factors, Attitude factors).

[5] The uploader addresses a person "B", the "downloader" (for simplicity, it represents all possible users) via Internet forums, website comments, webpage threads etc. (Step 4; Fig 1). In this instance, i.e. influencing others to download, the uploader is driven by Profit, Recognition and Attitude factors (A., B. and C.; Section II). Therefore, the uploader's main aim is to target all potential downloaders with his/her pirated product. In order to attract as many downloaders as possible, the uploader advertises the entire scope of his/her uploaded products. [5], [6]

However, the downloader might be also influenced by the uploader, but the main part in the decision to download the film product is driven by the personal motivational factors (Economic, Supply, Socio-psychological and Other factors) (Step 5; Fig 1). [5] Stated motivational factors and influences cause that downloader finally downloads the product from the Internet (Step 6; Fig 1). [6]

Moreover, the downloader might then address additional people, referred to as "C", on the Internet the same way as described above. Such individual can be downloader's friends or acquaintances, or people completely unknown to him or her. Several motivational factors, e.g. Recommendation factors, Anti-regime attitude etc. then lead the downloader to voice his opinion about the pirated product. [5] If the downloader wants to address all potential downloaders (Step 7; Fig 1), he/she is actually taking the same position as the uploader in advertising his opinions and recommendations, also driven by motivational factors. Mentioned person "C" is influenced by "B" and downloads the movie (Step 8; Fig 1). This is driven by downloader's attitude towards the movie or his experience with the downloaded movie. [6]

For simplicity the above discussed interactions between downloaders and uploaders do not picture the possibility of the downloader downloading the product and then uploading it back on the Internet under a new name. Such situations are considered common, as the downloaders are also driven by the motivational factors applicable to uploading, especially the Profit factors (B.; Section II).

IV. APPLICATION OF MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS TO ULOZTO.NET

This Section applies the theoretical model discussed in previous Section to data storage webpage server called Ulozto.net. This webpage server enables users to upload movie files or any other kind of data that can be easily accessible for downloading. Therefore, uploaders can upload any kind of content that does not violate the rules of the server [10]. Download is provided to anyone either for free or for a certain fee. The amount of fee is depending on the desirable download speed. [14] However, because the final downloadable product is in most cases compressed (.zip, .rar), uploader can add recommended website links, advertisements,

or various software programs that can contain computer viruses or spyware, i.e. downloader is not aware of also downloading the added materials. The webpage Ulozto.net mainly serves users from the Czech Republic, Slovak Republic and also Poland.

As seen in Figure 2, the file contains the American movie named "Inception". [15] However, the file itself is being named "Inception.2010_720pBRRipThE.MaYeStRo" (see Figure 2). As is shown on the most downloadable data statistics from the data storage webpage server called Hellshare.com that works on the same principle as Ulozto.net, the usual file name of the film product contains the original name of the movie and also the local release name, i.e. Czech, Slovak or other name. [16] According to the list, the movies are usually uploaded under their Czech name, for the downloaders tend to search the websites using Czech names of the movies. Thus, when an uploader wants to target mainstream audience, he or she is indirectly forced to rename the original name into the local one. Such behavior is a result of being driven by the motivation of Profit or Attitude factors (B. and C.; Section II).

The term "ThE.MaYeStRo" in the name of the file leads to the warez community nickname of an individual or individuals. This demonstrates that the uploader (or the group of uploaders) is motivated by the Recognition factor (A.; Section I). Uploader "The.Mayestro" operates on the Czech Internet websites, though his/her uploaded data is mainly in English, it is a clear example of the Local community recognition factor (A.; Section II). Moreover, the term "Moon17.CoM" leads to individual or group that is able to deliver film products to the whole international community (A.; Section II) and likely from which the product has been obtained.

The nickname under which the uploader is recognized on the website serves as a certain branding. Goodwill of the uploader's name also works as a positive guaranty of quality of the uploaded data, i.e. video quality of the film, but most importantly a downloader is assured that he/she downloads product that is stated and displayed in the name of a file.

However, the major part of uploaded The.Mayestro's data to the server contains original language (English mainly) title, for the uploader wants to attract the potential downloaders searching for the film products without local dubbing language. [17] The type of the release is also mentioned, as the uploader distinguishes between various types of video quality releases. Such behavior makes it easier for a potential downloader to find the certain quality of film product he or she is looking for, e.g. BRRip, BDRip, DVDRip etc. [11], [19]

In order to distinguish among the priorities of the classified motivational factors of the uploader The.Mayestro, I have contacted and discussed the matter with the person. The interview confirmed that the uploader is driven mainly by the Profit factor – Collect website bonus points (B.; Section II). [17] For download of uploader's product, the website provides him with a special bonus credit that otherwise would have to be bought. Such credit is then used as a fee for downloads of other products of different uploaders. Therefore, people are directly motivated by the website providers to upload data in order to obtain the bonus points.

However, other uploaders are motivated to obtain and collect the bonus points, therefore such uploaders can reupload once downloaded data (B.; Section II).

Therefore, uploader The.Mayestro assures all the potential downloaders with the branding of his/hers uploaded data in order not to jeopardize his recognition status in the community (A.; Section II). [17]



Fig. 2 Screenshot of the Mayestro's upload to Ulozto.net

V. APPLICATION OF MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS TO PIRATEBAY.ORG

This Section applies the motivational factors and interactions between internet users to website called Piratebay.org. Figure 3 shows the webpage containing the same American movie named "Inception" which was used in the previous example. And again, the file itself has been renamed, this time to "Inception_Hindi_HD_BRRip_By_Chinmay". [18]

As the uploader tries to focus on the mainstream audience, he or she is using the original English name. Such behavior is a result of being driven by the motivation of the Attitude factor (C.; Section II). As the BitTorrent protocol works on a different Internet network, the users are called seeders or leechers. However, I have decided to keep terms uploader/downloader in order to keep the same classification of users.

The term "Chinmay" in the file name refers to nickname of an individual. This demonstrates that the uploader is motivated by the Recognition factor (A.; Section II). The uploader "Chinmay" operates on the main international torrent websites that exists in dozens of language version. Though, I attribute this behavior to the local community recognition (A.; Section I). The main reason to support this motivational factor is the language release version. The term "Hindi" indicates that the movie itself is exclusively in the Hindi language version. Therefore, the uploader is targeting only the people of India or people who want to see the movie in that particular language (C.; Section II). Such behavior of Attitude factor is also supported in the comment section on the website, where the person highly recommends the movie itself as a must-see film for all potential downloaders from India. Furthermore, the type of the quality of the screen video is also mentioned in the file name, and "BRRip" stands for a movie that was obviously ripped from the Blu-ray disc. [11], [19]

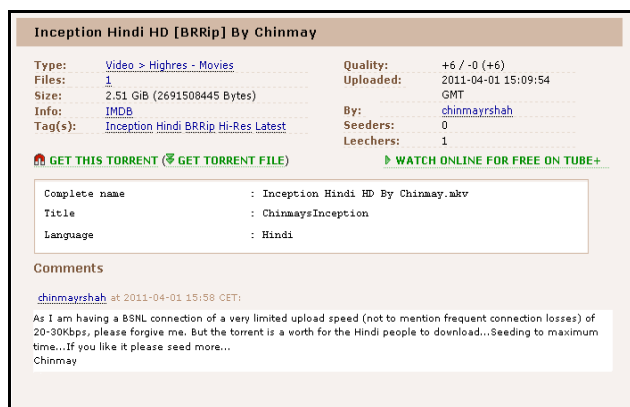


Fig. 3 Screenshot of the Mayestro's upload to Ulozto.net

VI. CONCLUSION

Uploading film products and providing them over the Internet is driven by various motivational factors that lead individuals to partake in the Internet film piracy. However, the main aim and the key outcome of this paper is the application of the theoretical knowledge of model behavior of motivational factors and interactions demonstrated on practical examples of the Internet data storage webpage server Ulozto.net and the website Piratebay.org on which users gather information of BitTorrents free to download.

The major motivational factor driving the uploader called "The.Mayestro" to upload the film products on the website Ulozto.net is the Profit factor – to collection website bonus points (B.). Gathered points are then transferred into a certain credit that can be used for increase of the downloading Internet speed of other products. Therefore, users are motivated to upload data in order to obtain such credit. Such system actually induces users to willingly engage in uploading data that might be copyrighted. Furthermore, uploader's recognition in the Internet community also plays important role in influencing him/her to upload data (A.) Last, but not least, uploader's attitude (C.) towards the movie itself plays also a big role for the person uploads only the movies that he/she considers worthwatching.

On the other hand, as the Internet website Piratebay.org works on a different principle, the uploader called "Chinmay" is mainly motivated by the Local (and global in the case of the international multi-language website) recognition factor (A.). Moreover, I see the Attitude factor as a crucial motivational factor for this uploader as he/she addresses the potential downloaders with a specific film product (C.).

Therefore, the motivational factors that influence Internet users to upload film products are driven not only by the personal prioritization of reason why to do so, but by the Internet base on which the webpage works. Two real world examples showed that when Internet users are offered a certain credit or bonus points for uploading, the users upload data mainly for the Profit factor. On the other hand, when the website works on free base, the users mainly do it for the Attitude (recommendation) factor.

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