

## NBC Universal, P2P firm launch on-demand films



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NBC Universal has struck a deal with technology and commerce specialist Wurld Media that will make selected movies available for on-demand downloading via peer-to-peer distribution early next year.

NBC Universal said it marks the first time a major studio has licensed content to a P2P service.

Saratoga Springs, N.Y.-based Wurld Media is one of the companies striving to rehabilitate the image of P2P, whose distribution technology is popular among pirates. Its main competitors in the legitimate P2P space include PassAlong, Intent Media, iMesh and Snocap-powered services like Mashboxx.

NBC Universal added that it partnered with Wurld Media because of its commitment to carry only authorized content on its secure Peer Impact network.

The companies have not yet determined the fees that it will charge for film downloads. NBC Universal said it would offer all of the titles that are available on its existing video-on-demand and pay-per-view services carried by cable and satellite operators. That means a range of contemporary releases -- including "The 40-Year-Old Virgin," "Cinderella Man," "Ray" and "The Motorcycle Diaries" -- as well as 75-100 older titles from the Universal library.

The deal at present does not include any NBC Universal-produced TV series, but it does cover special programs that NBC Universal offers on VOD/PPV such as "Jerry Springer: Uncensored," uncensored versions of the syndicated dating shows "5th Wheel" and "Blind Date" and the Spanish-language novela "Laura Sin Censura."

Peer Impact users will be able to view the films for a 24-hour period once they hit the "play" button on their computers. The file will remain on a user's computer for 30 days in an effort to hasten the download speeds of other Peer Impact users who purchase the same titles, because P2P gains speed and efficiency with each additional copy of content on the network.

Consumers log on to the secure network, where they can preview clips of all available content. Payment is due upon checkout, though Gregory Kerber, chairman and CEO of Wurld Media, said many users choose to keep a balance to draw from.

Kerber said the strength of NBC Universal's brand will help overcome users' lack of technical knowledge. "This is content they know, so that will give people a sense of familiarity," he said. "People won't need to know P2P, they'll just know the convenience it gives them at a price point they find worthwhile."

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