Movie piracy losses bigger than expected: report

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Lost sales from pirated DVD movies and Internet downloads are higher than previously thought, a report in the Wall Street Journal said on Wednesday.

A study showed the industry was losing $6.1 billion annually in global wholesale revenue, about 75 percent higher than earlier estimates, it said.

Losses came not only from fewer ticket sales, but also from fewer DVD sales, considered one of the industry's biggest profit centers, the report cited unnamed sources as saying.

The newspaper said some in the U.S. movies industry sought to suppress the report.

The study was conducted by LEK Consulting LLC and commissioned by U.S. films industry lobbying group the Motion Picture Association of America.

The MPAA was not immediately available for comment.

According to the report, losses in the U.S. alone totaled almost $1.3 billion.

The study also dispelled commonly held beliefs. Mexico, for instance, now ranked as the world's largest market for pirated U.S. films, overshadowing China and Russia, with $483 million in lost revenue in 2005.

The study was conducted in 28 countries, over 18 months, and cost $3 million, according to the Journal.
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