

Contact Persons:

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**IP & TMT**

Bahari Yeow Tien Hong  
**Partner**  
DID: +603 6208 5856  
Fax: +603 6201 0122  
Email: [yth@lh-ag.com](mailto:yth@lh-ag.com)

Adlin Abdul Majid  
**Partner**  
DID: +603 6208 5816  
Fax: +603 6201 0122  
Email: [aam@lh-ag.com](mailto:aam@lh-ag.com)

Eunice Chan Wei Lynn  
**Partner**  
DID: +603 6208 5872  
Fax: +603 6201 0122  
Email: [cwl@lh-ag.com](mailto:cwl@lh-ag.com)

**Infringing Website List**

Last week, Malaysia became the third country in the Asia Pacific region to launch the Infringing Website List (IWL) initiative.

The initiative, created by the UK's Operation Creative, a scheme led by the Police Intellectual Property Crime Unit (PIPCU) in 2014, lists pirate websites with the object of combatting digital piracy of copyrighted content, including films, software, music and even books.

Media Prima, Astro, the Communications and Multimedia Content Forum of Malaysia (CMCF) the Motion Picture Association (MPA), the Centre for Content Promotion and the Media Specialists Association (MSA) are some of the stakeholders working together to ensure that the aims of the IWL are achieved.

Pirate websites have generated more than US\$209 million in advertising revenue alone.<sup>[1]</sup> Malaysians are reported to have contributed to over 71 million page views across the top five pirated sites up until August 2017, and page views at such sites are 3.25 times higher than those across the top five legitimate websites such as *tm.com.my*, *netflix.com* and *astro.com.my*.<sup>[2]</sup>

Advertisers may be unaware that advertisements are being placed on these illegal and high-risk websites. As advertisers become unknowingly or indirectly associated with these illegal websites, their brand reputation and image may be adversely affected while inadvertently supporting pirate websites, which may lead to funding of other illegal activities.

The IWL initiative, by identifying and sharing a list of pirate websites in Malaysia, aims to warn advertisers to remove such advertisements and thereby cut off advertising revenue flowing to such websites in Malaysia. By impeding the operations of these pirate websites, online copyright infringement may be reduced.

**Lim Zhi Jian**

If you have any queries or would like to know more about the IWL initiative, please do not hesitate to contact the author or his team partner Mr [Bahari Yeow Tien Hong](mailto:yth@lh-ag.com) ([yth@lh-ag.com](mailto:yth@lh-ag.com)).

Lee Hishammuddin Allen & Gledhill

Level 6, Menara 1 Dutamas  
Solaris Dutamas  
No. 1, Jalan Dutamas 1  
50480 Kuala Lumpur  
Malaysia

T +603 6208 5888  
F +603 6201 0122/0136  
E [enquiry@lh-ag.com](mailto:enquiry@lh-ag.com)  
W [www.lh-ag.com](http://www.lh-ag.com)

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[1] Masiwanie Muhamading, "Malaysia launches Infringing Website List initiative to combat digital piracy", *New Straits Times* (10 October 2017) <<https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2017/10/289556/malaysia-launches-infringing-website-list-initiative-combat-digital>>

[2] Sharmila Nair, "New anti-piracy move aims to hit pirates where it hurts the most", *The Star Online* (11 October 2017) <<http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2017/10/11/new-antipiracy-move-aims-to-hit-pirates-where-it-hurts-the-most>>