

AMI Trains to go dark on Jan 18 to protest against SOPA

Written by John M

Monday, 16 January 2012 15:18 -

On January 18, AMI Trains, alongside many other websites, is going dark for a day to protest against the proposed introduction of the [Stop Online Piracy Act \(SOPA\)](#) and its Senate counterpart, the PROTECT IP Act (PIPA) in the USA. SOPA will not just affect those in the USA; its knock-on effects would touch every website in the world. Under the proposed legislation, it would be illegal for us (or you) to link to any website – any website at all, including community-driven behemoths like YouTube, Flickr, Blogspot or WordPress – without checking first that nothing on that site infringes copyright. And we'd have to review those sites continually after a link was made.

Under these Acts, every person making a link to such a site would have to check the millions of other pages on that site to ensure that nobody, anywhere, is breaching copyright. Even search results would be covered under the proposed law. And if a website like ours were to be prosecuted for linking to another site where copyrighted material was hosted, our domain could be confiscated and our IP address added to a USA-wide blacklist, even though we are UK-based and have servers hosted outside the USA – all this without legal process.

So far, so ridiculous. It's censorship and shifting of responsibility on a grand scale. But despite a loud chorus of opposition to the Acts from legal experts, internet experts, journalists, website owners like us, human rights activists (want to publicise the next Arab Spring using Twitter, Facebook, YouTube or another site that potentially infringes? You've just provided the powers that be with an instant excuse and mechanism to shut you down) and ordinary people who just surf the web, the Acts stand a genuine chance of being pushed through. Lobbyists like the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and the movie and music studios have much louder voices and deeper pockets than we individuals on the internet do; but by joining together on January 18 we hope that we can make enough of an impact to be noticed by those voting on the legislation, and by the news outlets that they read and watch.

So on January 18, AMI Trains intends to join the planned shutdown organised by [Reddit](#). This site will be unavailable from 8am EST to 8pm. We encourage those of you who can to join us – and if you're a US citizen, please call or email your representative. For those of you in the UK, <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/26143>.

I will point out that: **AMI Trains in no way condones piracy or theft of intellectual properties.**

In fact, Our stance against piracy is very strong. However, we believe that web censorship and SOPA specifically is a violation of civil liberties. If this is

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passed, sites like TT-Forums.net, TTD-Russia.net, Locomods.eu, tycoonez.com and locomotion-fanpage.net, all non-US sites, could go offline without warning due to a single copywrite infringement complaint or a link back to a site that has had a complaint from within the United States.

Fun fact: Sopa means garbage in swedish.