

# What is File Sharing?

- Simply put: 'the process of sharing of files over a decentralised or Peer-to-Peer (P2P) network, via intranets, portable media devices, or even hyperlinked material on the World Wide Web.'
- This is not a definitive list of how files can be shared, but it includes the most commonly used processes.
- When people think of file sharing, they tend to think first about free music and movie downloads from the internet, and high profile peer-to-peer (P2P) networks, as these have received the most coverage in the media in recent years.

# Examples of Popular File Sharing Sites and Networks



The Pirate Bay



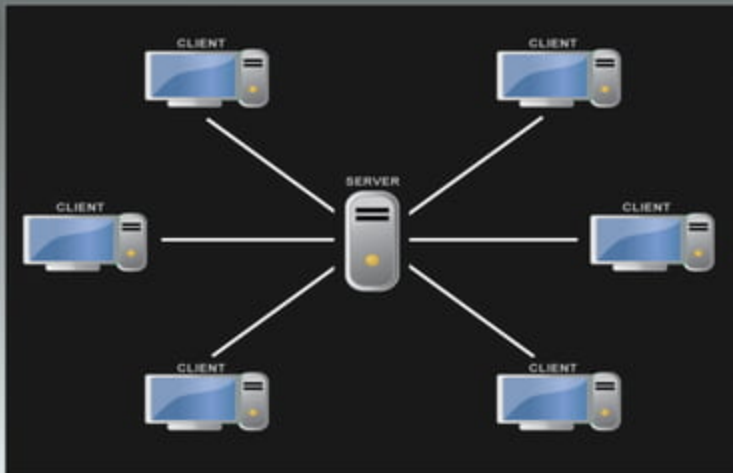
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# What is legal/illegal file sharing?

- Illegal file sharing is where a copyrighted material is distributed or downloaded without the permission of its' owner, or without paying for it. It could be music, a movie, games, artwork, or any other published work.
- Legal file sharing can be seen as sharing any non-copyrighted material, or material which has been authorised for distribution by the copyright owner.
- So the key points here that differentiate legal and illegal file sharing are copyright and permission.

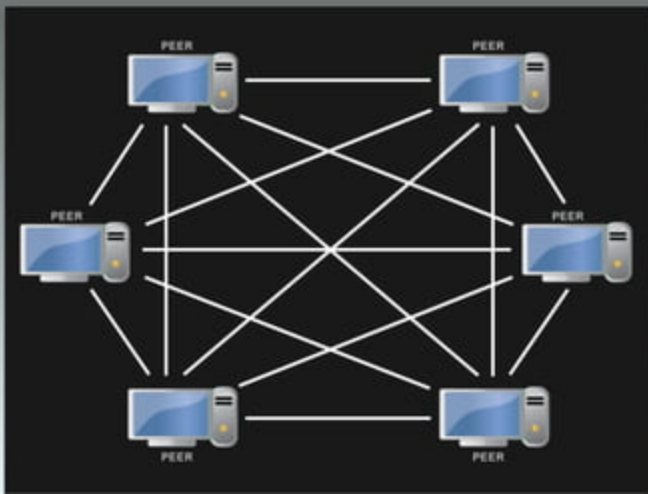
# One to Many

- The most common example of file sharing is the WWW itself. Using a client/server model, many users/visitors are delivered content from a central server.
- Examples: Web pages, YouTube, Flickr.



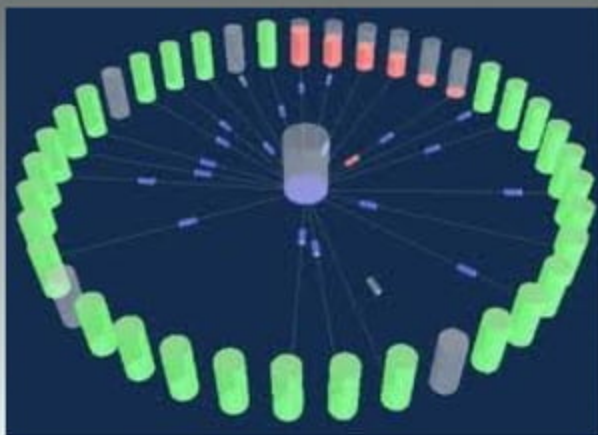
# Peer to Peer (P2P)

- In this decentralised model, individual computers can send and receive files directly to each other without the need for a centralised server.
- Examples: Napster, LimeWire, Kazaa.



# BitTorrent

- A newer decentralised approach where every computer in the network can send and receive parts of files from multiple others. This is faster and puts less demands on the 'host' or 'peer'. It creates a true sharing network.
- Examples: BitTorrent, The Pirate Bay, Torrent Spy



# How is it used/misused?

- A recent article in *The Australian* regarding research from a Victorian university has found the following breakdown on popular file sharing resource BitTorrent:
- Almost 90% of files available are illegal and/or infringe copyright; including music, movies, games & software.
- 8.2% of files shared were classed as rudey-nudey stuff.
- Only the remaining 1.9% of files were legitimate files.
- So it seems we have chosen to use the power of the internet for evil rather than good, at least when it comes to file sharing.



# What impact does it have?

- **Financial:** According to a recent article from BBC News, at current growth trends, illegal file sharing is predicted to cost almost AU\$350 Billion, and up to 1.2 million jobs globally by 2015.
- **Social:** We have global sharing on a scale not seen before, but conversely we are also experiencing an exponential increase in global copyright infringement. We now have a generation of people, of which a large % are comfortable breaking the law, and see illegal file sharing as legitimate and acceptable.