

Subject: [DRAFT] Alert: PrairieCat policy update - acquisition & verification of video recordings

Action: Informational

PrairieCat has introduced a new policy for the acquisition and verification of video recordings (DVDs, Blu-rays, and other media) to prevent pirated or bootleg copies from entering our shared catalog.

Although counterfeit media often display poor playback quality, many bootlegs today are sophisticated and difficult to identify. Even discs with shrink-wraps, marketing stickers, or professional artwork can be illegitimate. These materials violate copyright law and compromise both catalog integrity and patron experience.

To help staff identify and prevent counterfeit items, please review and follow the policy below.

PrairieCat Policy: Acquisition and Verification of Videorecordings

Purpose

To ensure all video recordings cataloged in PrairieCat are legitimate, studio-issued products, authorized reproductions.

Policy Overview

If a video recording cannot be verified through official databases or appears suspicious, PrairieCat will make the final determination on whether the title is legitimate for catalog inclusion.

Suspected counterfeit titles may be removed or suppressed from the shared catalog.

PrairieCat staff will determine whether a locally created, self-produced, or self-published videorecording is eligible for inclusion in PrairieCat's shared catalog.

Recommended Vendors (use with caution)

While the following distributors are recognized and generally reputable, bootlegs can appear anywhere, even though they are seemingly reliable sources. Libraries must verify every title before cataloging.

- Midwest Tape – Library-exclusive distributor

- Alliance Entertainment – Authorized distributor for major studios
- Studio Distribution Services (SDS) – Warner Bros. & Universal joint venture
- Shout! Studios (Shout! Factory) – Licensed boutique distributor
- Mill Creek Entertainment – Authorized studio/independent distributor
- CAV Distributing Corp. – Licensed manufacturer/distributor

⚠ Always use caution, even with approved vendors. Marketplace sellers (eBay, Walmart Marketplace, Amazon Marketplace) and sellers such as Media Mania Collections have known issues with bootlegs.

Verification Resources

Before purchasing or cataloging, confirm official release data using one or more of the following trusted resources:

- <https://www.dvdsreleasedates.com/>
- <https://www.newdvdreleasedates.com/>
- <https://www.blu-ray.com/>

If no release date or official listing is found, or if the seller source appears questionable, do not catalog the title and contact PrairieCat Support for verification assistance.

Identifying Possible Bootleg Copies

Even professional-looking packaging can hide counterfeit discs. Be alert for these signs:

1. Missing Booklets – Official box sets usually include printed inserts or booklets. Missing materials often signal unofficial origins.
2. No Replacement Support – Authorized sellers can replace damaged or defective discs. Bootleg sellers typically cannot.
3. Playback Problems – Bootleg discs are often poorly authored; episodes skip, cut out, or fail to load.
4. Poor Video or Audio Quality – Counterfeit discs compress content from dual-layer sources to single-layer, reducing picture and sound quality.

5. Region Coding – Official U.S. releases are Region 1. Region-free discs may indicate counterfeits.

6. Disc Size – Authentic DVDs are typically dual-layer (8.5 GB); counterfeit discs are usually single-layer (4.7 GB).

Reminder: Shrink-wrap, retail stickers, and packaging alone do not confirm authenticity.

Reporting and Support

If your library encounters a questionable video recording:

- Do not catalog or circulate it.
- Contact PrairieCat Support at [Insert email].
- Provide the title, vendor, order number, and verification findings.

PrairieCat staff will review and confirm legitimacy before inclusion in the shared catalog.

Thank you for your continued diligence in maintaining the quality and legality of PrairieCat's shared collections. Your attention to these details protects both your patrons and the consortium's reputation.