Beat: Miscellaneous

'Games of Thrones' is named most pirated show of 2012

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USPA News - The popular HBO fantasy series "Game of Thrones" has surpassed crime drama "Dexter" to become the most-pirated television show of the year on BitTorrent, according to an annual survey conducted by news website TorrentFreak. One episode of "Game of Thrones" this year was downloaded more than 4.2 million times, significantly more than the 3.8 million downloads for an episode of "Dexter."

It is followed by "The Big Bang Theory" with 3.2 million downloads, "How I Met Your Mother" with 2.9 million downloads, and "Breaking Bad" with 2.5 million downloads. TorrentFreak said the limited availability of American television shows for people outside the United States is one of the top reasons why people choose to download episodes through BitTorrent. It is estimated more than 80 percent of TV show piracy occurs outside the United States. For example, about 10 percent of the people who download "Games of Thrones" episodes are from Australia, where people have to wait a week longer than fans in the United States to view the show on television. But because "Games of Thrones" premieres on a premium cable television network and is not available on legal websites such as Netflix, more than 400,000 Americans still choose to download the show through BitTorrent. Also in the top 10 this year is "The Walking Dead" with 2.5 million downloads per episode, "Homeland" with 2.4 million downloads, "House" with 2.3 million downloads, "Fringe" with 2.2 million downloads, and "Revolution" with 2.1 million episodes. "Games of Thrones", "Dexter" and "Homeland" are the only shows to gather more viewers on BitTorrent than on the premium cable TV networks on which they air. TorrentFreak reported a similar top 10 last year when "Dexter" topped the chart with 3.6 million downloads per episode. It was followed by "Games of Thrones" with 3.4 million downloads, "The Big Bang Theory" with 3 million downloads, "House" with 2.7 million downloads, and "How I Met Your Mother" with 2.4 million downloads. The website said the number of downloads for TV shows on BitTorrent has leveled off slightly in recent years, but 2012 saw a small increase. The survey does not include other file-sharing networks or the number of people who watch television series on unauthorized, and in some cases illegal, websites.

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