# Iconic anti-piracy advert used pirated font in ironic twist



An iconic anti-piracy advertisement, which was widely seen across DVDs, video cassettes, and cinemas in the early 2000s, has recently been revealed to have used a pirated font for its text. The campaign, famous for its dramatic warnings such as "You wouldn’t steal a car, you wouldn’t steal a handbag" followed by "Piracy. It’s a crime," was intended to deter viewers from illegally copying films. However, the font featured in this memorable advert itself appears to have been unlawfully replicated.

The font in question originates from Dutch typeface designer Just Van Rossum, who created the FF Confidential font in 1992. It was subsequently cloned and redistributed under the name XBand-Rough without authorisation. While the cloned font was available for free, companies were required to pay to use Van Rossum’s original creation.

The discovery was made by a user on the social platform Bluesky, who ran an image from the anti-piracy advert through a font detection software. The analysis revealed that the version of XBand-Rough, the illegally copied font, had been used rather than the licensed FF Confidential.

It is believed that those responsible for the ad campaign may have been unaware of the font’s pirated status, as the illegitimacy of XBand-Rough was not widely known. There remains a possibility that the advert’s producers did in fact pay to use the legitimate FF Confidential font.

Speaking to the tech news website TorrentFreak, Just Van Rossum commented on the situation, saying: "I knew my font was used for the campaign and that a pirated clone named XBand-Rough existed. I did not know that the campaign used XBand-Rough and not FF Confidential, though. So this fact is new to me, and I find it hilarious."

This revelation adds a layer of irony to the campaign, which for years has been used to highlight intellectual property theft. Past claims that the advert’s accompanying music was also pirated have been debunked.

The anti-piracy advert was originally launched in 2004 and discontinued in 2009. It has since remained a part of popular culture through DVD and video collections and has been replaced in public spaces by adverts promoting British cinema and thanking audiences for their support of films.

Attempts to obtain a comment from the organisations behind the adverts, including the UK’s Federation Against Copyright Theft (FACT), the US-based Motion Picture Association, and the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore, have been made, but no statements have been provided so far.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://news.sky.com/story/you-wouldnt-steal-a-font-famous-anti-piracy-campaign-may-have-used-pirated-typeface-13357462> - This article confirms that the anti-piracy campaign used a pirated font, specifically XBand-Rough instead of the licensed FF Confidential, created by Just van Rossum. It also mentions that the designers may have been unaware of the font's illegitimacy.
* <https://www.myfonts.com/collections/just-van-rossum> - This webpage lists various fonts by Just van Rossum, including FF Confidential, highlighting his role as a prolific Dutch type designer. It further supports the claim that FF Confidential is a legitimate font created by him.
* <https://www.myfonts.com/collections/ff-confidential-font-fontfont> - This page provides details about the FF Confidential font, indicating it was created in 1992 by Just van Rossum and is suited for various media, reinforcing its official status.
* <http://www.identifont.com/show?K8> - Identifont lists FF Confidential as a font without lower-case characters, designed by Just van Rossum in 1992, aligning with descriptions of the font's characteristics and origins.
* <https://fontsinuse.com/type_designers/389/just-van-rossum> - This webpage describes Just van Rossum's background as a type designer from the Netherlands and lists several of his notable typefaces, including FF Confidential. It underscores his expertise in typography.
* <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14657827/You-wouldnt-steal-font-Famous-anti-piracy-campaign.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data