

Ernesto, January 7, 2012

Top 10 Most Popular Torrent Sites of 2012

Continuing a long-standing New Year's tradition, we present an up-to-date list of the world's most visited BitTorrent sites. At the start of 2012 The Pirate Bay continues to pull in the most visitors, followed by Torrentz and KickassTorrents. The six-year-old TV-torrent distribution group EZTV appears in the list for the first time, ranked 8th.

Which torrent sites get the most visitors at the start of 2012? At first glance little seems to have changed, as many of the sites in the top 10 have been among the top torrent sites for more than half a decade. But moving down the list we see quite a few movers and shakers as well as three newcomers.

The most notable absentee this year is TorrentReactor, one of the oldest torrent sites on the Internet. The Russian-based site has been featured in the top 10 since 2006, but missed the cut in 2012. Last year's best newcomer LimeTorrents took an even bigger hit in traffic and has dropped off the list as well.

Below we have compiled a list of the 10 most-visited torrent sites at the start of the new year. Only public and English language sites are included. The list is based on traffic rank reports from Compete and Alexa. In addition, we include last year's ranking for each of the 10 sites.

1. The Pirate Bay

The Pirate Bay is probably the best known BitTorrent brand on the Internet. The site was founded in 2003 and is still expanding, despite the various legal troubles and blockades that were designed to hurt the site in recent years. The Pirate Bay currently has close to 2 billion page views a month.

Alexa Rank: 78 / Compete Rank: 577 / Last year #1

2. Torrentz

Torrentz has been the leading BitTorrent meta-search engine for years. Unlike the other sites featured in the list Torrentz does not host any torrent files, it merely redirects visitors to other places on the web.

Alexa Rank: 142 / Compete Rank: 1.053 / Last year #2

3. KickassTorrents

Founded in 2009, KickassTorrents is one of the youngest sites in the list, and this year it moved up to the top 3. Responding to the increasing worries about domain seizures, the site moved from its kickasstorrents.com domain to kat.ph a few months ago. The site continues to innovate and release new features every other week.

Alexa Rank: 257 / Compete Rank: 1,165 / Last year #4

4. IsoHunt

In 2010 isoHunt became the first search engine forced to implement a keyword filter provided by the MPAA. Despite this setback, isoHunt continues to be listed among the top torrent sites. In 2012, isoHunt hopes to get rid of the filter through the Appeals Court.

Alexa Rank: 259 / Compete Rank: 1,153 / Last year #3

5. BTjunkie

BTjunkie had to deal with a setback a few months ago when the site was blocked in Italy following a court order. In response to the block, the site's owners launched an ad-free proxy site for Italians only. Just as last year, BTjunkie settles in fifth place.

Alexa Rank: 385 / Compete Rank: 802 / Last year #5

6. ExtraTorrent

ExtraTorrent is one of those robust torrent indexes that doesn't make the news very often. Compared to last year the site has moved up a spot and is now the 6th most popular torrent venue.

Alexa Rank: 446 / Compete Rank: 1,574 / Last year #7

7. Demonoid

The semi-private tracker continues to attract a massive audience, also on the new .me domain name. Behind the scenes the site's owners are working on a new and improved look.

Alexa Rank: 455 / Compete Rank: 2,397 / Last year #6

8. EZTV

Unlike the other sites in the top 10, TV-torrent distribution group EZTV is a niche site specializing in TV content only. Despite its fair share of downtime this year, EZTV has managed to get a spot in the top 10 for the first time in its six year existence.

Alexa Rank: 1,151 / Compete Rank: 13,647 / Last year #na

9. Bitsnoop

BitSnoop is another newcomer that gained a large audience this year. This didn't go unnoticed by the RIAA, who filed a complaint at the U.S. District Court of Columbia and obtained a subpoena to reveal the identity of BitSnoop's owner a few months ago.

Alexa Rank: 1,415 / Compete Rank: 5,242 / Last year #na

10. 1337x

1337x is also new to the top 10, and focuses more on the community aspect than some competitors. The site's owners say they started 1337x to "fill an apparent void where it seemed there was a lack of quality conscience ad free torrent sites with public trackers." Its 10th place this year proves that they're getting the success formula right.

Alexa Rank: 2,006 / Compete Rank: 10,856 / Last year #na

Disclaimer: Yes, we know that Alexa isn't perfect and that Compete has plenty of flaws, but combined both do a pretty good job at comparing sites that operate in a similar niche.