

CBS' overzealous copyright bots hit Star Trek virtual Comic-Con panel

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San Diego Comic-Con—like just about every large conference, convention, and gathering in 2020—has had to switch to an online-only virtual format this year due to the continuing pandemic. Media companies that usually have a large presence at events like SDCC worked hard to create streaming alternative content—but it seems they forgot to tell their copyright bots.

ViacomCBS kicked things off today with an hour-long panel showing off its slew of current and upcoming *Star Trek* projects: *Discovery*, *Picard*, *Lower Decks*, and *Strange New Worlds*.

The panel included the cast and producers of *Discovery* doing a read-through of the first act of the season 2 finale, “Such Sweet Sorrow, Part 2.” The “enhanced” read-through included sound effects, effects shots, and storyboard images meant to bolster the actors as they delivered lines from their living rooms and home offices.

Even if the presentation didn't look like a real episode of *Discovery* to the home viewer, it apparently sounded close enough: after the *Star Trek* Universe virtual panel began

viewers began to lose access to the stream. In place of the video, YouTube displayed a content ID warning reading: "Video unavailable: This video contains content from CBS CID, who has blocked it on copyright grounds."

After being blacked out for about 20 minutes, the panel was restored, and the recording of the virtual panel has no gaps in playback.

Obviously, CBS would not benefit from pulling its own marketing material offline on purpose; it seems most likely that software simply heard a match, made a match, and threw up a notice until a human could override and fix it. Unfortunately, it seems an array of media companies are each going to have to rush to correct the error in turn: two hours later, io9 reporter Beth Elderkin tweeted that a Cartoon Network panel livestream was pulled offline due to a copyright claim from Turner, Cartoon Network's parent company.

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