

Lawsuit Alleges OpenAI and Microsoft Misused Nonfiction Authors' Work to Train AI Models



In a recent legal development, OpenAI and Microsoft are facing a lawsuit, accused of utilizing nonfiction authors' works without permission to train artificial intelligence (AI) models, including those powering OpenAI's ChatGPT service.

Allegations of Unauthorized Use

Author and Hollywood Reporter editor Julian Sancton leads the proposed class action filed in Manhattan federal court, asserting that OpenAI unlawfully copied tens of thousands of nonfiction books to instruct its large language models in generating responses to human text prompts. This lawsuit is part of a broader trend, with groups of copyright owners, including prominent authors like John Grisham, George R.R. Martin, and Jonathan Franzen, filing similar complaints against OpenAI and other tech companies over alleged misuse of their works for AI training. Despite the mounting legal challenges, the companies involved have consistently denied wrongdoing.

Want to know if you're earning what you deserve? Find out with LawCrossing's salary surveys.

Microsoft's Involvement in the Legal Fray

Notably, Sancton's complaint is the first author-led lawsuit against OpenAI that implicates Microsoft as a defendant. Having invested significantly in OpenAI and integrated its systems into its products, Microsoft is now entangled in the legal web surrounding AI training practices.

Silence and Denial

A spokesperson for OpenAI declined to comment on the recent lawsuit, citing the ongoing legal proceedings. Similarly, representatives for Microsoft have yet to respond to requests for comment. The silence from both entities contrasts sharply with the allegations, which claim that while refusing compensation to nonfiction authors, their AI platform's value has skyrocketed.

The Stolen Foundations of OpenAI

According to Sancton's attorney, Justin Nelson, the essence of OpenAI's operation is "nothing less than the rampant theft of copyrighted works." The lawsuit specifies that OpenAI used nonfiction books, including Sancton's "Madhouse at the End of the Earth: The Belgica's Journey into the Dark Antarctic Night," to train its GPT large language models.

Stay up-to-date without the overwhelming noise. Subscribe to JDJournal for a curated selection of the most relevant legal news.

Microsoft's Alleged Complicity

The legal complaint also contends that Microsoft played a significant role in the training and development of the AI models in question, holding the tech giant accountable for copyright infringement.

Legal Demands

Sancton seeks unspecified monetary damages through the lawsuit and requests a court order to halt the alleged infringement, adding a layer of complexity to the ongoing legal battles surrounding AI training methodologies. The outcome of this case may significantly impact the future landscape of AI development and the ethical use of copyrighted materials in the industry.

Don't be a silent ninja! Let us know your thoughts in the comment section below.

