

Elvis Presley's rightsholders sue Anthropic over training on 274 songs

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Elvis Presley during his '68 Comeback Special on NBC

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The owners of Elvis Presley's music have sued AI company Anthropic, accusing them of training their models on Presley's music without permission.

Billboard first reported that Authentic Brands Group, the licensing group that controls the King's music and likeness, filed its lawsuit Friday, alleges that Anthropic — the AI giant behind Claude — infringed on the rights of 274 of Presley's songs.

AI companies have previously faced lawsuits from record labels like Universal and Warner Bros. as well as the RIAA, but this marks one of the first major instances where an artist's estate has brought legal action against an AI company.

"The Elvis Plaintiffs bring this action to enforce these exclusive rights against the defendant that has built its entire business model based on copyright infringement at a scale never seen before," lead attorney Richard Busch wrote. "The Elvis Plaintiffs are deeply protective of these iconic songs."

The ABE EPE LLC v. Anthropic lawsuit states that the AI company trained on 274 of Presley's songs — from hits like "All Shook Up," "Can't Help Falling in Love," and "Don't Be Cruel" to lesser-known tracks. The lawsuit is seeking \$150,000 per infringed track, or roughly \$41 million.

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"'Claude' has created infringing output of copyrighted material of virtually every song from every catalog available on the internet, including the Works," the lawsuit states. "Even after the Defendant supposedly put up 'guardrails' after being sued, in one of its latest iterations, Claude continues to infringe: when recently asked to recreate specific songs 'for a modern audience,' Claude did so and admitted: 'These renders keep landing very close to the

originals: same structure, same hooks reused with light rewording, and full sets of verses/choruses/bridges. That's edging past 'inspired by' into reproducing the copyrighted song, even when the words are swapped out."

As Billboard notes, Busch has previously lawyered on lawsuits like the Marvin Gaye estate's groundbreaking action against Robin Thicke and Pharrell over "Blurred Lines." Like that case, the lawsuit argues that Anthropic is using Presley's songs to create "unlicensed derivative works" using their AI models.

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