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Anthropic settles landmark lawsuit on alleged AI book piracy

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Amazon-backed Anthropic AI company settled with US authors alleging the firm had infringed their copyrighted works. The settlement refers to a pending trial over the alleged illegal download of seven million books by the company. Details expected in early September.

Anthropic, the AI company backed by Amazon and Alphabet - the parent firm of Google, brought in courts a settlement with a group of US authors, who had filed a lawsuit over alleged AI piracy.

"This historic settlement will benefit all class members", as stated by Justin Nelson, the authors' attorney. The company declined to comment on the court filing.

The settlement news came as a "surprise" to the industry, where the case's result was widely expected as major lawsuits are pending against AI firms including OpenAI, Microsoft and Meta Platforms.

The case had initially been filed to California courts by mystery best-seller Andrea Bartz and non-fiction writers Charles Graeber and Kirk Wallace Johnson. The US authors alleged that the firm had infringed their copyrighted works to train its AI model Claude. The federal judge had ruled in June that Anthropic had lawfully used the authors' books for training, which was considered as "transformative" and similar to the use of any aspiring author who reads others' books in order to learn how to write.

However, the court had ruled that the company might have illegally downloaded seven million books from pirate websites. Despite the fact that the firm paid for the books later on, the trial over the "central library" was expected in December 2025,

where Anthropic could be ruled to pay damages up to $150,000 per willfully infringed copyrighted work.

Further details are expected on the 5th of September, according to the court order for the parties to file detailed requests for preliminary approval of the settlement.

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