

PRESS RELEASE

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Image creators sue Meta over large-scale copyright infringement

Dutch copyright organisation Pictoright has sued Meta, the parent company of Facebook and Instagram, for copyright infringement. The company is not fulfilling its legal obligations towards the visual artists represented by Pictoright.

Pictoright is of the opinion that Meta should pay a fair remuneration for the use of images on their social media platforms. Since the summer of 2021, they have been obliged to do so: the Dutch Copyright Act was then adapted to European regulations, with the aim that platforms will pay for the use of copyrighted content. More than two years later, there is still no prospect of a licensing agreement. Stichting Pictoright, representing more than 100,000 visual creators worldwide, therefore sees no other option than to go to court.

Fair remuneration

'Social media platforms make a huge amount of money from advertising thanks to the content that users upload and distribute,' says Hanneke Holthuis, General Counsel of Pictoright. 'Much of that content is created by professional photographers, designers, illustrators, architects, and other visual artists - works that are protected by copyright. Freely and without consent, their work is being shared on a large scale. It is only fair that the creators of these works be compensated for this, as is the case for other forms of large-scale use.'

No 'upload filter'

The proceedings are explicitly not aimed at forcing Meta to remove or filter all professionally created images. Introducing an 'upload filter' - that term circulated during the period when the legislation was being drafted - is not an issue as far as Pictoright is concerned. Pictoright wants to make sound agreements with Meta, to ensure image creators receive fair compensation for their mass-shared work on social media. So perhaps the term 'upload fee' might be more appropriate. And that benefits everyone: the platforms, the people who use them and the visual authors.

Note to editors: for more information, please contact Hanneke Holthuis (General Counsel Pictoright) at h.holthuis@pictoright.nl or +31205891840.

About us:

Pictoright is the collective management and copyright organisation for visual authors in the Netherlands: illustrators, visual artists, graphic designers, photographers, architects, and other visual artists (or their heirs). These visual authors can join Pictoright free of charge to claim the collective fees to which they are entitled. In addition, they can commission Pictoright to protect their rights and collect fees for the use of their work.

Pictoright is a non-profit foundation designated by the government to collect and distribute collective rights remunerations. Pictoright also exploits individual copyrights, provides legal assistance, acts as an enquiry point and is committed to improving the copyright position of visual authors.