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Fair remuneration demanded: GEMA files lawsuit against Suno Inc.

Munich (ots) -

GEMA is taking legal action against Suno Inc., an American provider of AI-generated audio content. It is accusing the company of processing protected recordings of world-famous songs from GEMA's repertoire in the tool without paying remuneration. In numerous cases, the AI tool generated audio content that is confusingly similar to the original songs such as 'Forever Young', 'Daddy Cool', 'Mambo No. 5' or 'Cheri Cheri Lady'.

To enforce the rights of its members, GEMA filed a lawsuit against the AI provider Suno Inc. with the Munich Regional Court on 21 January 2025. The music tool makes it possible to generate playable audio content using simple prompts. GEMA was able to document that the system outputs content that obviously infringes copyrights. In terms of melody, harmony and rhythm, this content largely corresponds to world-famous works whose authors GEMA represents. The songs affected include those by Alphaville (Forever Young), Kristina Bach (Atemlos), Lou Bega (Mambo No. 5), Frank Farian (Daddy Cool) and Modern Talking (Cheri Cheri Lady).

The results clearly show that Suno Inc. has systematically used GEMA's repertoire for the training of its music tool and is now exploiting it commercially without giving the authors of the works a financial share. Users of the premium version of the AI tool, on the other hand, have to pay a subscription fee to Suno Inc.

Dr Tobias Holzmüller, CEO of GEMA, says: 'Human creativity is the basis of all generative AI. But this market has so far lacked basic principles such as transparency, fairness and respect. AI providers such as Suno Inc. use our members' works without their consent and profit financially from them. At the same time, the output generated in this way competes with the works created by humans and deprives them of their economic basis. GEMA is endeavouring to find solutions in partnership with the AI companies. But this will not work without adhering to the necessary basic rules of fair cooperation and, above all, it will not work without the acquisition of licences.'

Dr Ralf Weigand, Chairman of GEMA's Supervisory Board, says: 'Generative AI tools such as the music tool from Suno Inc. make uninhibited use of compositions and texts that do not belong to them. If we don't want to do without man-made music in the future, we urgently need a legal framework that guarantees authors an appropriate share of the value created by AI providers. Otherwise, we will very quickly reach the point where no one will be able to make a living from their creative work - a 'brave new world' after all human creativity in music has ended!'

Dr Kai Welp, General Counsel of GEMA, says: 'Providers of generative AI must respect copyright law and remunerate authors for their creative work. Unfortunately, many AI providers have deliberately ignored this matter of course in the past. This must change. The lawsuit against Suno Inc. is part of an overall concept of measures taken by GEMA, at the end of which there will be fair treatment of authors and their remuneration.'

GEMA filed a lawsuit against OpenAI with the Munich Regional Court back in November 2024. It accuses the company of reproducing protected song lyrics by GEMA members without having acquired licences or remunerated the authors of the works used. With the current lawsuit, GEMA is now extending its activities to its core area, namely the licensing of playable music titles. In the USA, Suno Inc.'s AI tool is already the subject of a lawsuit by the music industry, whereas in Europe, GEMA's lawsuit is the first against one of the leading providers of AI music tools.

In Germany GEMA represents copyrights for over 95,000 members (composers, lyricists and music publishers) and over two million copyrights owners from all over the world. It is one of the largest societies for creators of musical works in the world.

Note to editors

FAQ & Example presentation of the comparison of AI-generated songs and original songs: www.gema.de/lawsuit-suno-ai

Lawsuit GEMA against OpenAI:

<https://www.gema.de/en/w/gema-files-lawsuit-against-openai>

GEMA's AI Charter:

<https://www.gema.de/en/news/ai-and-music/ai-charter>

GEMA's AI licensing model:

<https://www.gema.de/en/w/generative-ai-licensing-model>

The study 'AI and music' (2024) can be found at

<https://www.gema.de/en/news/ai-study>

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