

Microsoft

Accuses Cybersquatters

US Software giant Microsoft recently filed two lawsuits against four men they believe are profiting from "cybersquatting" and "typosquatting."

They claim the 4 men registered over 400 domain names which bear close similarity to ones in use by Microsoft.

"Microsoft hopes to help Web surfers reach their intended Internet destinations" said attorney Aaron Kornblum. "Where you cross the line is when you misuse someone else's intellectual property in your domain name. Microsoft is aggressively targeting those who misuse Microsoft's intellectual property for monetary gain."

So what is 'cybersquatting' exactly? The term is used to describe the practice of registering domain names that infringe on a trademark. Cybersquatting is registering, trafficking in, or using a domain name with bad-faith intent to profit from the goodwill of a trademark belonging to someone else. Microsoft's claim is that the 4 men violated the Anticybersquatting Consumer Protection Act by registering domain names with purposefully misspelled names – all with similar addresses to their own (known as 'typosquatting').

The disputed domain names include: 1microsoft67.info, halo2player.com, freehotmail.net, genuinewindowsvista.com, and windowshome.info.

Microsoft claim the defendants were planning to make money by falsely leading websurfers to these sites, all of which were packed with pay-per-click advertisements.

A former victim of cybersquatting was Harrods, the famous London department store, who fought a vigorous court battle to wrestle the domain www.harrods.com from the hands of cybersquatters.

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