

Scarlett Johansson told OpenAI not to use her voice – and she's not happy they might have anyway

“Last September, I received an offer from Sam Altman, who wanted to hire me to voice the current ChatGPT 4.0 system. He told me that he felt that by my voicing the system, I could bridge the gap between tech companies and creatives and help consumers to feel comfortable with the seismic shift concerning humans and AI. He said he felt that my voice would be comforting to people.

After much consideration and for personal reasons, I declined the offer. Nine months later, my friends, family and the general public all noted how much the newest system named “Sky” sounded like me.

When I heard the released demo, I was shocked, angered and in disbelief that Mr. Altman would pursue a voice that sounded so eerily similar to mine that my closest friends and news outlets could not tell the difference. Mr. Altman even insinuated that the similarity was intentional, tweeting a single word “her” – a reference to the film in which I voiced a chat system, Samantha, who forms an intimate relationship with a human.

Two days before the ChatGPT 4.0 demo was released, Mr. Altman contacted my agent, asking me to reconsider. Before we could connect, the system was out there.

As a result of their actions, I was forced to hire legal

counsel, who wrote two letters to Mr. Altman and OpenAI, setting out what they had done and asking them to detail the exact process by which they created the “Sky” voice. Consequently, OpenAI reluctantly agreed to take down the “Sky” voice.

In a time when we are all grappling with deepfakes and the protection of our own likeness, our own work, our own identities, I believe these are questions that deserve absolute clarity. I look forward to resolution in the form of transparency and the passage of appropriate legislation to help ensure that individual rights are protected.”

<https://www.theverge.com/2024/5/20/24161253/scarlett-johansson-openai-altman-legal-action>