

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF DELAWARE

THOMSON REUTERS ENTERPRISE)	
CENTRE GMBH and)	
WEST PUBLISHING CORPORATION,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,)	C.A. No. _____
)	
v.)	DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL
)	
ROSS INTELLIGENCE INC.,)	
)	
Defendant.)	

COMPLAINT

Plaintiffs Thomson Reuters Enterprise Centre GmbH (“Thomson Reuters”) and West Publishing Corporation (“West”) (collectively, “Plaintiffs”), for their Complaint, hereby allege against Defendant ROSS Intelligence Inc. (“ROSS”) as follows:

NATURE OF THE ACTION

1. Plaintiffs created and nurtured their well-known Westlaw product since its inception, including without limitation its unique West Key Number System (“WKNS”) and West Headnotes (collectively, “Westlaw Content”). ROSS is attempting to create a business by taking for itself critical features of Westlaw, without permission from or compensation to Plaintiffs. Upon information and belief, ROSS illicitly and surreptitiously used a then-Westlaw licensee to acquire access to and copy Plaintiffs’ valuable content. ROSS did so, not for the purposes of legal research, but to rush out a competing product without having to spend the resources, creative energy, and time to create it itself. The net result is that Plaintiffs are now being put in the unfair position of having to compete with a product that they unknowingly helped create.

2. This action seeks to recover damages that Plaintiffs have suffered and to prevent the irreparable harm that continues to threaten them as a result of ROSS's deceitful and willful copying of Plaintiffs' copyrighted content and organization, as well as ROSS's tortious interference with contract.

3. Specifically, upon information and belief, ROSS intentionally and knowingly induced a third-party called LegalEase Solutions, LLC ("LegalEase")—a legal support services company—to breach its contract with West by engaging in the unlawful reproduction of Plaintiffs' copyrighted content and distribution of that content *en masse* to ROSS. ROSS did so after asking for and explicitly being denied access to Westlaw by West on the basis that West does not give competitors access to its products. Thus, ROSS induced LegalEase to engage in this unlawful activity, knowing that it violated the terms of LegalEase's contract with West and that West would not grant ROSS a license to use Plaintiffs' content to create a competing product. ROSS committed direct copyright infringement by reproducing and creating a derivative work based on Plaintiffs' content, and is also secondarily liable for LegalEase's copyright infringement.

4. In short, ROSS has engaged, and continues to engage, in a pattern and practice of knowingly, intentionally, and willfully infringing Plaintiffs' copyrights. Further, it is obvious from the roundabout and deceitful tactics ROSS employed to gain access to Westlaw, , that it was aware what it was doing was improper, and without authorization or consent from the Plaintiffs.

5. Hence, due to ROSS's blatant and willful infringement, Thomson Reuters and West file this lawsuit seeking injunctive relief and damages that they have suffered as a result of ROSS's direct, contributory, and vicarious copyright infringement under the Copyright Act of

1976, 17 U.S.C. § 101 *et. seq.*, and intentional and tortious interference with contractual relations.

PARTIES

6. Plaintiff Thomson Reuters Enterprise Centre GmbH is a limited liability company having its principal place of business in Zug, Switzerland. It is the owner of the copyrights in and to Westlaw Content.

7. Plaintiff West Publishing Corporation is a Minnesota corporation having its principal place of business at 610 Opperman Drive, Eagan, Minnesota 55123. West creates and authors Westlaw Content.

8. Defendant ROSS Intelligence Inc. is a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Delaware and having an office in San Francisco, California.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

9. This action arises under the Copyright Act of 1976, 17 U.S.C. § 101 *et. seq.* and Delaware law. This Court has jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331, 1338 and 1367.

10. Venue is proper in this District under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1391 and 1400.

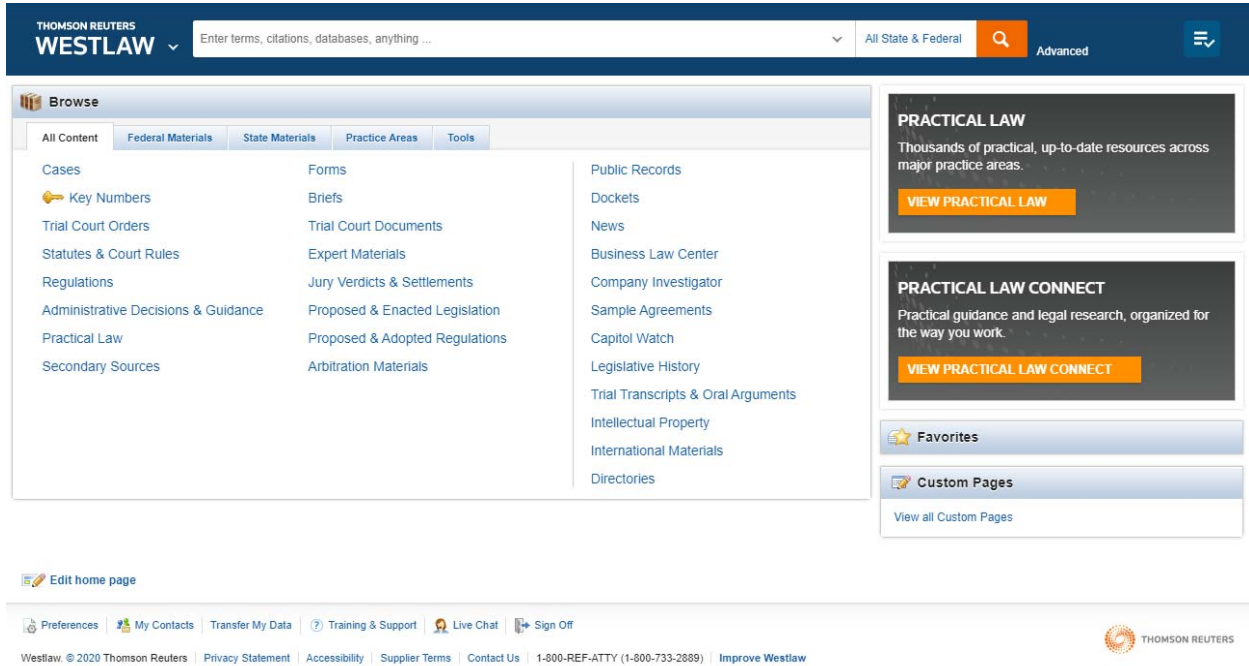
ALLEGATIONS COMMON TO ALL CLAIMS FOR RELIEF

I. Plaintiffs and the Creativity of Westlaw

11. Plaintiffs are well-known as industry leaders in online legal research. Westlaw, in particular, offers to West's subscribers access to a comprehensive collection of legal information that is easily searchable through keywords, natural language, and/or Boolean inquiries, backed by a rigorous editorial process that makes navigating the legal field simple. Editorial enhancements, such as Plaintiffs' proprietary West Headnotes, notes of decisions, and the WKNS are but a few examples of the creative and original material authored by West's dedicated attorney-editors. Westlaw makes legal research seamless through its well-designed

structure, sequence, and organization. Below is Westlaw’s home page, which helps subscribers easily navigate to the exact information for which they are looking.

Westlaw’s Home Page



12. Integral to Westlaw is Plaintiffs’ WKNS, which organizes U.S. law using a hierarchy that is unique to Plaintiffs. The WKNS is the backbone through which thousands of lawyers conduct legal research. The development of the WKNS, beginning in print and now in a digital format, has been and continues to be the result of Plaintiffs’ numerous creative choices about how to organize cases and which cases to place in that classification, requiring substantial investments of time, technological and human resources, and money over the course of decades. Below is the WKNS home page that can be navigated by Westlaw subscribers.

The WKNS Home Page

Home [West Key Number System](#) [★ Add to Favorites](#) [🔗 Copy link](#)

Search for Key Numbers relevant to your issue ⓘ

🔍 Enter terms e.g., landlord duty of care to trespassers [Search](#)

Jurisdiction selected: All State & Federal [Change Jurisdiction](#)

Specify Content to Search

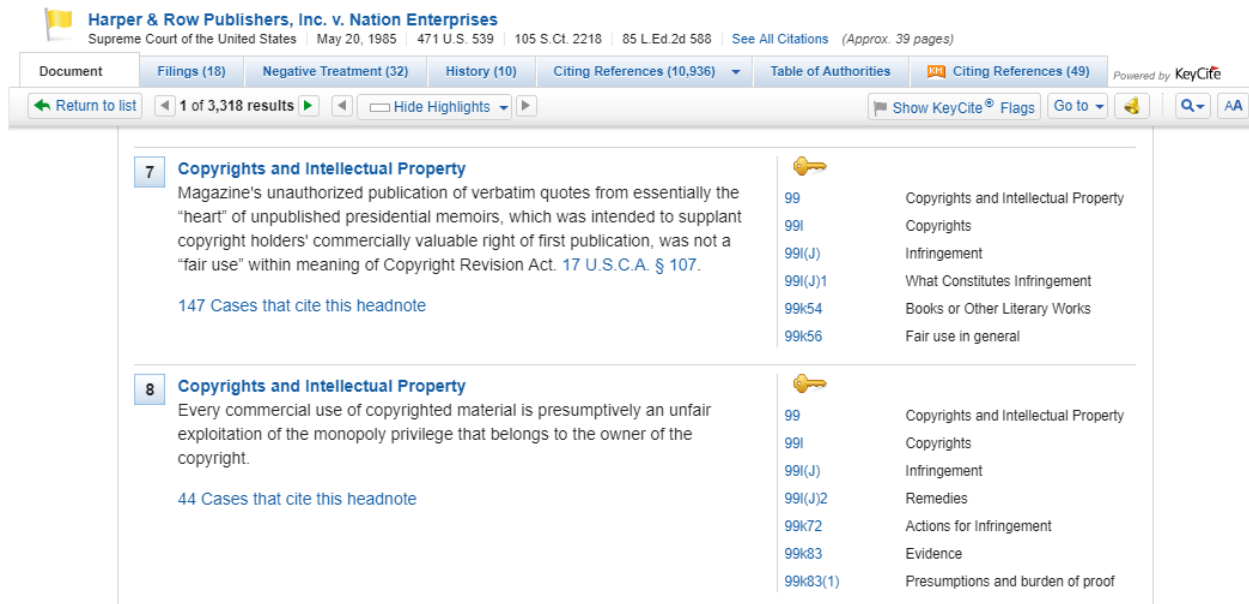
Select all content | No items selected | [Clear Selection](#)

<input type="checkbox"/> 1 ABANDONED AND LOST PROPERTY	<input type="checkbox"/> 142T ELECTION LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> 289 PARTNERSHIP
<input type="checkbox"/> 2 ABATEMENT AND REVIVAL	<input type="checkbox"/> 143 ELECTION OF REMEDIES	<input type="checkbox"/> 290 PARTY WALLS
<input type="checkbox"/> 4 ABORTION AND BIRTH CONTROL	<input type="checkbox"/> 145 ELECTRICITY	<input type="checkbox"/> 291 PATENTS
<input type="checkbox"/> 5 ABSENTEES	<input type="checkbox"/> 146 EMBEZZLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> 294 PAYMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> 6 ABSTRACTS OF TITLE	<input type="checkbox"/> 148 EMINENT DOMAIN	<input type="checkbox"/> 295 PENALTIES
<input type="checkbox"/> 7 ACCESSION	<input type="checkbox"/> 149 ENTRY, WRIT OF	<input type="checkbox"/> 296 PENSIONS
<input type="checkbox"/> 8 ACCORD AND SATISFACTION	<input type="checkbox"/> 149E ENVIRONMENTAL LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> 297 PERJURY
<input type="checkbox"/> 9 ACCOUNT	<input type="checkbox"/> 149T EQUITABLE CONVERSION	<input type="checkbox"/> 298 PERPETUITIES
<input type="checkbox"/> 10 ACCOUNT, ACTION ON	<input type="checkbox"/> 150 EQUITY	<input type="checkbox"/> 300 PILOTS
<input type="checkbox"/> 11 ACCOUNT STATED	<input type="checkbox"/> 151 ESCAPE	<input type="checkbox"/> 302 PLEADING
<input type="checkbox"/> 11A ACCOUNTANTS	<input type="checkbox"/> 152 ESCHEAT	<input type="checkbox"/> 303 PLEDGES
<input type="checkbox"/> 12 ACKNOWLEDGMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> 154 ESTATES IN PROPERTY	<input type="checkbox"/> 305 POSSESSORY WARRANT

13. As an example of Plaintiffs’ complex hierarchy, within the “Abandoned and Lost Property” topic are the Key Numbers “Nature and elements,” “evidence and questions for jury,” and “operation and effect.” Within the “Nature and elements” Key Number are Key Numbers assigned to the legal issues and points of law “In general,” “Intent,” and “Acts and omissions” topics. The “In general” Key Number is delineated 1k1.1, and currently contains 603 cases. Nothing dictated the hierarchy that Plaintiffs created as cases, topics, legal issues, and points of law could be arranged in an unlimited number of combinations.

14. As decisions are issued, West’s attorney-editors—all of whom are bar-admitted—carefully review them and create original West Headnotes to describe the key concepts discussed in the case. West’s attorney-editors then integrate those West Headnotes into the WKNS so subscribers can easily find the latest decisions on any given topic or issue. Moreover, West’s attorney-editors regularly edit and revise the West Headnotes and the West Key Numbers of previously integrated cases so that subscribers can trust the accuracy and timeliness of the information that is offered.

15. Westlaw includes access to volumes of proprietary material (such as West Headnotes, case summaries, and other Westlaw-created content), databases, and compilations of case law, state and federal statutes, state and federal regulations, law journals, treatises, and other resources—all organized and curated by West’s editorial team. Westlaw incorporates decades of search and editorial intelligence with the latest technological innovations to bring its subscribers the most comprehensive legal research platform on the market. Below is an example of West Headnotes describing the key concepts discussed in the *Harper & Row* case, as well as the manner in which subscribers can see and further navigate to corresponding West Key Numbers.



16. The WKNS adds immeasurable value to Westlaw. It is how thousands of professionals learn to navigate and conceptualize the legal field and is what helped position Westlaw as the leading legal research service.

17. Plaintiffs take great care in deciding who they permit to access Westlaw and what those with access are allowed to do with it. Plaintiffs have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in Westlaw and thus take measures, such as those limitations set forth in West’s Subscriber Agreements, to protect the proprietary nature of Westlaw Content.

18. Specifically, each of West’s Subscriber Agreements with third parties—like the one it entered into with LegalEase (the “Service Agreement”)—provides precisely what third parties are and are not allowed to do with Westlaw content. Critically, the Service Agreement provides that a subscriber “may not sell, sublicense, distribute, display, store or transfer [West’s] products or any data in [its] products in bulk or in any way that could be used to replace or substitute for [its] products in whole or in part or as a component of any material offered for sale, license or distribution to third parties.” Moreover, although a subscriber may “store, on a matter-by-matter basis, *insubstantial portions* of [Westlaw content]... in connection with an active matter being handled by Subscriber in its regular course of business,” the amount stored must “(a) have no independent value other than as part of Subscriber’s work product; and (b) c[an] not be used in any way in whole or in part as a substitute for any service or product provided by West.” Similarly, although a subscriber may “on *an occasional basis* and via *Product functionality*, direct West to transmit individual documents in electronic format to... individual third parties in connection with actual, ascertainable matters being handled by Subscriber... [a]ll other direct transmission of electronic copies by Subscriber is *prohibited*.” Finally, the Service Agreement provides that a “Subscriber shall not copy, download, scrape, store, publish, post, transmit, retransmit, transfer, distribute, disseminate, broadcast, circulate, sell, resell, license, sublicense or otherwise use [Westlaw content], or any portion of [Westlaw content], in any form or by any means except as expressly permitted by [the License Grant], or as otherwise expressly permitted in writing by West.”

19. As these restrictions show, although Westlaw subscribers are permitted to use Westlaw in certain ways, they are expressly prohibited from using Westlaw Content to create a competitive product or to sell the Plaintiffs’ proprietary content to others. Westlaw, including

Westlaw Content, is extremely valuable, and thus West is constantly monitoring user activity for behavior that would breach the terms of its subscriber agreement—which is precisely how West discovered ROSS’s unlawful infringement and covert activity.

II. Plaintiffs’ Valuable Intellectual Property Rights in Westlaw

20. Plaintiffs have invested vast resources, including creativity, talent, time, effort, and money, to create Westlaw Content. West employs attorney-editors whose sole responsibility is to review decisions, create original and creative West Headnotes summarizing key points of law, and organizing those cases and West Headnotes in the WKNS. In addition, the editors are regularly reviewing existing West Headnotes and the WKNS to ensure the greatest accuracy in light of the countless new cases that are added every day.

21. Cases, areas of law, legal topics, legal issues, subtopics, and subissues can all be summarized and organized in a variety of different ways—the structure, sequence, and organization of the WKNS is not something that has been achieved by accident or necessity; rather, it is the result of decades of human creativity and choices.

22. To protect Westlaw, Thomson Reuters registers the database with the United States Copyright Office every three months. For example, attached hereto as **Exhibit A**, and incorporated herein by reference, are true and correct copies of certificates of registration issued by the Copyright Office and other documents reflecting Westlaw’s registrations. They reflect the effective date of registration, as well as the assigned registration numbers.

23. Thomson Reuters is the sole owner and proprietor of all right, title, and interest in and to the copyrights in Westlaw. The copyrights in Westlaw are presently valid and subsisting and were valid and subsisting at all times affecting the matters complained of herein.

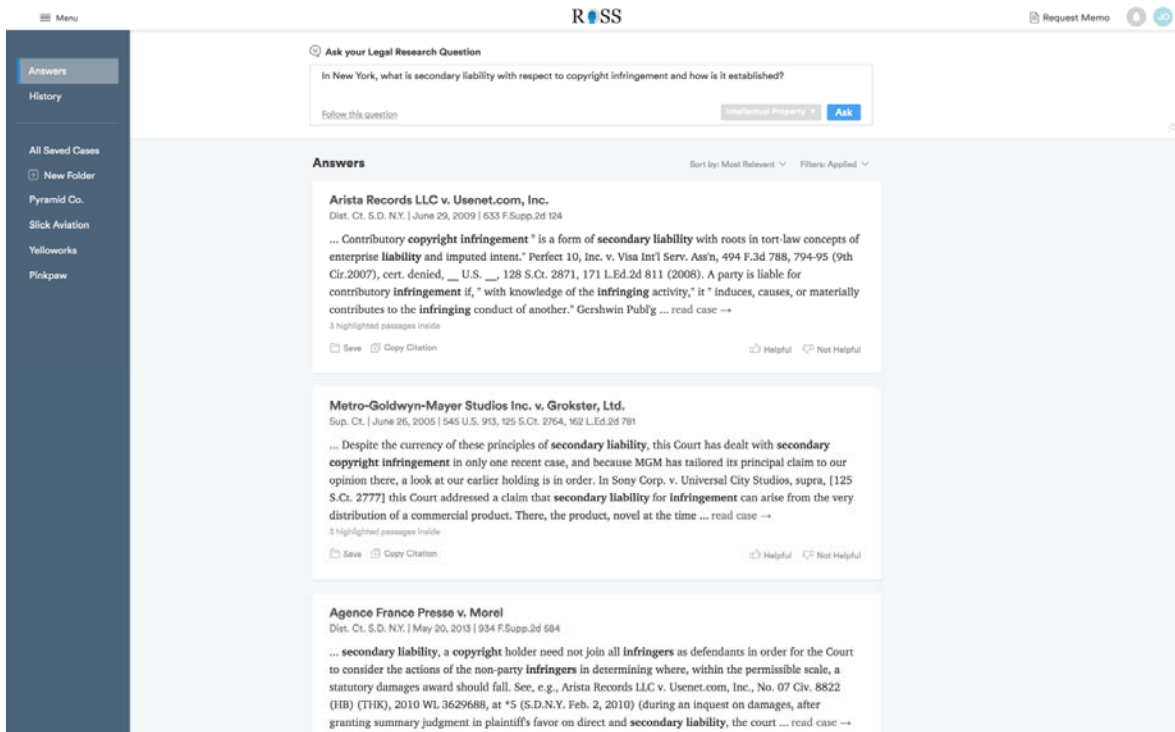
III. ROSS Intelligence and Its Infringement of Westlaw

24. Upon information and belief, ROSS was founded in 2015 and is engaged in the business of offering and providing to the public legal research services through its ROSS platform.

25. Upon information and belief, ROSS first began by offering research services in both bankruptcy and intellectual property law, but now offers case law, statutes, and regulations across various practice areas and all 50 states.

26. Upon information and belief, as the screenshot below illustrates, ROSS's users are able to search for relevant law by posing a question in natural language, as opposed to Boolean terms or key words.

Results of Natural Language Search on ROSS



27. Upon information and belief, similar to Westlaw, the ROSS platform provides users with case summaries and treatments, as well as allows the user to use the initial search

results as a jumping-off point to find additional cases with similar facts and/or procedural postures.

28. Upon information and belief, to create a legal research platform that could compete with Westlaw, ROSS needed to acquire vast amounts of legal content, descriptions of that content, and a means by which to organize that legal content. ROSS knew that it would not be granted access to Westlaw for such a purpose, so instead ROSS opted to gain access to Westlaw through deceitful and undisclosed tactics.

29. Upon information and belief, to develop its platform, ROSS contracted with LegalEase—a legal research and writing support services company. Because LegalEase only provides research and writing services, not a competing legal research product like ROSS does, it was able to obtain a limited license beginning in 2008 to use Westlaw to conduct legal research for customers. The Service Agreement between LegalEase and West prohibited LegalEase from running or installing any computer software on West’s products or network, as well as selling, sublicensing, distributing, displaying, storing, or transferring Westlaw information in bulk to third parties.

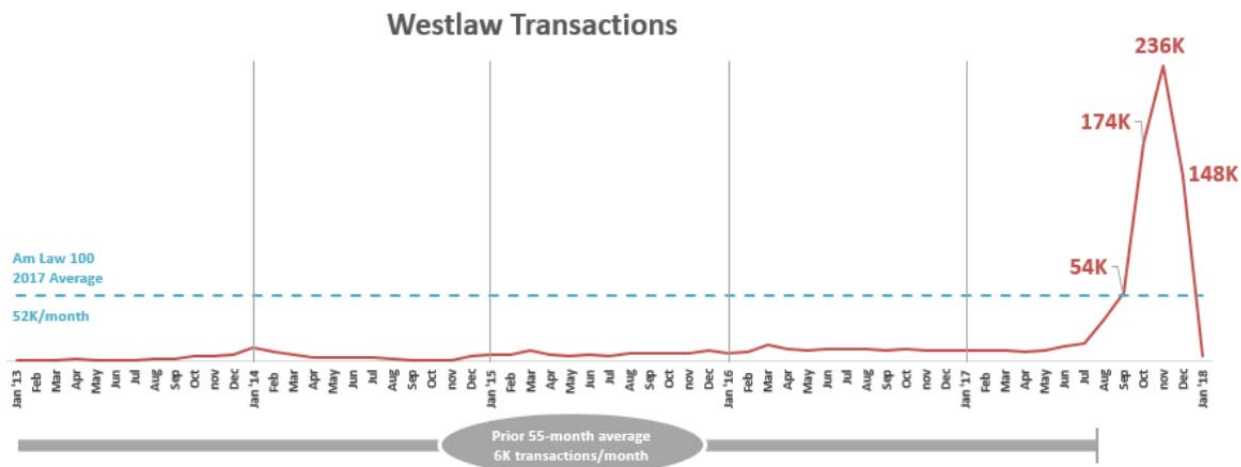
30. For years, LegalEase’s usage appeared to show that it abided by the terms of the Service Agreement. That all changed in July 2017.

31. Prior to July 2017, LegalEase had consistently averaged approximately 6,000 Westlaw transactions per month.¹ Beginning in about July 2017, LegalEase’s use of Westlaw spiked dramatically, eventually reaching approximately 236,000 transactions per month, which, as shown below, is nearly a forty-fold increase over LegalEase’s historical usage pattern and

¹ For the purposes of this complaint, a “transaction” refers to any executed search, as well as any viewing, printing, downloading, or emailing of a specific document.

represents a usage rate of nearly five times greater than the average monthly usage of the “AmLaw 100” law firms.

LegalEase’s Westlaw Usage²



32. Further investigation revealed that users of certain Westlaw credentials assigned to LegalEase were exhibiting activity that indicated that computer software, or a “bot,” was being used, and that it appeared as though content from Westlaw was being downloaded and stored in bulk by said those software tools in violation of the Service Agreement. West observed that LegalEase’s software was systematically making its way through the WKNS to, upon information and belief, reproduce and store the manner in which the WKNS was organized.

33. Upon information and belief, LegalEase implemented this automated software, materially breached its Service Agreement with West, and unlawfully reproduced and distributed the copyright-protected Westlaw Content at the direction of and to benefit ROSS. In a July 2017 interview—the same time LegalEase’s Westlaw transactions began to skyrocket—LegalEase stated that it was working with “a machine learning legal research firm,” later revealed to be ROSS, to help create a new legal research product. LegalEase explained that it was feeding

² This graph is based on usage data West regularly tracks and records for its subscribers.

ROSS with “tons and tons of legal research,” which, upon information and belief, was copyrighted content from Westlaw, to help create ROSS’s competing product.

34. Upon information and belief, ROSS paid LegalEase to copy the Westlaw Content from Westlaw to build ROSS’s competing platform, thereby knowingly and deliberately instructing LegalEase to breach its Service Agreement with West. Upon information and belief, LegalEase and ROSS have been working together since at least October 2015.

35. Upon information and belief, after LegalEase copied the Westlaw Content, it distributed that content to Ross. Ross then copied that content and used it to create its platform.

36. By letter dated January 4, 2018, West terminated LegalEase’s Service Agreement due to LegalEase’s material breach and violation of the Service Agreement. The effective date of termination was January 17, 2018.

37. It is clear that by copying the copyright-protected Westlaw Content—piggybacking off of the creativity, countless hours, and extraordinary expense that have gone into creating Westlaw—ROSS drastically sped up its development time and reduced the cost associated with the development of its competing platform.

38. Upon information and belief, ROSS’s copying has allowed it to forego the immense expenditure of resources—including creativity, talent, time, effort, and money—that otherwise would be required to create its competing platform as the algorithms comprising ROSS’s platform function in a manner analogous to those of Westlaw.

39. Upon information and belief, unless enjoined by this Court, ROSS intends to continue to infringe upon Plaintiffs’ copyrights and otherwise to profit from Plaintiffs’ works. Accordingly, Plaintiffs have suffered irreparable damage. Plaintiffs have no adequate remedy at law to redress all of the injuries that ROSS has caused, and intends to cause, by its conduct.

Plaintiffs will continue to suffer irreparable damage until ROSS's actions alleged above are enjoined by this Court.

CLAIMS FOR RELIEF

COUNT I

Copyright Infringement (17 U.S.C. § 101 *et seq.*)

40. Plaintiffs repeat and reallege each and every allegation above as if fully set forth herein.

41. Westlaw, including, without limitation, the Westlaw Content, is original and creative. As a result, it constitutes copyrightable subject matter under the laws of the United States.

42. Thomson Reuters is the owner of valid copyrights in Westlaw, and the Register of Copyrights has issued certificates of registration for it. It has complied in all respects with 17 U.S.C. § 101, *et seq.*, and has secured the exclusive rights and privileges in and to the copyrights in Westlaw Content.

43. By its actions, alleged above, ROSS has infringed and will continue to infringe the Westlaw Content's copyrights by, *inter alia*, reproducing and creating a derivative work using the Westlaw Content without any authorization or other permission from Plaintiffs. ROSS's direct infringement of Plaintiffs' copyrights has been deliberate, willful, and in utter disregard of Plaintiffs' rights.

44. Moreover, as LegalEase clearly infringed Plaintiffs' copyrights by reproducing and distributing the Westlaw Content to ROSS, ROSS is contributorily liable for materially and knowingly contributing to LegalEase's infringement. Upon information and belief, ROSS induced LegalEase to infringe Plaintiffs' copyrights by directly contracting with LegalEase to reproduce and distribute Westlaw content to ROSS. Moreover, it knew that LegalEase was

unlawfully reproducing and distributing the copyrighted Westlaw Content as ROSS received tens of thousands of documents from LegalEase containing the Westlaw Content or materials based thereon.

45. Further, ROSS is vicariously liable for LegalEase's direct infringement. Upon information and belief, ROSS had a financial interest in LegalEase's direct infringement, including, without limitation, significantly reducing the cost of development of its platform, procuring investments in ROSS to which ROSS was not entitled, and avoiding the cost that ROSS would have to pay to obtain this content. LegalEase was an agent of ROSS, and ROSS exercised the requisite levels of control over the creation and distribution of the documents that LegalEase sent to ROSS to support a finding of vicarious liability.

46. As a direct and proximate result of ROSS's wrongful conduct, Plaintiffs have been substantially and irreparably harmed in an amount not readily capable of determination. Unless restrained by this Court, ROSS will cause further irreparable injury to Plaintiffs.

47. Plaintiffs are entitled to injunctive relief preventing ROSS, its agents and employees, and all persons acting in concert or participation with it, from engaging in any further infringement of Westlaw.

48. Plaintiffs are further entitled to recover from ROSS the damages, including attorneys' fees and costs, they have sustained and will sustain, and any gains, profits, and advantages obtained by ROSS as a result of its acts of infringement as alleged above. At present, the amount of such damages, gains, profits, and advantages cannot be fully ascertained by Plaintiffs, but will be established according to proof at trial. Plaintiffs are also entitled to recover statutory damages for ROSS's willful infringement of its copyrights.

COUNT II
Tortious Interference with Contract

49. Plaintiffs repeat and reallege each and every allegation above as if fully set forth herein.

50. A valid contractual relationship between West and LegalEase existed for nearly ten years prior to ROSS's inducement of LegalEase to breach the Service Agreement.

51. Upon information and belief, ROSS knew that LegalEase had a valid contract with West—as apparent from the fact ROSS contracted with LegalEase to obtain the password-protected and copyrighted content from Westlaw that ROSS was explicitly denied access to—and intentionally instructed LegalEase to act in breach of that contract without justification.

52. Upon information and belief, ROSS knew that it would not be able to receive permission from Thomson Reuters or West to access Westlaw, that Westlaw was secured behind a paywall, and that LegalEase's Service Agreement did not permit the naked reproduction and distribution of copyrighted material from Westlaw.

53. As a result of ROSS's intentional and tortious interference with West's contract with LegalEase, Plaintiffs have been damaged in an amount to be determined at trial.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs Thomson Reuters and West respectfully request judgment in their favor and against Defendant ROSS as follows:

- A. Finding that ROSS has directly and indirectly infringed Plaintiffs' copyrights in Westlaw;
- B. Finding that ROSS's infringement of Plaintiffs' copyrights was willful;
- C. Finding that ROSS has tortiously interfered with West's contract with LegalEase;

- D. Finding that there is a substantial likelihood that ROSS will continue to infringe Plaintiffs' copyrights unless enjoined from doing so;
- E. Issuing a preliminary and permanent injunction enjoining ROSS, and its agents, servants, employees, attorneys, successors and assigns, and all persons, firms and corporations acting in concert with it, from directly or indirectly infringing Plaintiffs' copyrights, including, but not limited to, offering ROSS's legal research product;
- F. Ordering the removal and destruction of Westlaw Content from ROSS's legal research product;
- G. Ordering ROSS to render a full and complete accounting to Thomson Reuters and West for ROSS's profits, gains, advantages and the value of the business opportunities received from the foregoing acts of infringement;
- H. Entering judgment for Plaintiffs against ROSS for all damages suffered by Plaintiffs and for any profits or gain by ROSS attributable to infringement of Thomson Reuters' copyrights in amounts to be determined at trial;
- I. Entering judgment for Plaintiffs against ROSS for statutory damages based upon ROSS's willful acts of infringement pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504;
- J. Entering judgment for Plaintiffs against ROSS for punitive damages based on ROSS's tortious interference with the contractual relationship between LegalEase and West in amounts to be determined at trial;
- K. Awarding Plaintiffs the costs and disbursement of this action, including reasonable attorneys' fees and costs pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 505;

- L. Awarding Plaintiffs pre-judgment and post-judgment interest, to the fullest extent available, on the foregoing; and
- M. Granting such other, further and different relief as the Court deems just and proper.

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Plaintiffs demand a trial by jury on all issues so triable.

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