EXHIBIT I

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Huffington Post Finally Responds, Stands By Its Completely Bogus, Totally Debunked 'History Of Email' Series

Failures
by Mike Masnick
Thu, Sep 4th 2014
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from the *destroying-all-journalistic-integrity* dept

Over the past couple of days we've been writing about an incredibly questionable series of articles at Huffington Post, *pretending* to be about the "history of email" even though they're not. They're actually a completely bogus rewriting of **well-documented** history to **falsely** pretend that a guy named V.A. Shiva Ayyadurai invented email as a 14-year-old boy. He did not. Not only do Ayyadurai and some of his friends totally misrepresent reality, they *fraudulently* make claims that are easily debunked. As we've discussed, their two biggest claims are (1) that the "US government officially recognized Ayyaudurai as the inventor of email" in 1982 and (2) that a leading analysis of electronic messaging in 1977, by Dave Crocker at RAND, claims that a full interoffice email system is "impossible." Both of these claims are absolutely **false**.

As we've explained, the first one relies on blatantly misleading people about what a copyright is and what Ayyadurai copyrighted. Copyright does not cover "inventions." It only covers creative *expression*. What Ayyadurai got a copyright on is a specific computer program called "email." That does not mean he invented email. Just as Microsoft holds a copyright on "Windows" but did not invent windowed user interfaces, Ayyadurai did not invent email. The copyright does not mean that he did invent email, and the fact that he and his friends continue to pretend that a copyright is something it is not is farcical. They are relying on the ignorance of reporters and the public about what a copyright is. The second issue is even more damaging. Ayyadurai and his friends claim that Crocker's paper is the "smoking gun" that proves that no one else was working on a full email system at the time. And yet, as we noted, they never actually link to the paper. We did. You can read it here, and you see that not only does it say the exact opposite of what they claim (debunking Ayyadurai's claims), they deliberately misrepresent what Crocker said by taking two separate sentences, from different pages in the report, removing the context around them, and mashing them together to pretend they say something they do not. It's shameless.

In our first post, we claimed that *perhaps* it's true that Ayyadurai was the first person to shorten "electronic mail" (which was in widespread use at the time) to "email" -- but now even that has been called into question. Computer historian Thomas Haigh has been tracking Ayyadurai's lies and misrepresentations for years, and alerts us to the fact that Ayyadurai's story has *notably changed* over the years, revealing additional misrepresentations and attempts to change history. This includes, among other things, him changing his story about when he completed his work -- and when his program "email" was named. Here's Haigh's analysis:

> "Electronic mail" was widely discussed in the 1970s, but was usually shortened simply to "MAIL" when naming commands. However, the Oxford English Dictionary (3rd edition online) gives a June 1979 usage ("Postal Service pushes ahead with E-mail") so Ayyadurai was not the first to use this contraction in print. The program name "EMAIL" is not mentioned in the 1980 newspaper article on Ayyadurai but does appear in his 1981 Westinghouse competition submission. By that year the name EMAIL was in use by CompuServe. Compuserve had offered timesharing computer access and electronic mail to businesses for years. In 1979 it launched a new service, aiming to sell otherwise wasted evening computer time to consumers for the bargain price of $5 an hour. A trademark application (later abandoned) that CompuServe made for "EMAIL" listed 1981/04/01 as its first use by the company, which fits with this May 1981 message mentioning CompuServe's "EMAIL program." By January 1983 "Email™" (for trademark) was part of CompuServe's advertising campaign.

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Furthermore, Haigh details how Ayyadurai has conveniently tried to *rewrite his own history* to counter the debunkings. For example, in 2011, he originally claimed that while he was "challenged" to create an electronic interoffice messaging system in 1978, he didn't actually get it to work until 1980. But, of course, by then email was much more widespread. So, Ayyadurai changed the story, and pretended that he was both challenged and wrote his "50,000 lines of code" and got it all working in 1978. Furthermore, as we noted in our second post, Ayyadurai and his friends are now trying to rewrite history to ignore all those other previous email systems by *tightly defining what an email system is* such that only *his* qualifies. But, as we noted, most of the features he listed are arbitrary and unrelated to the basics of email. All of the core elements of email were widely used before Ayyadurai wrote his system. Haigh details how Ayyadurai has taken this to absolutely ridiculous extremes, claiming that it's not email unless it has 87 specific features (up from 32, which was ratcheted up from an original 6 -- as he continues to revise history):

> One of the five main tabs on Ayyadurai's new site is *"Definition of email."* This presents a short version ("email is the electronic version of the interoffice, inter-organizational paper-based email system") and two lengthy checklists. The first checklist presents 32 distinct features of the traditional mail system, all of which he claims were necessary ("if any one component was taken away...you no longer had a functioning interoffice mail system.") The second checklist repeats these, with some additional items added, and places a check mark by each one to indicate that Ayyadurai's system had that capability. There are 87 of these check marks. If I understand his argument correctly then this signifies that a system must possess 87 specific features to properly be called email.
> Has this definition been widely accepted since 1978, as Ayyadurai claims? No it has not. Indeed, Ayyadurai's own website did not include these definitions of email until recently. The old site (prior to June 2012) offered a *quite different six point definition* of "an E-Mail System." These six points were: User-Friendly Interface; A Rich Set of Features; Network Wide; Security and Login; Enterprise Management; Database and Archival. The definition was originally presented as the work of one Matthew J. Labrador. Labrador claims to have "met Shiva in 1981 in a computer science class" and to have been impressed by his modesty. He recently been motivated by inaccurate reports on email origins to "do my own research... to provide readers with a more comprehensive and holistic history." *Ayyudari's resume* lists Labrador as a student whose bachelor's thesis he supervised in 1990. Labrador, whose prose style closely resembles Ayyadurai's own, expressed awe at Ayyadurai's accomplishments ("in writing this History, I was amazed at the vision that Dr. V.A. Shiva Ayyadurai had even as a 13 year old, in developing that first E-Mail system"), acknowledged his graciousness in providing materials, and proceeded to show that Ayyadurai's system met this unorthodox six point definition.

Either way, given the abundant evidence that Ayyadurai's claim is *complete bullshit*, we were still left amazed that Huffington Post has allowed this to remain on its site.

Late yesterday, a PR person from Huffington Post finally got back to me, claiming they did not get my original email. Huffington Post not only stupidly stands by the completely false story, it claims that the matter is okay because they've "updated each piece with a clarification." The clarification is **not** a "clarification" and it's not an apology for publishing a totally bullshit series. It's merely a repeating of Ayyadurai's lies. Incredibly, they repeat his exact language, suggesting the "clarification" is either from him directly, or taken from the claims in the bogus articles.

> *Clarification about the series: Electronic messaging predates email. To paraphrase Noam Chomsky in 2012, email, spelled uppercase or lowercase, as defined in 1978, was a computer program which was the first full-scale electronic version of the interoffice mail system (Inbox, Outbox, Drafts, Folders, Attachments, etc.), containing the integrated features of what we experience today in "email" programs. However, this is not to imply that prior to the invention of email in 1978, simple methods of computer-to-computer or device-to-device electronic messaging did not exist. In fact such methods of sending text messages electronically -- text messaging -- could be said to date back to the Morse code telegraph of the mid-1800s; or the 1939 World's Fair where IBM sent a message of congratulations from San Francisco to*

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Except, this is equally misleading. The systems in place long before 1978 absolutely **were** "electronic mail" and absolutely "emulated the interoffice mail system." "Email as we know it" was **absolutely not first created at 1978 at UMDNJ** and any *basic reading* of the actual documentation would prove that. I asked Huffington Post's PR people if they really wanted to make this statement, pointing out that it would only make them look silly. For reasons I cannot fathom, they appear to be standing by it and have not yet replied.

Furthermore, this completely misleading and factually bogus "clarification" has not, in fact, been placed on all of the articles in this series. This HuffPost Live article by Emily Tess Katz does not include it at all, but rather repeats many long-disproved claims by Ayyadurai. Apparently Katz tweeted that she stands behind the article, but later deleted that tweet. I asked her again last night if she still stood by the article, but, par for the course, she has not replied.

Huffington Post's PR people further told me that (1) it had not received any money for publishing the series (i.e., it's not a sponsored post) and (2) that "the authors declared no financial interest." Oh really? As I've pointed out, Larry Weber is one of the biggest names in PR. He didn't just magically decide to write an entire series of *blatant falsehoods* about the history of email. In fact, it didn't take much sleuthing to discover that Ayyadurai and Weber are business partners in "EchoMail", the company that Ayyadurai also likes to insist was a major part of email's history (it wasn't). Ayyadurai claims that EchoMail "grew to nearly $200 million in market valuation" but provides no evidence for that. Was the company public? Where does this valuation come from? For such an important company, you'd think there'd be a lot more information online about it, but there's basically none. The Wikipedia page for it says that EchoMail is a "subsidiary of General Interactive, but was initially developed under Information Cybernetics." The only "citation" to support these claims is this page at General Interactive. However, General Interactive appears to just be *yet another* (in an increasingly long list) of websites of questionable businesses that appear to do nothing but promote... V.A. Shiva Ayyadurai.

For such a big company, you'd assume there'd be some press reports somewhere. So far, I can find none. It's possible they exist, but they are not readily available. It's not hard, however, to find news reports on other big companies of that generation. Either way, Echomail notes that companies like American Express and IBM are customers. It somehow leaves out that the only confirmation I can find of this is a *lawsuit* EchoMail filed against both companies in 2005. So, at least they were customers, though it doesn't appear to have ended on friendly terms.

Basically, no matter where you start to dig in, nearly *everything* about Ayyadurai's claims is incredibly sketchy, or outright disproven and debunked widely. It's incredible that Huffington Post has decided to stand by this and merely repeat debunked claims. Even if, as some have claimed, the posts by Weber, Ayyadurai and their friends are on the "unedited" blogs section of HuffPo, the HuffPo Live pieces are a part of the "news" business, and they are reporting blatantly false information.

As per usual, Ayyadurai himself refuses to address any of this other than pointing back to the same debunked claims. His Twitter feed is hilarious, just constantly repeating claims, in a foot stamping manner, sometimes referring to himself in the third person.

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> **VA Shiva Ayyadurai** @va_shiva · 4h
>
> @MizuRyuu No ARPANET, Raython/BBN did not invent email. Shiva did. The facts are BLACK and WHITE
>
> ↩ ⇄ ★ •••   View conversation

No evidence, no support. And, of course, BBN doesn't claim to have "invented email." Like pretty much everyone else, BBN notes that it was among those who made significant contributions to a large group effort that became email.

Oh, and there's also this amusing tweet in which Ayyadurai appears to be implying that we're paid off by Raytheon for writing this.

> **VA Shiva Ayyadurai** @va_shiva · 6h
>
> @MizuRyuu Check out BBNs branding campaign and look into paid off Tech. DIRT! The earth is not the center of the solar system.
>
> ↩ ⇄ ★ •••   View conversation

We're curious if Ayyadurai would like to try to present *any* evidence that a giant defense contractor is paying us off to (1) explain basic copyright law and (2) point to the actual 1977 paper that Ayyadurai himself totally misrepresents. Because we'd like to see him try.

In the meantime, the folks over at Huffington Post (the ones who still believe in journalistic integrity) might want to take a closer look at what's going on over there.

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