

EXHIBIT T



Actual Creators Of Email Not At All Happy The Fake Creator Of Email Got Paid For His Bogus Claim

from the *as-they-should-be dept*

Email
by Mike Masnick
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As we noted last week, Shiva Ayyadurai, a guy who didn't invent email but has built his entire reputation on the false claim that he did, was able to cash in on the settlement agreed to by Nick Denton to end all of the Charles Harder-related lawsuits against Gawker. Again, Silicon Valley billionaire Peter Thiel, because of a personal grudge against Gawker, set up lawyer Charles Harder on a retainer, basically agreeing to help fund any lawsuit against Gawker that might help destroy the company. Harder filed a few, but the big one was the one filed by Hulk Hogan. Hogan won that (after losing the first few attempts and then going jurisdiction shopping for a court that would side with him). Almost everyone with any knowledge of the law agreed it was likely the verdict would lose on appeal (the appeals court had already ruled earlier on this case in favor of Gawker). Either way, Denton finally settled the case rather than push on, because of the cost of defending it and because Thiel had promised to keep funding the case as far as it would go. And, of course, it wasn't just that one case.

The Ayyadurai case was the most ridiculous of all. Ayyadurai did not invent email by any stretch of the imagination, but likes to go around falsely claiming he did, and smearing those who actually did the work. Thomas Haigh, a historian who keeps the most canonical explanation of Ayyadurai's misleading claims (including how they continue to morph and change and evolve over time) has the full story, but Gawker, among many others (including us) pointed out that he did not invent email. That led Ayyadurai and Charles Harder to sue Gawker -- presumably because (1) the Gawker/Harder/Thiel thing and (2) because Gawker used inflammatory language. The "settlement" meant that Ayyadurai got \$750,000, though we're guessing a decent chunk of that likely went to Harder. Ayyadurai, somewhat ridiculous, put out a press release laughably claiming that "this settlement is a victory for truth." It's not. It's the opposite. It's a victory for the opposite of truth and shows how abusing the legal system can get you paid out -- especially when there's a billionaire willing to help fund the questionable lawsuits.

Anyway, it appears that those who were actually involved in the creation of email are pretty damn upset by this turn of events and are speaking out. If you go back to the early RFC on the creation of email, like 524, 561, 680 and 724 and 733, you see that all of the key concepts in email were being publicly discussed and implemented prior to Ayyadurai writing his email program in 1978.

One of the authors of those last two RFCs (724 and 733) is David Crocker, and he's not pleased with Ayyadurai trying to rewrite him out of the history of email -- and especially not with Ayyadurai getting a ton of cash for doing so. For what it's worth, Crocker and Ayyadurai have tangled before -- when Ayyadurai took some comments from Crocker so out of context to be borderline fraudulent (Ayyadurai took two separate sentences, that were separated by pages in a report Crocker wrote, totally out of context to falsely imply that Crocker said that no one was working on email in 1977). As you can imagine, Crocker is not pleased with the latest windfall for Ayyadurai.

Dave Crocker, who helped write several foundational standards documents about messaging over the internet, told Gizmodo that Ayyadurai's settlement with Gawker Media represents a victory for a version of the history of email's development that isn't supported by evidence. "I grew up being taught that the truth is always a sufficient defense against claims of defamation," Crocker said upon hearing about the settlement. "Given the extensive documentation about the history of email, I'm sorry to find that that the adage no longer holds true."

Gizmodo also spoke to one of his co-authors, John Vittal, who first implemented features like "reply" and "forward," and he also found the whole thing baffling.

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John Vittal, one of Crocker's co-authors, seconded his frustration. Vittal is best known in the traditional history of email for being the first person to implement "reply" and "forward" functions. "What's true is true, and you can't hide from it, and shouldn't be able to capitalize on thwarting it," said Vittal. "To me, it's a sad day."

Meanwhile, it appears that throughout all of this, Ayyadurai continues to fool people. I had missed this, but earlier this year, he actually got onto CBS with comedian Mo Rocca on his "Henry Ford's Innovation Nation" in which Rocca falls hook, line and sinker for the bogus claims by Ayyadurai. CBS, of course, happens to also be the home of Walter O'Brien, whose origin story is quite similar to Ayyadurai's. Either way, as long as Ayyadurai continues to falsely hold himself out as the inventor of email, when he is not, people should continue to call out that his claims are simply false.

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