



The Arena Group Accuses Sports Illustrated Owner, ABG, of Theft

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Arena seeks \$200 million for stealing its crown jewel proprietary code technology

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jun. 11, 2024-- [The Arena Group](#) (NYSE American: AREN), has filed a lawsuit against ABG, who own the rights to *Sports Illustrated*, and against Minute Media, for theft of Arena's technology.

[The lawsuit](#) highlights how ABG conspired to steal the crown jewel of Arena's business – the proprietary code technology and trade secrets comprising the valuable internet platform Arena developed at a significant expense.

"These guys stole our most valuable property, our digital platform code, and then left a clear trail for anyone to follow... not too bright," said Arena's President and largest shareholder, Manoj Bhargava. "They are like the Wet Bandits from Home Alone!"

The suit showcases that ABG enlisted business leaders from top tier investment firms – including CVC Capital Partners ("CVC") and BlackRock – to help steal proprietary technology and business from Arena, working with ABG's new licensee, Minute, to orchestrate a multi-step corporate heist.

"I am genuinely surprised that BlackRock and CVC would participate in such unethical behavior," said Bhargava. "It is alarming to see organizations that claim to uphold the highest ethical standards involved in such questionable conduct.

"Given the revelations about Jamie Salter's business practices, it is perplexing that BlackRock and CVC have not yet called for a leadership change at Authentic Brands Group (ABG).

"BlackRock and CVC's response to this situation will speak volumes about their commitment to ethical governance," said Bhargava.

Arena also notes that ABG has a history of monopolistic and predatory licensing behavior. The lawsuit highlights how Arena is "just the latest licensee to fall victim to ABG's extensive and public history of strip-mining its license partners, imposing steep guaranteed royalties and termination fees that award ABG a windfall." Another company, 888 Holdings, was forced to terminate its unprofitable joint venture with ABG earlier this year, triggering an oppressive \$50 million termination fee.

Arena strongly believes that ABG's theft and predatory practices, along with those of their accomplice Minute, who greatly benefited from Arena's years of research, development, and implementation, will be made clear in a court of law.

Arena seeks \$200 million in damages. The case is pending in federal court in the Southern District of New York.

About The Arena Group

The Arena Group (NYSE American: AREN) is an innovative technology platform and media company with a proven cutting-edge playbook that transforms media brands. Our unified technology platform empowers creators and publishers with tools to publish and monetize their content, while also leveraging quality journalism of anchor brands like TheStreet, Parade, Men's Journal and Athlon Sports to build their businesses. The company aggregates content across a diverse portfolio of over 265 brands, reaching over 50 million users monthly. Visit us at thearenagroup.net and discover how we are revolutionizing the world of digital media.

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