

Musk sues OpenAI for 'perverting' the company's mission

Elon Musk, the multi-billionaire owner of Tesla and X, is suing artificial intelligence company OpenAI, accusing the firm of prioritising profit over developing AI for the public good.

Mr Musk is bringing the suit against OpenAI, which he co-founded, and its chief executive, Sam Altman, for breaching a contract by reneging on its pledge to develop AI carefully and make the tech widely available.

The company behind the ground-breaking generative AI chatbot, ChatGPT, has "been transformed into a closed-source de facto subsidiary of the largest technology company, Microsoft", a court filing said.

The court action is the latest in a series of challenges to Mr Altman who was ousted from his position at OpenAI by the company board and briefly went to work at Microsoft, OpenAI's biggest shareholder, before being returned to his post.

The AI giant was originally founded as a not-for-profit company but has grown to have commercial interests, which has caused tension between board members and founders.

By embracing a close relationship with Microsoft, OpenAI and its top executives have set that pact "afire" and are "perverting" the company's mission, Mr Musk alleges in the lawsuit.

"Under its new board, it is not just developing but is actually refining an AGI [artificial general intelligence] to maximize profits for Microsoft, rather than for the benefit of

humanity”, the filing said.

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A key part of OpenAI's mission to benefit humanity, the court filing said, was to make the company software open source and share it, but this has not happened.

Instead, the company operates on a for-profit model.

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Mr Musk has his own AI company, called xAI and has said OpenAI is not focused enough on the potential harms of AI.

As well as alleging breach of contract, Mr Musk's claim said OpenAI is violating fiduciary duty and is engaged in unfair business practices. A jury trial has been sought by Mr Musk.

OpenAI and Microsoft have been contacted for comment.