

Australian sues Twitter over hate blog: report

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A lawyer for Melbourne man Joshua Meggitt served a legal notice on the US-based [Twitter](#) Inc on Thursday, the Sydney Morning Herald said.

The action arose after Australian writer and TV personality Marieke Hardy wrongly accused Meggitt of being the author of a hate blog about her to her more than 60,000 followers on the micro-blogging site in November.

"I name and shame my 'anonymous' internet [bully](#). Liberating business!"

Join me," Hardy tweeted, posting a link to her blog in which she mistakenly named Meggitt as being behind the articles.

Hardy subsequently apologised to Meggitt on her blog and reportedly paid him Aus\$13,000 (US\$14,016) in damages as part of a confidential out-of-court settlement.

But because Hardy's tweet had appeared on Twitter's homepage, and was copied by some of her followers and other users during a worldwide campaign against online abuse, Meggitt's lawyer Stuart Gibson is pursuing the site, the Herald said.

"Twitter are a publisher, and at law anyone involved in the publication can be sued," Gibson told the newspaper.

"We're suing for the re-tweets and the original tweet -- and many of the re-tweets and comments are far worse."

Twitter itself, not individual users, were being sued for damages, he said.

The case is expected to test whether Twitter, which allows users to publish their thoughts in 140 characters or less, can be sued for defamation in Australia.

Twitter, which was championed as a tool of free expression during the Arab Spring for its uncensored comments, in January announced it could block [tweets](#) on a country-by-country basis if legally required to do so.

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