

Singapore's SPH sues Yahoo! in copyright row

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SPH, publisher of the Straits Times newspaper and other dailies, has asked Singapore's High Court to stop [Yahoo!](#) from further reproducing articles from its newspapers and pay unspecified damages for infringement.

"In our statement of claim, we cited, as examples, 23 articles from our newspapers which Yahoo! had reproduced over a 12-month period without our licence or authorisation," SPH spokeswoman Chin Soo Fang told AFP.

According to a story on the front page of the Straits Times, they included political and crime stories that were first published in the [print editions](#) of the Straits Times, The New Paper and My Paper.

"We confirm that Singapore Press Holdings has commenced litigation against Yahoo! Southeast Asia Pte Ltd for alleged [copyright infringement](#)," said a Yahoo! statement sent to AFP.

"This matter has been referred to our legal advisors and as such we are unable to comment further at this time."



A front-page report on its flagship Straits Times newspaper said SPH had asked Singapore's High Court to stop Yahoo! from further reproducing its articles and pay unspecified damages for infringement.

In a story on the Yahoo! Singapore website, the California-based firm's Southeast Asia [Managing Editor](#) Alan Soon said: "We intend to vigorously defend ourselves against this suit.

"Our editorial business model of acquired, commissioned and original content is proven."

The Straits Times said that despite a request to cease the alleged infringement, "substantial reproduction" of SPH content continued to be available on Yahoo! Southeast Asia's sites.

SPH is asking the court to declare that Yahoo! [Southeast Asia](#) infringed on its copyright, stop it from further reproducing articles and pay damages, the report said.

It quoted a local media expert, Ang Peng Hwa, as saying the case could set a precedent as it would have an impact on the way news websites operate.

Yahoo! is one of the top online sources of news in Singapore along with the Breaking News section of the Straits Times website, both of which can be accessed free of charge.

Both are competing for online advertising revenues from Singaporean and foreign companies along with Microsoft's MSN, which has a news tie-up with Singaporean broadcasting-based group MediaCorp.

SPH is one of Asia's biggest media-based groups, with a near monopoly of Singapore's daily newspaper market and prime property assets.

Group revenue in its financial year ending August 31 was down 9.4 percent from a year ago at Sg\$1.25 billion (\$958 million), but revenue from its newspaper and magazine business was up four percent at Sg\$1.01 billion, according to the SPH annual report.

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