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Actors say Hollywood studios want their AI replicas – for free, forever / The reveal came as SAG-AFTRA actors confirmed they were going on strike.

By [Andrew Webster](#), an entertainment editor covering streaming, virtual worlds, and every single Pokémon video game. Andrew joined The Verge in 2012, writing over 4,000 stories.

Jul 13, 2023, 1:35 PM PDT | [117 Comments](#) / [117 New](#)



The AMPTP proposal will sound familiar to Black Mirror fans. Image: Netflix

During today's press conference in which [Hollywood actors confirmed that they were going on strike](#), Duncan Crabtree-Ireland, SAG-AFTRA's chief negotiator, revealed a proposal from Hollywood studios that sounds ripped right out of [a Black Mirror episode](#).

In a statement about the strike, the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) said that its proposal included “a groundbreaking AI proposal that protects actors’ digital likenesses for SAG-AFTRA members.”

“If you think that’s a groundbreaking proposal, I suggest you think again.”

When asked about the proposal during the press conference, Crabtree-Ireland said that “This ‘groundbreaking’ AI proposal that they gave us yesterday, they proposed that our background performers should be able to be scanned, get one day’s pay, and their companies should own that scan, their image, their likeness and should be able to use it for the rest of eternity on any project they want, with no consent and no compensation. So if you think that’s a groundbreaking proposal, I suggest you think again.”

In response, AMPTP spokesperson Scott Rowe sent out a statement denying the claims made during SAG-AFTRA’s press conference. “The claim made today by SAG-AFTRA leadership that the digital replicas of background actors may be used in perpetuity with no consent or compensation is false. In fact, the current AMPTP proposal only permits a company to use the digital replica of a background actor in the motion picture for which the background actor is employed. Any other use requires the background actor’s consent and bargaining for the use, subject to a minimum payment.”

The use of generative AI has been one of the major sticking points in negotiations between the two sides (it’s also a major issue behind the writers strike), and in her opening statement of the press conference, SAG-AFTRA president Fran Drescher said that “If we don’t stand tall right now, we are all going to be in trouble, we are all going to be in jeopardy of being replaced by machines.”

The SAG-AFTRA strike will officially commence at midnight tonight.

Disclosure: The Verge’s editorial staff is also unionized with the Writers Guild of America, East.

Update July 14th, 10:25AM ET: Added a statement from the AMPTP.

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