Wayne Sidor

AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF NEW JERSEY)
) ss:
CITY OF MONMOUTH JUNCTION, in the COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX)

I, Wayne Sidor, being duly sworn, depose and say that I am the Advertising Clerk of the Publisher of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, a daily national newspaper of general circulation throughout the United States, and that the notice attached to this Affidavit has been regularly published in THE WALL STREET JOURNAL for

National distribution for

1 insertion(s) on the following date(s): 06/03/2025

ADVERTISER: ASCEND Performance materials holdings inc and that the foregoing statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Sworn to before me this 4th day of June 2025

Notary Public



TECHNOLOGY

WSJ.com/Tech



The online retailer has been under tighter scrutiny in Germany since 2022. A distribution center in Horn-Bad Meinberg.

Germany Warns Amazon Over Pricing Mechanism

Antitrust officials said the tool could be in violation of competition laws

By Mauro Orru

German antitrust officials said tools that Amazon.com uses to highlight competitively priced goods and filter out overpriced listings in its online marketplace could be in breach of competition law, the latest salvo from a European regulator against a U.S. giant.

Amazon has a pricing mechanism in place to evaluate competing offers since its marketplace hosts countless products from multiple sellers, including Amazon itself.

The company said its systems highlight offers that customers are most likely to choose based on pricing and other factors, giving them more visibility on its market-

When Amazon's systems detect that prices for certain products are unusually high, its tools can downgrade listings so they don't feature prominently or remove them altogether.

Amazon said each selling partner is free to set their own prices, shipping fees and return policies.

Germany's Federal Cartel Office said Monday that Amazon's pricing mechanism limits visibility of retailers' offers and interferes with sellers' freedom to set their prices, placing what it called inappropriate and objectively unjustified restrictions on third parties. The watchdog said the company could change price caps at its sole discretion, potentially hindering competi-

An Amazon spokesperson said the group strongly disagreed with the regulator's preliminary assessment, noting its store was built to ensure consumers can quickly find the best items based on pricing, availability and deliv-

"If Amazon is prevented

from helping people find competitively priced offers, it will lead to a bad shopping experience for them, as we'd need to promote uncompetitive or even abusive pricing in our store," the spokesperson said. "This would mislead customers into thinking they're getting good value when, in reality, they're not.'

Amazon has been under tighter scrutiny in Germany since the regulator said in 2022 that the company was of paramount significance for cross-border competition, a designation that in Germany means expanded surveillance aimed at preventing large companies from engaging in any anticompetitive practices.

Music Labels Negotiate AI Licensing Rights

By Anne Steele

Major music companies are negotiating licensing deals with two startups that could set a new precedent for how songs are used and artists are paid for remixes generated by artificial intelligence.

Universal Music Group, Warner Music Group and Sony Music Group want to be compensated by startups Suno and Udio when music by artists they represent is used to train generative AI models and produce new music, according to people familiar with the talks. To determine how much artists and labels should be paid, the companies want the startups to develop fingerprinting and attribution technology—similar to YouTube's content ID—to track when and how a song is used, the people said.

In addition, the music companies want to be active participants in the music-related products that the AI companies release, including having a say in which products are developed and how they work.

The companies represent some of the most popular art-

ists, such as Taylor Swift, Drake and Ed Sheeran.

The negotiations are a sign of how record labels, like movie studios, book publishers and news organizations such as The Wall Street Journal's owner News Corp, are trying to protect against the threat that generative AI poses to their business while creating new revenue streams.

The Recording Industry Association of America, the music industry's trade group, filed a lawsuit last June against Suno and Udio, alleging the firms were infringing on artists and labels' copyrights.

Suno said its technology was creating new content and not memorizing or regurgitating pre-existing music. Udio said the goal of its training was to develop an understanding of musical ideas that aren't owned by anyone, and that it has filters to ensure its model doesn't reproduce copyrighted works or artists' voices.

Each label is negotiating with the startups individually, and the talks are at different stages of progression, the peo-

Disney Plans to Lay Off Several Hundred People

By Katherine Hamilton

Walt Disney Co. is laying off several hundred people globally across multiple divisions, including marketing for film and television, TV publicity, casting and development, and corporate financial operations, the entertainment conglomerate said Monday.

No entire teams were cut. Disney said the layoffs are part of an effort to operate more ef-

200 employees in its ABC News Group and Disney Entertainment Networks units. It has conducted several other staff reductions in the past few years as it, like many other entertainment companies, looks for ways to save costs.

In March, Disney laid off

The Burbank, Calif., company had about 233,000 employees at the end of September, according to a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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Case No. 25-90127 (CML) (Jointly Administered)

NOTICE OF DEADLINES FOR THE FILING OF PROOFS OF

NOTICE OF DEADLINES FOR THE FILING OF PROOFS OF CLAIM, INCLUDING REQUESTS FOR PAYMENTS UNDER SECTION 503(b)(9) OF THE BANKRUPTCY CODE THE CLAIMS BARD ATE ISJULY23, 2025, AT 4:00 P.M., PREVAILING CENTRAL TIME THE GOVERNMENTAL CLAIMS BARD ATELS DCTOBER 20, 2025, AT 4:00 P.M., PREVAILING CENTRAL TIME PLEASETAKE NOTICE OF THE POLLOWING: Deadlines for Filing Proofs of Claim. On May 29, 2025, the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Flexas (the "Gourt") entered an order [Docket No. 366] (the "Bar Date Order") establishing certain deadlines for the filing of proofs of claim, including requests for payment under section 503(b) (9) of the Bankruptcy Code (collectively, "Proofs of Claim"), in the chapter 11 cases of the following debars and debtors in possession (collectively, the "Debtors"): Debtor, Case No.: Ascend Performance Materials Consumer Solutions LLC, 25-9013; ARM (PR) LLC, 25-90123; APM (PR) LLC, 25-90123; APM (PR) LLC, 25-9013; Ascend Performance Materials Consumer Solutions LLC, 25-90135; Ascend Performance Materials Consumer Solutions LLC, 25-90136; Ascend

The Bar Dates. Pursuant to the Bar Date Order, all entities

(except governmental units), including individuals, partnerships estates, and trusts that have a claim or potential claim against the Debtors that arose prior to April 21, 2025, no matter how remote Debtors that arose prior to April 21, 2025, no matter now remote or contingent such right to payment or equitable remedy may be, including requests for payment under section 503(b)(9) of the Bankruptcy Code, MUST FILE A PROOF OF CLAIM on or before July 23, 2025 at 4:00 p.m., prevailing Central Time (the "Claims Bar Date"). Governmental entities that have a claim or potential claim against the Debtors that arose prior to April 21, 2025, no matter how remote or contingent such right to payment or equitable remedy may be, MUST FILE A PROOF OF CLAIM on or before October 20, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. prevailing Central Files. equitable remedy may be, MUST FILE A PROOF OF CLAIM on or before October 20, 2025, at 4:00 p.m., prevailing Central Time (the "Governmental Bar Date"). All entities holding claims arising from the Debtors rejection of executory contracts and unexpired leases are equired to lie Proofs of Claim by the date that is the later of (a) the Claims Bar Date or the Governmental Bar Date, as applicable, and (b) 4:00 p.m., prevailing central Time, on the date that is 30 days following entry of the order approving the Debtors' rejection of the applicable executory contract or unexpired lease (the "Rejection Damages Bar Date"). All entities holding daims affected by an amendment to the Debtors' schedules of assets and liabilities filed in these case; the "Schedules" are required to file Proofs of lifed in these case; the "Schedules" are required to file Proofs of filed in these cases (the "<u>Schedules</u>") are required to file Proofs o Claim by the date that is **later of (i) the Claims Bar Date or the** Governmental Bar Date, as applicable, and (ii) 4:00 p.m. prevailing Central Time, on the date that is 30 days from the

prevailing Central lime, of interease that is 30 days from the date on which the Debtors mail notice of the amendment to the Schedules (the "Amended Schedules Bar Date").

ANY PERSON OR ENTITY WHO FAILS TO FILE A PROOF OF CLAIM, INCLUDING ANY REQUEST FOR PAYMENT UNDER SECTION 503(B)(9) OF THE BANKRUPTCY CODE ON OR BEFORE THE CLAIMS BAR DATE, OR THE GOVERNMENTAL BAR DATE, AS APPLICABLE, SHALL NOT BE TREATED AS A CREDITOR WITH PROPERTY OF CURTUK AND THE TREATED AS A CREDITOR WITH PROPERTY OF CURTUK AND THE TREATED AS A CREDITOR WITH PROPERTY OF CURTUK AND THE TREATED AS A CREDITOR WITH PROPERTY OF CURTUK AND THE PROPERTY OF TH RESPECT TO SUCH CLAIM FOR THE PURPOSES OF VOTING AND

DISTRIBUTION ON ANY CHAPTER 11 PLAN.

Filing a Proof of Claim. Each Proof of Claim must be filed or submitted, including supporting documentation, through any

of the following methods: (i) electronic submission through PACER (Public Access to Court Electronic Records at http://ecf.bub.courts.goog. (ii) electronic submission using the interface available on the website maintained by the Debtors' claims and noticing agent at https://dm.epig.11.com/Ascend. (iii) if submitted through non-electronic means, by U.S. mail or other hand delivery system, so as to be actually received by the Claims and Noticing gent on or before the Claims Bar Date or the Govern Bar Date, or any other applicable Bar Date, as applicable at the following address: **If by First-Class Mail:** Ascend Performance following address: If by First-Class Mail: Ascend Performance Materials Holdings LLC Claims Processing Center, Cro Epiq Corporate Restructuring, LLC, P.O. Box 4421, Beaverton, OR 97076-4421; If by Overnight Mail, or Hand Delivery: Ascend Performance Materials Holdings LLC Claims Processing Center, Cro Epiq Corporate Restructuring, LLC, 10300 SW Allen Blvt, Beawerton, OR 97005.

PROOFS OF CLAIM SUBMITTED BY FACSIONILE OR ELECTRONIC MAIL WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED Contents of Proofs of Claim. Each Proof of Claim must: (i) be written in legible English, (ii) include a claim amount denominated in libited States collars, using if a policibale the exphance rate in libited States collars, using if a policibale the exphance rate

n United States dollars, using, if applicable, the exchange rate at 5:00 p.m., prevailing Central Time, on April 21, 2025 (and to the extent such claim is converted to United States dollars, state the extent such claim is converted to United States collars, state the rate used in such conversion); (iii) clearly identify the Debtor against which the claim is asserted; (iv) conform substantially with the Proof of Claim form provided by the Debtors or Official form 410; (iv) be signed by the claimant or by an authorized agent or legal representative of the claimant on behalf of the claimant, whether such signature is an electronic signature or is in ink; and (vi) include as attachments any and all supporting documentation on which the claim is based. Please note that each Proof of Claim must state a claim seasits. Only con publicy and clearly inclicate the specific claim as askits. claim against only one Debtor and clearly indicate the specific Debtor against which the claim is asserted. To the extent more than one Debtor is listed on the Proof of Claim, a Proof of Claim is treated

one Debtor is listed on the Proof of Claim, a Proof of Claim is treated as if filed only against Ascend, or if a Proof of Claim is otherwise filed without identifying a specific Debtor, the Proof of Claim may be deemed as filed only against Ascend.

Electronic Signatures Permitted. Proofs of Claim signed electronically or in ink by the claimant or an authorized agent or legal representative of the claimant may be deemed acceptable for purposes of claims administration. Copies of Proofs of Claim, or Proofs of Claim sent by facsimile or electronic mail will not be accepted. Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, any original deservative interest the science of the proof of the proof of Claim or proofs of Claim sent by facsimile or electronic mail will not be accepted. Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, any original deservative interest the science of the proof o document containing the original signature of any party other than the party that files the Proof of Claim shall be retained by the filing party for a period of not less than five years after the Debtor

than the party that these her Proof of Culam had be retained by the filing party for a period of not less than five years after the Debtors' cases are closed, and upon request, such original document must be provided to the Court or other parties for review, pursant to the Administrative Procedures for the Filing, Signing, and Verifying of Documents by Electronic Means in Texas Bankruptcy Courts.

Section 503(b)(9) Requests for Payment. Any Proof of Claim that asserts a right to payment arising under section 503(b) (9) of the Bankruptcy Code must also: (1) include the value of the goods delivered to and received by the Debtors in the 20 days prior to the Petition Date; (2) attach any documentation identifying the particular invoices for which such claim is being asserted; and (3) attach documentation of any reclamation demand made to the Debtors under section 546(c) of the Bankruptcy Code (frapplicable).

Additional Information. If you have any questions regarding the claims process and/or you wish to obtain a copy of the Ban Date Notice, a proof of claim form or related documents you may do so by: (1) calling the Debtors' restructuring hothine at (188) 890–9917 (domestic, toll free) or +1 (971) 385-8728 (international); and/or (11) visiting the Debtors' restructuring website at: https://dm.epid.11.com/Ascend.

"A complete list of each of the Debtors in these chapter 11 cases may be obtained on the website of the Debtors' claims and noticing agent at https://dm.epiq11.com/Ascend. The location of Debtor Ascend Performance Materials Holdings IncS: principal place of businessis 1010 Travis St., Suite 900, Houston, Texas 77002.

AI Startup Targets Home Services The next time you book a

plumber, artificial intelligence might be taking your call or returning your message. Or it might reach out because it knows your air conditioner needs an upgrade well before the summer.

Netic, a startup based in San Francisco, is selling an AIbased platform that helps home-services firms automatically reach out to clients in need of maintenance or upgrades, and takes calls and messages on their behalf.

Founded in 2024, Netic is part of a growing crop of startups looking beyond the saturated white-collar market and toward home-services operators like electricians, plumbers, roofers and HVACheating, ventilation and air conditioning—specialists.

The startup said on Monday it has raised \$20 million with funding from venturecapital firms including Greylock and Founders Fund.

While Netic's mission to automate sales and business operations seems simple, it can be a challenge to integrate AI into services businesses that run on manual labor-and it certainly can't replace the work of skilled human techni-

The rise of AI in skilled trades is getting a boost from private-equity firms, which have invested heavily in the



Al aims to optimize pairing technicians with customers.

technology into their portfolio companies, hoping for productivity gains and hefty returns. Netic's customers are mostly private-equity-owned homeservices companies, as well as some larger owner-operated firms, the startup said. Asheem Chandna, an inves-

tor at Grevlock who served as lead investor in Netic's seed round, said home-services businesses often have "underutilized capacity," or staff who aren't being put to work most efficiently. The point of AI is to optimize the pairing of technicians with customers when they need help, and to reach them before they do, Chandna said.

Netic's platform, which

area and are now injecting the uses generative AI models and fine-tuned language models, is designed to use a certain AI model for each technology function, from customer verification to urgency and priority analysis, said Melisa Tokmak, the startup's founder and chief executive.

For instance, Netic's algorithms pick up on signals from customer calls, bumping a regular maintenance call to lower priority or escalating repairs for weather and emergencies. Or a customer who has a quote from a rival firm might be pushed to the top. To help drive sales, Netic's AI creates marketing campaigns that predict when customers might need a maintenance call based on data like an impend-

ing storm, the region and property type.

The platform also works with customer-management software for the trades, Tokmak said, and is meant to minimize the amount of integration between software that businesses have to deal with.

One customer, Chris Hoffmann, CEO of St. Louis-based home-services company HB Solutions Group, said that many startups are automating the work of booking appointments over the phone through AI voice agents. Hoffmann gets so many pitches for AI products, he said, that he is often turning down vendors hawking their wares.

Netic's AI platform, along with taking calls and answering messages with more accuracy and recall than humans can, helps Hoffmann Brothers plan and prioritize which of the firm's hundreds of technicians should take appointments and when, he said.

"I have to match my capacity with my customer demand on a daily basis," Hoffman said. "And that's really hard, because I don't always get to choose how many people's air conditioners are going to break when they call me.'

Still, even with the amount of AI that Hoffmann has put into his firm, only 20% of customer calls are being answered by Netic's AI platform.

"We're still human first," he added.

DEA

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Meta Aims For Fully AIAds

Continued from page B1 short videos from a text prompt.

"In the not-too-distant future, we want to get to a world where any business will be able to just tell us what objective they're trying to achieve, like selling some-

thing or getting a new customer, how much they're willing to pay for each result, and connect their bank account and then we just do the rest for them," Zuckerberg said during the company's annual shareholder meeting last week. On a separate podcast appearance, he called it "a redefinition of the category of advertising."

ads Generating scratch with AI could be a boon to small and midsize businesses, which represent most of the advertisers on Meta's platforms and often lack big budgets for ad cre-

Some big brands are wary of providing Meta with even more control over their advertising efforts, given the company's heft in the business and worry that AI-generated campaigns won't have the same look and feel as human-made ads.

Although most tech companies have high hopes for AI-generated ads, some brands say the technology that exists throughout the industry often produces distorted or unusable visuals. Improving the quality of these outputs often requires

time and resource-intensive work.

Meta's new tools also require a lot of computing power and the creation of unique AI models for each brand, the people said.

Newer AI companies are also racing to help advertisers create content. Many brands, for example, are already using third-party tools such as Midjourney and OpenAI's DALL-E to create the ads they place on all digiplatforms, including Meta's. Meta said it is exploring how to integrate those tools into its platform.