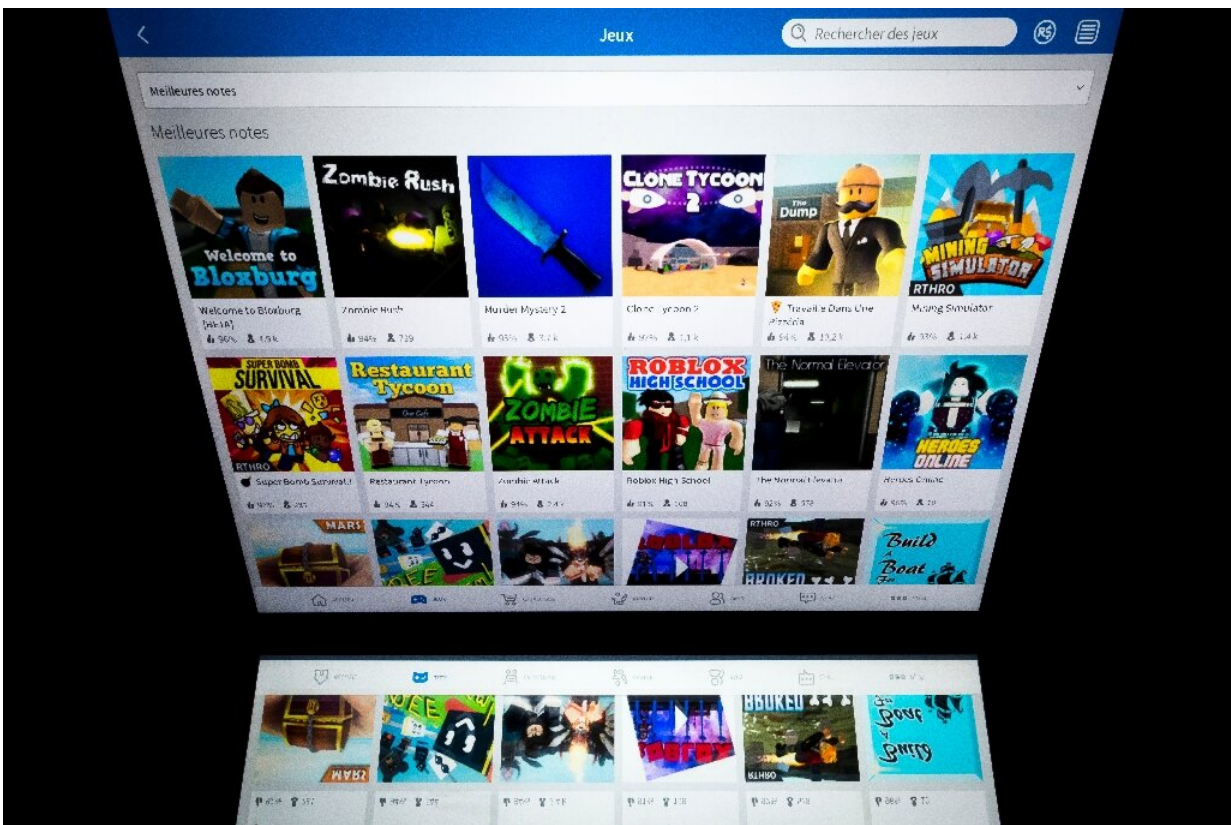


US music publishers sue Roblox for \$200 mn over copyright

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Online gaming service Roblox displayed on a tablet screen on February 1, 2019.

US music publishers representing artists such as Ariana Grande, Imagine Dragons and the Rolling Stones said Thursday they are suing hit video game Roblox for allegedly using songs without permission.

National Music Publishers' Association (NMPA) chief David Israelite announced the [copyright](#) suit at an annual meeting at which he stressed that the trade group has the [video game industry](#) in its sights.

He contended that Silicon Valley-based Roblox is "taking advantage of young people's lack of understanding about copyright" while doing almost nothing to prevent [copyright infringement](#) or warn users of its risks.

"They've made hundreds of millions of dollars by requiring users to pay every time they upload music onto the platform," Israelite said in a release.

The suit asks for at least \$200 million in damage for "Roblox's unabashed exploitation" of unlicensed music and calls for musicians to be paid when their works are used on the [game](#) platform. NMPA did not say which court it filed the suit in.

Roblox countered in a release that it does not tolerate copyright infringement and takes action against those who violate its rules.

"We are surprised and disappointed by this lawsuit which represents a fundamental misunderstanding of how the Roblox platform operates, and will defend Roblox vigorously as we work to achieve a fair resolution," the company said.

Roblox has won over youth around the world.

With its Lego-like avatars and easy-to-learn coding for budding programmers, the online gaming app has become a thriving clubhouse for young gamers, most of them younger than 16.

As of late last year, more than 31 million users daily were diving into

Roblox on mobile, desktop or console devices and cumulatively spending billions of hours there, according to the company.

Israelite also said the NMPA is ramping up a campaign to have unlicensed tunes taken down at Amazon-owned game play streaming service Twitch.

"Twitch should serve its users by fully licensing music which would allow the [platform](#) to flourish and copyright owners to be properly compensated," Israelite said.

Twitch is in "active and ongoing" conversations with music rights holders on approaches it feels will fit its service and its community of users, a spokesperson said in response to an AFP inquiry.

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