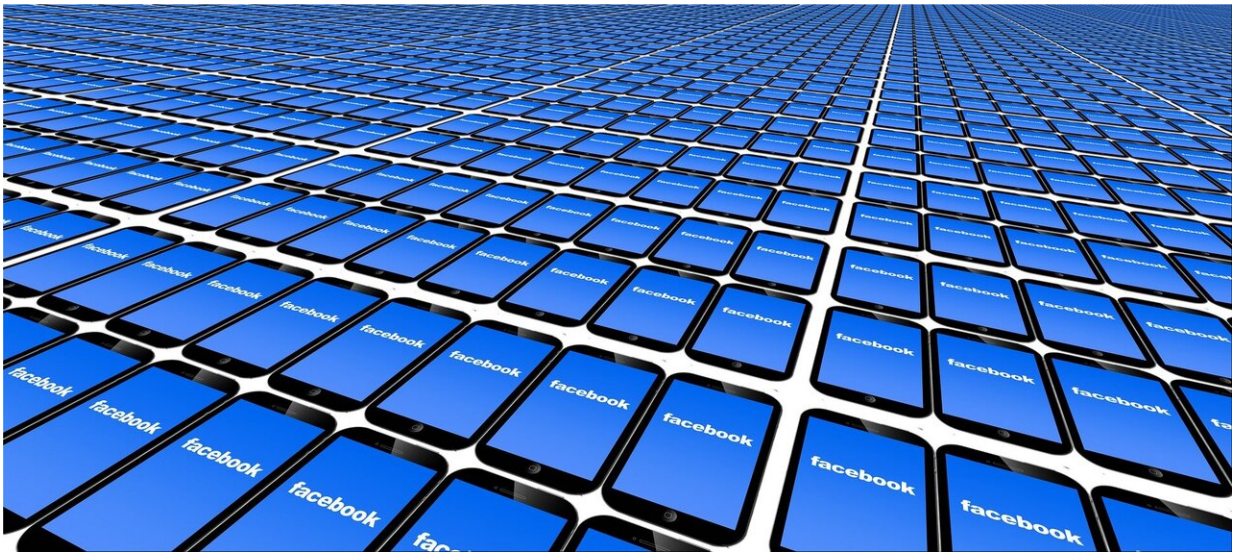# Facebook accuses Ukrainian programmer of selling 178 million users' data, files lawsuit

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Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Facebook is suing a Ukrainian programmer for allegedly scraping and selling publicly accessible information from millions of Facebook users.

The lawsuit, filed Thursday in the Northern District of California [federal court](#), accuses freelance programmer Alexander Alexandrovich Solonchenko of using automated means to scrape phone numbers and Facebook user IDs off roughly 178 million accounts in 2018 and 2019.

Solonchenko went on to allegedly sell the data on an online marketplace in May 2021. The majority of the stolen information belonged to users based in the United States, according to the lawsuit.

Facebook argues that Solonchenko violated Facebook's terms of service, which prohibit users from doing anything unlawful, misleading or fraudulent.

The tech giant has disabled Solonchenko's Facebook and Instagram accounts and revoked his access to the company's websites. Its lawsuit asks for a jury trial.