

Videotron wins copyright infringement case against three tech firms and a shareholder

Montréal, May 29, 2023 — The Federal Court has ruled in favour of Videotron in a dispute over the illegal retransmission of the TVA and TVA Sports channels by Konek Technologies Inc., Coopérative de câblodistribution Hill Valley and Libéo inc. In a decision handed down on May 26, the Court ordered the three companies, as well as Jean-François Rousseau, a shareholder in two of the companies, to pay \$553,000 in joint and several damages for copyright infringement. The Court also issued a permanent injunction requiring the defendants to immediately cease carrying TVA Sports.

Mindful of the importance of copyright protection for safeguarding the work of artists and creators in the television industry, Videotron takes note of the Court’s condemnation of the practices of the defendant companies and one of their shareholders. They can no longer act with impunity.

The defendants were behind a technology that provided hotel guests with a variety of telecommunications services, including unauthorized access to the TVA and TVA Sports channels.

A defamation suit brought by Videotron against the same companies is still before Superior Court.

Highlights of the decision

- “Mr. Rousseau incurred personal liability by personally taking the actions that constitute copyright infringement.” (paragraph 69)
- “[...] the fact that he used streaming services that are likely illegal suggests that Mr. Rousseau has only a limited concern for compliance with the law.” (paragraph 73)
- “First, they [the defendants] started operating their business before ensuring that they had obtained the necessary rights and authorizations. By so doing, they ran the risk that certain aspects of their activities could prove to be unlawful. In other words, they were reckless with respect to the risk associated with legal uncertainty. In taking this risk, they must now face the consequences of an intentional breach of the law.” (paragraph 90)
- “Second, the defendants were wilfully blind in holding out, up until the trial, the possibility that the CRTC would grant them some form of authorization to retransmit the TVA Sports channels.” (paragraph 91)
- “Insofar as I have concluded that the defendants were in bad faith, their conduct must be denounced and deterred.” (paragraph 98)

The full decision is [available here](#).

Quebecor and Videotron continue to defend their rights

Throughout its existence, Quebecor has played an active role in Québec’s cultural and economic development, and it has long fought piracy and counterfeiting. For example, in 2015 it went to court when Bell declined to implement adequate security systems and Bell was ordered to pay \$141 million. It also took legal action against the counterfeiting of its content by the TVAddOn app, misuse of patents by Xperi, and piracy of NHL games in Canada.

About Videotron

Videotron, a wholly owned subsidiary of **Quebecor Media Inc.**, is an integrated communications company engaged in television, entertainment, Internet access, wireline telephone and mobile telephone services. Videotron is a leader in new technologies with its **Helix** home entertainment and management platform. As of March 31, 2023, Videotron was serving 1,385,600 cable television customers and was the Québec leader in high-speed Internet access with 1,691,500 subscribers. As of the same date, Videotron had 1,736,600 subscriber connections to its mobile telephone service and was providing wireline telephone service to 730,800 households and organizations. On April 3, 2023, Videotron acquired Freedom Mobile Inc., creating a fourth strong and competitive national mobile carrier in Canada. Together, Videotron and Freedom have more than 3.5 million mobile customers.

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