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SO SUE ME..., TRADES

## TVLine.com Parent Company Sues *Hollywood Reporter* for Copyright Infringement

By Richard Horgan on September 14, 2011 12:10 PM

The logo for TVLine, featuring the word "TV" in a white serif font and "LINE" in a white sans-serif font, separated by a vertical line, all on a black background.

If you thought the gloves were off [last Friday](#) between Penske Media Corporation (PMC) and the *Hollywood Reporter*, you ain't read nothing yet.

Today, **Jay Penske**'s evolving media empire has filed a [copyright infringement lawsuit](#) against Prometheus Global Media, overseer of the *Hollywood Reporter*. This type of [complaint](#) is tricky to prove, let alone win; usually, it comes down to the strength of the [supporting exhibits](#).

On that front, there are seven exhibits in all comparing screen and source code grabs of the front pages of [TVLine.com](#) and [HollywoodReporter.com](#). PMC is basically alleging that the latter's "featured stories grid" bears far too many navigation and programming similarities to the patent-pending programming anchoring its TV industry website.

In the complaint introduction, PMC attorneys write that "THR was so incompetent and careless in its theft, that it actually copied the original source code *labels* [italics theirs, not ours] exactly as they existed on TVLine.com, and did not even attempt to rename them." The complaint goes on to allege, amazingly, that these labels contain the incriminating initials "MMC," an abbreviation of PMC's former corporate name (Mail.com Media Corporation).

Meanwhile, in one of several other supporting complaint sections ("THR Attempts To Lure Away Key Deadline Employees"), it is alleged that **Nikki Finke**

**THE *Hollywood* REPORTER**

received an employment offer to become the editor-in-chief of *THR* in January of 2010 from an executive of the equity firm Guggenheim. The offer is said to have consisted of a base annual salary of \$450,000, a \$1 million Malibu home and a percentage of future cable TV profits.

There's a whole lot more here, including an itemized supporting list of Deadline.com items that the attorneys frame as having shown up within minutes or hours at HollywoodReporter.com.

Update – 09/14/11: The *Hollywood Reporter* has [posted a response](#) to the PMC lawsuit on its website. Among other things, the publication says it has removed some contested code from the TVLine.com website while it investigates further, and that this particular "carousel" code was created by a third-party vendor.