

The Arena Group Holdings removes CEO after AI ghost-writing scandal

 By [Lindsey Schutters](#)

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The Arena Group Holdings (not to be confused with South African publisher Arena Group, itself [involved in corporate scandal](#)), the parent company of *Sports Illustrated*, has [removed its CEO](#) after the company was entangled in a [scandal involving the use of artificial intelligence](#) to generate content. The company stands accused of publishing articles penned by AI under pseudonyms, leading to significant backlash and criticism.



The December 2023 cover of *Sports Illustrated* magazine, published by The Arena Group Holdings.

Ross Levinsohn, the erstwhile company CEO, found his tenure abruptly terminated in the wake of these allegations. His position has been filled on an interim basis by Manoj Bhargava, the philanthropist and billionaire founder of Innovations Ventures – backers of the 5-hour Energy line of caffeine energy drinks.

The fallout from the scandal didn't stop at the top. Andrew Kraft, the operations president and COO, and Rob Barrett, the media president, were also shown the door. Their [dismissals were confirmed](#) by a spokesperson for Manoj Bhargava, the majority stakeholder of the Arena Group.

Julie Fenster, the corporate counsel, was another casualty of the scandal, although the specific reasons for her dismissal remain unclear.

In its defence, The Arena Group initially denied the allegations, asserting that the contentious articles were commercial content sourced from a third-party advertising company, AdVon Commerce.

However, the controversy has precipitated significant changes in the company's leadership. It's noteworthy that the company's actions were ostensibly aimed at enhancing operational efficiency and revenue. The full impact of this scandal on the company's future remains to be seen.

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