

Former Tesla employee allegedly stole the company's trade secret and sold it to partners in China

Tesla sued Guangzhi Cao in court for allegedly stealing trade secrets involving Autopilot and reselling it to a startup company that also operates in electric vehicles in China.

Guangzhi Cao, a former Tesla engineer, officially admitted at the trial earlier this week that he had downloaded a large number of zip files containing important source code of the Autopilot platform to his personal iCloud account. By the end of 2018, during this time this engineer was still working for the company.

Earlier, shortly after the incident broke, Tesla sued Guangzhi Cao to court for allegedly stealing trade secrets related to Autopilot and reselling to a startup company also operating in the car sector. Electric in China is called Xiaopeng Motors (also known as Xmotors or XPeng). Reportedly, this startup is the 'backyard' of technology giant Alibaba.

1. Send military chip technology to China, an American professor at risk of 'peeling off' 219 years



Former Tesla Guangzhi engineer Cao

Former Tesla engineer, denies stealing sensitive information from US electric car manufacturers in the same file sent to court. Cao's legal team thinks that he does not intend to sell or distribute confidential documents, as evidenced by the effort of the engineer to delete all important files from the personal iCloud immediately after leaving from the company.

However, the problem lies in the reason Guangzhi Cao resigned from his job at Tesla was to move to Xiaopeng Motors. According to Guangzhi Cao's profile information on LinkedIn, the engineer currently holds the position of director of development at China's start-up company, who is primarily responsible for providing and ensuring quality for The manufacturer's self-driving driving technologies. Perhaps this is the reason why Tesla suspects that Guangzhi Cao transferred confidential documents about Autopilot to Xiaopeng Motors.

According to the data extracted from the common records of both parties were submitted this week. Tesla mentioned some documents from Apple to reinforce his thesis. Although Apple is not directly involved in this incident, however, the Apples of Apples used to be the 'victim' of the same case when a former employee who had a long time working in a self-driving car project. The company's secret was accused by the FBI of stealing trade secrets, causing serious consequences in July last year. And the common point of the two cases is all towards the final destination: Xiaopeng Motors.

1. The safety features equipped with Tesla cars make it difficult for you to 'want' in the wrong lane



Xiaopeng Motors is also active in electric vehicle manufacturing

A little bit about the Apple case, the accused employee was allegedly stealthily copying the company's sensitive data into his wife's laptop, and was also caught by surveillance cameras. leave the Apple campus with a 'suspicious box'. The employee left his job at Apple to accept a new position at XPeng before being arrested. Another relevant 'interesting' information, Guangzhi Cao was also a senior design engineer at Apple for about two years before officially joining Tesla (according to LinkedIn profiles).

Back to the problem between Tesla and Guangzhi Cao. The lawsuit took place at the time of President Donald Trump's administration showing signs of easing stress in the nearly 1-year trade war with China. Earlier the US had repeatedly accused the world's most populous nation and some of its major companies had made the so-called "cyber espionage" and stole technology from US businesses, At the same time, he took it as a reason to impose tough sanctions.

Both Tesla, Apple, Xiaopeng Motors and Cao's lawyers refused to respond to requests for comment from the press.

1. Tesla came back strong after months of bad business

Earlier, in an interview with technology site The Verge earlier this year, Xiaopeng Motors representative said the company had opened an internal investigation of Tesla's allegations, and said the car maker Chinese electricity has always held a completely respectful view of any third party intellectual property and confidential information.

'However, we believe that Mr. Cao has no intention of stealing trade secrets, as well as Tesla's confidential and proprietary information. At the same time, this incident is definitely not related to Xiaopeng Motors', Chinese electric vehicle manufacturer representative said.

Tesla filed a Guangzhi Cao lawsuit last March. During his time at Tesla, Cao was one of the only 40 senior engineers who had direct access to the source code of Autopilot - the manufacturer's advanced driver assistance system.

1. This is a group of hackers who have successfully hacked Tesla's autopilot system, they hacked Safari on Mac OS in just 20 seconds.



Autopilot is the most valuable technology on Tesla cars

Tesla accused Guangzhi Cao of starting to take acts of downloading complete copies of the Autopilot-related source code into the personal iCloud account at the end of last year. Specifically, according to the complaint, the company claimed that Cao has compressed and moved more than 300,000 files as well as folders related to Autopilot on his iCloud.

Earlier in late 2018, Guangzhi Cao was also accused of deleting about 120,000 files from his working computer, disconnecting his personal iCloud account and simultaneously deleting his web browser history. - at the same time this engineer officially accepted a new job offer from Xiaopeng Motors.

Specifically, Xiaopeng Motors sent Cao a collaborative invitation on December 12. After that, the engineer disconnected his personal iCloud account from a Tesla-supplied computer around December 26, however, he continued to log on to Tesla's intranet, from December 27 to January 1, 2019. Cao did not elaborate on the time

he officially took up work at Xiaopeng Motors, though However, Tesla said that the last working day of this engineer at the company was 3 January. The Guangzhi Cao era was also said to have "enticed" other members of the Autopilot team to move to work at the company. new to me, however he denies this allegation.

1. Ignoring the hype about environmental protection, electric cars still bring a lot of practical benefits

In addition to the thesis on Guangzhi Cao tried to delete all important Tesla-related files from the iCloud personal computer and account, in general records, Cao's lawyers argued that taking any source code or any secret information that exists on Cao's device after he leaves Tesla will be completely unintentional. It is also said that his client did not arbitrarily use or disclose any information regarding Tesla's trade secret after he left the company, nor did he transfer any information. for Xiaopeng Motors.

In a related move, Guangzhi Cao gave Tesla a series of electronic devices related to the incident or the digital image of those devices, as well as allowing the company to access the account. His Gmail for forensic analysis. While Xiaopeng Motors also sent Tesla the necessary data about the computer that Cao used after moving to this company.



1. Take a ride on Tesla's self-driving car and watch the self-driving Tesla car video on the real road

With contradictions as well as good evidence that all stakeholders have come up with, this lawsuit will inevitably fall short. If in the case of Guangzhi Cao really did have a mistake, it would not be surprising that similar incidents had happened too much before, with the typical participation of a large American technology company and a business. Other industries based in China. And with the severity of the incident, the level of punishment faced by former Tesla engineer will certainly not be mild.

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