

Exhibit J

Expert Report – Highly Confidential

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA,
et al.,
Plaintiffs,

v.

META PLATFORMS, INC, Instagram, LLC,
Meta Payments, Inc., Meta Platforms
Technologies, LLC., et al.,
Defendants

IN RE: SOCIAL MEDIA ADOLESCENT
ADDICTION/PERSONAL INJURY
PRODUCTS LIABILITY LITIGATION

THIS DOCUMENT RELATES TO:
4:23-cv-05448

MDL No. 3047

Case No. 4:23-cv-05448-YGR

Judge: Hon. Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers

Magistrate Judge: Hon. Peter H. Kang

**TRIAL REPORT OF PATRICK MCDANIEL
NOVEMBER 21, 2025**

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1 SUMMARY OF OPINIONS

1.1 OPINION 1 – META’S PROCESSES FOR DETECTING UNDER-13 USERS FAIL TO MEET BASIC SECURITY AND CHILD-PROTECTION STANDARDS

1. Meta’s under-13 detection framework has not, and does not, comport with established security principles for secure, reliable, or ethical operation. Its systems are primarily reactive, inconsistently applied, and structurally biased toward false negatives. Despite the availability of mature, privacy-preserving verification technologies, Meta continues to rely on self-reported ages and post-hoc interventions, resulting in a process that cannot be considered technically sound or effective in preventing underage access.

1.2 OPINION 2 – META’S HUMAN REVIEW PROCESS IS INEFFECTIVE AT DISTINGUISHING UNDERAGE USERS

2. Meta’s manual review system prioritizes efficiency and throughput over accuracy. The design removes meaningful human judgment, encourages false negatives, and systematically allows underage accounts to remain active. Meta’s account reviewers are neither equipped nor trained to handle low-prevalence detection tasks. Human reviewers are shown only a narrow set of information that has often only marginal utility for determining if a user is under-13. As implemented, Meta’s human review provides the appearance, but not the substance, of responsible oversight.

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1.3 OPINION 3 – META’S FAILURE TO USE SOFT-MATCHING TO IDENTIFY UNDERAGE ACCOUNTS REPRESENTS A MAJOR TECHNICAL AND PROCEDURAL OMISSION

3. Meta uses a machine-learning-based “soft-matching” capability designed to link accounts likely controlled by the same user. While this tool has been used for policy enforcement purposes, Meta does not apply it to identify additional underage accounts associated with known violators. This omission undermines the effectiveness of Meta’s system for detecting and removing underage users and reflects a failure to employ readily available, low-cost measures that would materially improve detection coverage and timeliness.

1.4 OPINION 4 – META RETAINS UNDER-13 USER DATA FOR UNREASONABLY LONG PERIODS AFTER DETECTION

4. Meta’s data-retention practices for confirmed underage accounts exceed reasonable and accepted limits. The company has repeatedly extended retention windows—from months to a full year—without credible technical justification. These delays violate the principle of prompt and secure data deletion established in industry standards, and they expose sensitive data belonging to children to unnecessary risk. The problems with Meta’s handling of user data stem more from organizational decisions than technological limitations.

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1.5 OPINION 5 – META’S CLAIMS THAT MANY UNDER-13 REPORTS WERE INAUTHENTIC OR ATTACK-GENERATED ARE NOT SUPPORTED BY THE DATA

5. Meta’s assertion that large volumes of under-13 reports were the result of automated or “bot” attacks is not supported by the data nor common understanding in the field regarding how such data typically presents. Quantitative analyses of Meta’s own reporting data show minimal sustained or coordinated activity consistent with such attacks and no regularly repeated attacks. The observed variations fall within the normal operational envelope of online systems and the resulting loads (even where potentially driven by malicious actors) were unlikely to have lasting impact on Meta’s systems. Outside of a few short-lived anomalies, the data do not support Meta’s characterization of widespread inauthentic reporting.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

6. My relevant qualifications are summarized here and provided in more detail in my curriculum vitae, which is attached as **Appendix A** to this report. This appendix also includes a list of my publications in the past ten years and the cases in which I have testified at deposition, hearing, or trial within the past four years.
7. I earned a Ph.D. in Computer Science from the Computer Science and Engineering Department at University of Michigan, Ann Arbor in 2001. I