

GILBERT RANDOLPH FILES FILE-SHARING CLASS ACTION AGAINST COMCAST

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Gilbert Randolph announced Monday that the firm has filed a nationwide class action against Comcast for allegedly blocking customers' access to file-sharing programs. The suit, which claims that the telecommunications giant falsely advertised its Internet service provisions, was filed in federal court in Portland, Ore.

When name plaintiff Robert Topolski tried to share music files about his barbershop quartet hobby, he discovered that Comcast had blocked access to file-sharing programs despite the company's claim that it provides "unfettered access" to all aspects of the Internet, says Alyson Foster, an associate at Gilbert Randolph.

"Comcast surreptitiously installed receiver packets to keep people from accessing file-sharing programs when it promised it wouldn't. Of course the competition is fierce in telecommunications, but they were trying to get an unfair leg up," Foster alleges.

The lawsuit stems from similar suits Gilbert Randolph filed against Comcast in California, Illinois, New Jersey, and Washington, D.C. earlier this year.

"The public response that we have heard is that people are very upset and frustrated with Comcast over this," she says.

The suit calls for payment to the class based on the damage caused by Comcast's alleged misrepresentation of its services and its allegedly making an unjust profit from its Internet service. The suit also asks for an injunction to stop the company from blocking file-sharing programs. Foster says it's too soon to estimate the amount of the damages, but because the case is filed in federal court, the alleged damages must exceed \$5 million.

Comcast did not return calls for comment.