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Whoops, Samsung workers accidentally leaked trade secrets via ChatGPT

ChatGPT doesn't keep secrets.

By [Cecily Mauran](#) on April 6, 2023





A major whoopsie from Samsung. Credit: Getty Images

Never forget that anything you share with ChatGPT is retained and used to further train the model. Samsung employees have learned this the hard way after accidentally leaking top secret [Samsung](#) data.

Samsung employees accidentally shared confidential information while using ChatGPT for help at work. Samsung's semiconductor division has allowed engineers to use



ChatGPT to check source code.

But The Economist Korea [reported](#) three separate instances of Samsung employees unintentionally leaking sensitive information to ChatGPT. In one instance, an employee pasted confidential source code into the chat to check for errors. Another employee shared code with ChatGPT and "requested code optimization." A third, shared a recording of a meeting to convert into notes for a presentation. That information is now out in the wild for ChatGPT to feed on.

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The leak is a real-world example of hypothetical scenarios privacy experts have been [concerned about](#). Other scenarios include sharing confidential legal documents or medical information for the purpose of summarizing or analyzing lengthy text, which might then be used to improve the model. Experts warn that it may violate GDPR compliance, which is why Italy recently [banned](#) ChatGPT.

Samsung has taken immediate action by limiting the ChatGPT upload capacity to 1024 bytes per person, and is investigating the people involved in the leak. It is also considering building its own internal AI chatbot to prevent future embarrassing mishaps. But it's unlikely that Samsung will recall any of its leaked data. ChatGPT's [data policy](#) says it uses data to train its models unless you request to opt out. In ChatGPT's usage guide, it explicitly [warns users](#) not to share sensitive information in conversations.

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Consider this a cautionary tale to be remembered the next time you turn to ChatGPT for help. Samsung certainly will.

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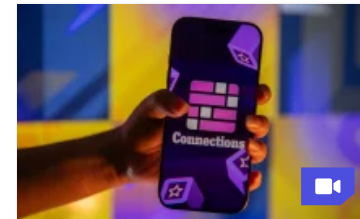


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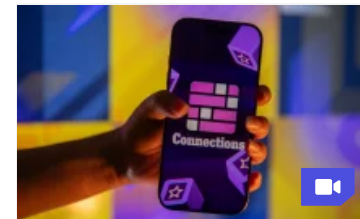
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BREAKING BUSINESS

Samsung Bans ChatGPT Among Employees After Sensitive Code Leak

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TOPLINE

Samsung Electronics has banned the use of ChatGPT and other AI-powered chatbots by its employees, Bloomberg [reported](#), becoming the latest company to crack down on the workplace use of AI services amid concerns about sensitive internal information being leaked on such platforms.



File Photo: Samsung Electronics has banned the use of ChatGPT and other similar tools at the workplace.
NURPHOTO VIA GETTY IMAGES

KEY FACTS

- According to Bloomberg, the crackdown was prompted by the discovery of an accidental leak of sensitive internal source code by an engineer who uploaded it to ChatGPT last month.
- Samsung subsequently issued a memo last week banning the use of “generative AI” tools.
- Although the severity of the leak remains unclear, Samsung is concerned that data shared with AI chatbots get stored on servers owned by companies operating the service like OpenAI, Microsoft, and Google—with no easy way to access and delete them.
- The company also fears that the sensitive data shared with the likes of ChatGPT could end up being served to other users, the report adds.
- By default, ChatGPT saves a user’s chat history and uses the conversations to train its models further, and while the platform allows users to disable this manually, it is unclear if this option retroactively applies to older chats.



KEY BACKGROUND

Samsung is not the only tech giant to crack down on the use of ChatGPT and similar tools among employees; Amazon issued a similar warning to staffers in January. The online retail giant informed its workers not to share any code or confidential information about the company with ChatGPT, after the company [reportedly](#) discovered examples of ChatGPT responses that resembled internal Amazon data. In February, JPMorgan Chase also [heavily restricted](#) the use of ChatGPT by its staffers amid concerns that it may face potential regulatory risks surrounding the sharing of sensitive financial information. Soon, other major U.S. banks—including Bank of America, Citigroup, Deutsche Bank, Wells Fargo and Goldman Sachs—[followed suit](#).

CONTRA

Despite lingering concerns, several workplaces have begun to integrate generative AI tools into their workflow. Last month, Goldman Sachs—one of the banks to restrict the use of ChatGPT by staffers—disclosed it was [using](#) generative AI tools to help its software developers write and test code. The company, however, did not mention which specific tool or service it was using. Management consulting firm Bain & Company also [announced](#) earlier this year it was integrating OpenAI's generative tools into its management systems. On Monday, IBM CEO Arvind Krishna [said](#) the company will stop hiring humans for jobs that AI tools can do.

FURTHER READING

[Samsung Bans Staff's AI Use After Spotting ChatGPT Data Leak](#) (Bloomberg)

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Post Office Horizon scandal: Why hundreds were wrongly prosecuted

9 October 2025

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PA Media

The Post Office Horizon scandal has been called the UK's most widespread miscarriage of justice, after hundreds of people were wrongly prosecuted due to faulty software which suggested money was missing from their branch accounts.

The scandal led to widespread public anger - partly fueled by a hit TV drama - and has been the subject of a lengthy inquiry.

In October the government accepted all but one of the recommendations made in the inquiry's first report, which had focused on the suffering endured by sub-postmasters and their fight for compensation.

What happened and how many people were affected?

More than 900 sub-postmasters were wrongly prosecuted because of incorrect information from the Horizon computer system.

Many sub-postmasters went to prison for false accounting and theft, and others were financially ruined.

The Post Office itself took many cases to court, prosecuting 700 people between 1999 and 2015. Another 283 cases were brought by other bodies, including the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).

In 2017, a group of 555 sub-postmasters - led by campaigner Alan Bates, who was subsequently knighted for his contribution - took legal action in a landmark court case against the Post Office.

In 2019, the Post Office agreed to pay the group £58m in compensation, but much of the money went on legal fees.

However, the action paved the way for dozens of sub-postmasters to have their convictions quashed in 2021.

The episode came to wider public attention at the start of 2024 when it was depicted in an ITV drama, Mr Bates vs The Post Office.

The outcry triggered by the series led the government to rush legislation through Parliament to quash all the convictions linked to the Horizon scandal.

What is Fujitsu's Horizon system?

Horizon was developed by the Japanese company Fujitsu, for tasks such as accounting and stocktaking.

It was introduced by the Post Office in 1999.

Sub-postmasters quickly complained about bugs in the system after it falsely reported shortfalls, often for many thousands of pounds, but their concerns were dismissed.

The Horizon system is still used by the Post Office and maintained by Fujitsu. The Post Office says it has continued to make improvements to the system while it plans "to move to a new system that is being developed".

What was the impact of the scandal on Post Office staff?



Sir Alan Bates became the face of the subpostmasters' campaign for justice

Many former sub-postmasters and sub-postmistresses say the scandal ruined their lives.

Some used their own money to cover non-existent shortfalls because their contracts said they were responsible for unexplained losses. Many faced bankruptcy or lost their livelihoods.

Marriages broke down, and some families believe the stress led to serious health conditions, addiction and even premature death.

It is thought that more than 13 people may have taken their own lives as a result.

- 'I'm terrified' - Post Office victim still fears seeing old customers
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What compensation schemes are in place?

There are four different compensation schemes, which are aimed at different groups of victims.

Individual eligibility for compensation depends on the particular circumstances of each case.

However, the schemes have been criticised for being too slow and complicated, with many of the worst affected victims receiving far less than their original claims.

As at **30 September 2025**, a total of £1.23bn had been awarded to more than 9,100 sub-postmasters:

- Horizon Shortfall Scheme - £692m
- Group Litigation Order Scheme - £199m
- Overturned Convictions Scheme - £68m
- Horizon Convictions Redress Scheme - £270m

The Overturned Convictions Scheme closed on 2 June 2025. Claims made through this route are now being managed under the Horizon Convictions Redress Scheme.

In October 2025, the government said that all victims of the scandal who are seeking compensation will be entitled to free legal advice regarding their claim.

This includes those who originally sought compensation through the Horizon Shortfall Scheme - which accounts for more than half of the compensation claims paid out so far. They will now get government-funded legal advice to help them decide whether to accept a fixed sum offer.

It is thought access to free legal advice could have a major effect on the amount of compensation some victims will receive.

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What is the Post Office Horizon public inquiry?

The public inquiry began in 2022 and heard evidence from sub-postmasters, Post Office and Fujitsu employees, IT experts and politicians.

Sir Alan - whose story featured in the ITV drama - told the inquiry that the Post Office had spent 23 years trying to "discredit and silence" him.



Getty Images

Paula Vennells was criticised for repeatedly telling the inquiry that she couldn't remember or had never been told key bits of information

Paula Vennells, who was the Post Office chief executive between 2012 and 2019, **gave evidence in May 2024.**

She was quizzed for three days and at times broke down in tears. She apologised to the sub-postmasters and their families "who have suffered as a result of all that the inquiry has been looking into for so long".

The first part of the inquiry's report was published on 8 July 2025.

In the report, inquiry chair Sir Wyn Williams said the impact on those affected had been "disastrous", and that it was not easy to "exaggerate the trauma" that people suffered as they were investigated and prosecuted.

- Post Office scandal had 'disastrous' impact on victims
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Responding to Sir Wyn's report in October 2024, the government said it accepted all but one of the recommendations.

It agreed to provide greater clarity on the definition of "full and fair redress", and said it would begin work on a restorative justice project for subpostmasters.

It is also considering establishing an independent body to oversee redress schemes for any future scandals.

Who has been criticised for the Horizon scandal?

Ms Vennells resigned from her role at the Post Office in 2019. In January 2024, she said she would hand back her CBE.

In August 2023, the then-Post Office chief executive Nick Read said he would return bonus money awarded for his work on the Horizon inquiry.

Fujitsu Europe director Paul Patterson said the firm had a "moral obligation" to help fund compensation payments.

Lib Dem leader Sir Ed Davey has been criticised for delaying meeting Sir Alan when he was postal affairs minister in 2010. He says he was "deeply misled by Post Office executives".

The BBC discovered that former Prime Minister David Cameron's government knew the Post Office had dropped a secret investigation that might have helped postmasters prove their innocence.

Post Office Inquiry

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Post Office scandal

Post Office 'maintained the fiction' that Horizon IT system worked, inquiry finds

Damning report says at least 6 sub-postmasters have died by suicide over flawed software scandal



Former Post Office workers celebrate outside London's Royal Courts of Justice after having their convictions overturned by the Court of Appeal in 2021 © Yui Mok/PA

Maisie Grice in London

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Post Office and Fujitsu employees knew the Horizon IT system was deeply flawed but “maintained the fiction” that it could not produce errors when prosecuting innocent sub-postmasters, a public inquiry has found.

Employees at the Japanese technology group were aware the software was “afflicted by bugs, errors and defects” even before it was rolled out, retired High Court judge Sir Wyn Williams said on Tuesday.

His damning report found at least six sub-postmasters had died by suicide since the inquiry was set up in 2020, and identified 13 overall who died by suicide after being accused of taking money from their branch accounts.

“A number of senior and not so senior employees of the [Post Office](#) knew . . . Legacy Horizon was capable of error,” Williams wrote. “Yet, for all practical purposes . . . the Post Office maintained the fiction that its data was always accurate. The impact upon those wrongly accused and prosecuted for criminal offences has been disastrous.”

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The post office Horizon IT inquiry chair Wyn Williams delivers his findings © Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry/Reuters

Almost 1,000 Post Office branch managers were convicted between 1999 and 2015 for offences including theft and false accounting using flawed evidence from Fujitsu's Horizon system. About 236 of these sub-postmasters were sent to prison.

The report's findings reaffirm victims and campaigners' long-standing belief that the Post Office abused its position as a trusted national institution to mount wrongful prosecutions against its own sub-postmasters.

Williams, in a speech following the publication of the report, said the "human suffering" revealed by the inquiry was "profoundly disturbing", noting sub-postmasters' ruined businesses and wrecked family lives.

Victims still faced “egregious delays” in [obtaining compensation](#), he noted, adding: “A large proportion of claims continue to be difficult to resolve.”

In 2019, the High Court in London found Fujitsu’s Horizon system contained bugs and errors that resulted in branches being wrongly flagged as suffering shortfalls.

A group of more than 500 sub-postmasters brought the case, which paved the way to a Court of Appeal ruling in 2021 that resulted in a small cohort of sub-postmasters having their convictions overturned.

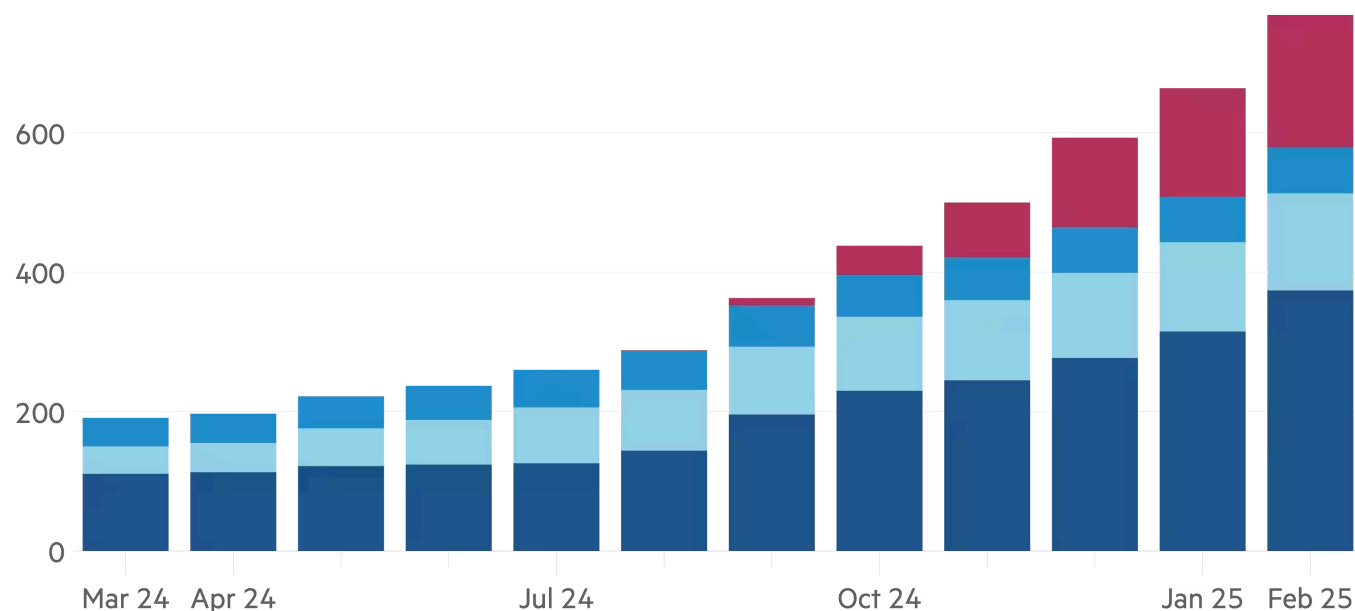
Legislation [passed last year](#) by the previous Conservative government overturned all remaining convictions. The move followed increased public scrutiny after an ITV drama.

About £768mn had been paid in financial redress across four schemes by the end of February this year, according to the Department for Business and Trade, which is responsible for the Post Office. There are approximately 10,000 eligible claimants.

Compensation to sub-postmasters has lagged despite complaints

Redress (£mn)

Horizon Shortfall Scheme Group Litigation Order Overturned Conviction
Horizon Convictions Redress Scheme



Source: DBT

The public inquiry was set up in 2020 and concluded hearings late last year, having taken evidence from dozens of sub-postmasters, many of whom lost their livelihoods and suffered significant personal losses.

Dozens of victims were driven to alcohol addiction, mental illness and divorce, Williams said, describing the “very significant suffering” endured by victims’ relatives.

Williams set out a series of recommendations for the government, including a new public body to oversee the administration of redress schemes and compensation for family members affected by the scandal.

He also said a senior lawyer should be appointed to the Horizon Shortfall Scheme — which compensates victims for erroneous account shortfalls — to expedite the claims process, and that victims should be allowed to fall back on the government’s fixed offer on other schemes even if they sought a full assessment.

Findings from other phases of the Post Office inquiry and overall recommendations from Williams will feature in a final report to be published at a later date.

Post Office chair Nigel Railton on Tuesday issued “a clear and unequivocal apology . . . Lots of people made choices over two decades which caused serious harm to so many people. Post Office did not listen to postmasters and, as an organisation, we let them down.”

Gareth Thomas, Post Office minister, told MPs the government would accept one of the report’s recommendations and enable some family members of “existing Horizon claimants who themselves suffered personal injury . . . because of their relatives’ suffering” to apply for compensation.

He earlier welcomed the report’s publication, saying the “recommendations are immensely helpful as a guide for what is needed to finish the job”.

Fujitsu said: “We have apologised for, and deeply regret, our role in sub-postmasters’ suffering, and we wish to reiterate that apology today. We hope for a swift resolution that ensures a just outcome for the victims.”

Letter in response to this article:

[Should the Post Office face charges over IT scandal? / From Jason Nisse, CEO, The Nisse Consultancy, London N5, UK](#)

