# Alleged GPL violation spurs accusations, lawsuit

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Alexander Maryanovsky, the developer of Jin, a Java-based chess client, has filed a lawsuit in Israel that alleges multiple violations of the GNU General Public License (GPL). In the suit, Maryanovsky alleges that International Chess University (IChessU), a startup offering online chess tutoring, and Alexander Rabinovitch, its CEO, violated both his copyright and the GPL in its production and distribution of the IChessU client, a piece of software based on Jin. Both sides agree on the general outline of events, but differ in their interpretation of the GPL and its applicability.

Originally from Russia, Maryanovsky is a computer science student at Tel Aviv University. Besides Jin, his main contributions to free software are Java programs such as Chessboard and automate. He has also made small contributions to Jedit.

Maryanovsky is especially proud of Jin. After a disastrous first version, he says, "I decided to rewrite it from scratch, and made a promise to myself that I will not write ugly code in it -- Jin would be perfect. It's a big reason why IChessU have been able to build on Jin so easily. Jin is very flexible, modular, and elegant."

The defendant, Alexander Rabinovitch, is a former professional chess player. He was World Champion for high schools in 1996, and is ranked as an International Master, one step below Grand Master. Although he holds a degree in software engineering and management, and has worked in the IT industry for three years, his experience with the GPL stems mainly from IChessU's involvement with Jin. He describes IChessU as "a community of people, brought together by the joy of the game, taking it one step beyond," and as "an educational organization."

[Full Story](#) [2].

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