

(An open letter) to all parties involved in the Los Altos Hacks event this year:

Hackathon events are opportunities we relish, opportunities to spend time with friends and flex our creative muscles in a time crunch. It's not the win or loss that matters in the end, rather the pride of knowing we did our best to create value for the world.

Unfortunately, while we were initially amazed by each of the winning projects at Los Altos Hacks this year, surface-level investigation has revealed major concerns regarding the legitimacy of the overall winner, SightSense. It's a brilliant project that solves a key issue in a beautiful and measured way, but we have substantive reason to believe that a) the project actively violated the rules of the event, and b) its creators wantonly obscured and continue to obscure that fact¹. Interestingly, throughout the process of collecting and organizing our evidence, various parts of SightSense's digital footprint continue to disappear after facing ramping scrutiny from members of the Los Altos Hacks community.

Regardless, we have done our best to compile reliable and concrete proof of dishonesty. We represent a group of disgruntled attendees, and although official results have been cemented, we hope you will take our perspective into consideration when making your personal judgment as to what occurred.

Thank you,
The Los Altos Hacks community

¹ Please note: All provided information has been gathered by various members of the Los Altos Hacks community. We have diligently done our best to only compile accurate evidence and factual, unbiased interpretations within context. Any inaccuracies are purely accidental and we will gladly make the necessary changes to correct them as soon as they are brought to our awareness. This document does not constitute a legal accusation. This is the fourth version of this document, revised to reflect all potential inaccuracies. All quantitative information is true and available publicly as of 05/30/2024.

1. SightSense on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/sightsense-ai>



Image 1a. Screenshot taken from the LinkedIn page indicating the founding year. The page overview has since been retroactively updated with the following: “Founded after winning the hackathon, Los Altos Hacks VII”.

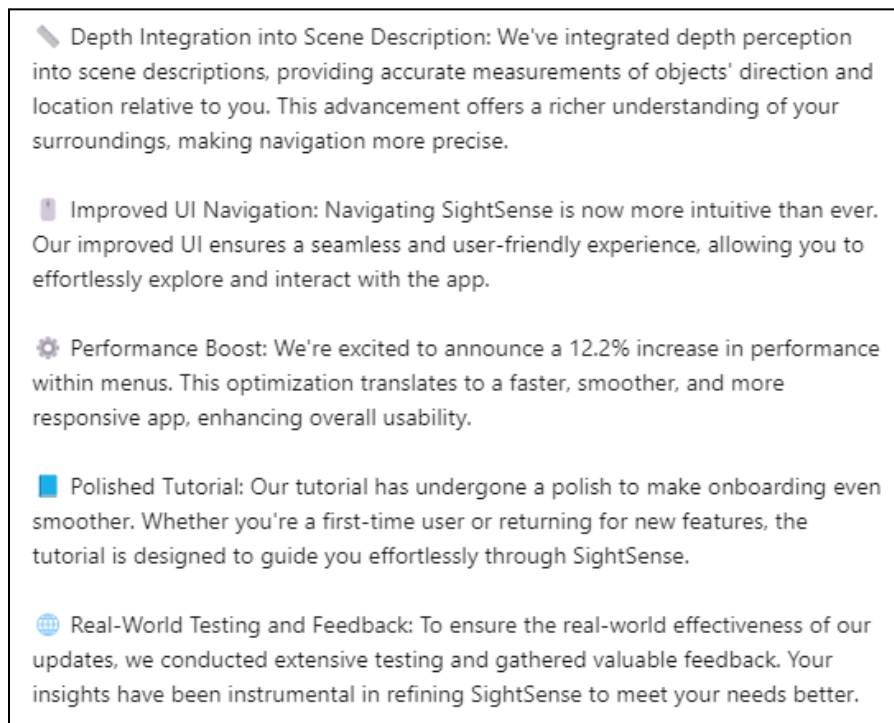


Image 1b. Screenshot taken from a post made on the LinkedIn page indicating planning, coding, UI, and crowdsourcing work done 3-4 months prior to the hackathon, some time in December or January. More likely than not, the post was made in December of 2023, explaining the previous discrepancy with the founding date.

2. History of unethical action from SightSense team

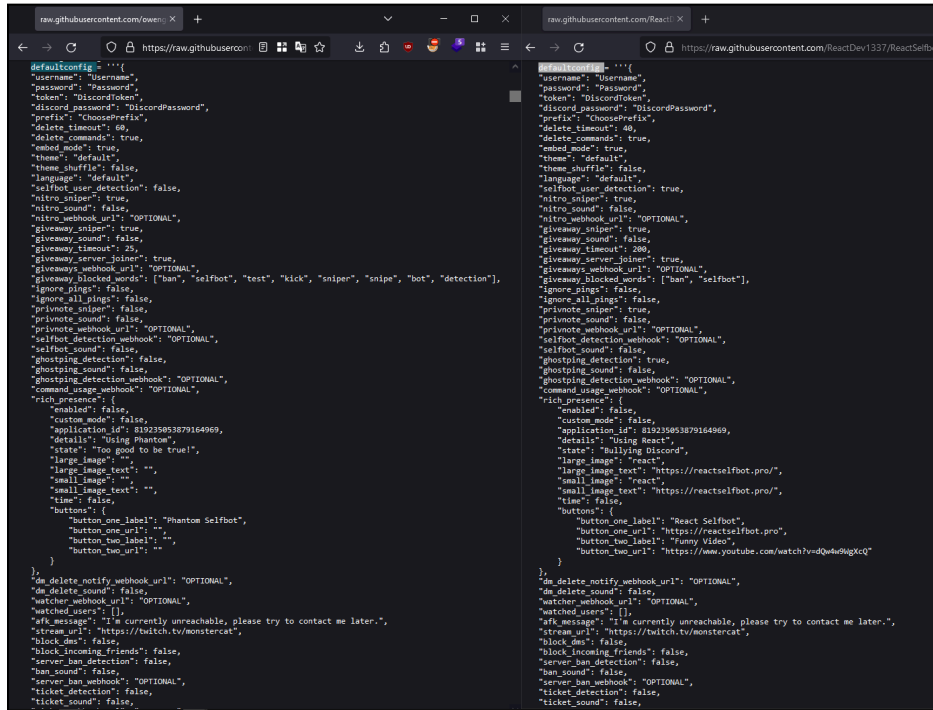


Image 2a.i. Comparison of a team member’s project Phantom with a popular existing Discord bot project React, revealing direct plagiarism. Furthermore, the project violates the ToS of Discord and exposes accounts to security vulnerabilities.

Sources:

- <https://raw.githubusercontent.com/ReactDev1337/ReactSelfbot/master/React.py>
- <https://raw.githubusercontent.com/owengregson/Phantom/main/Phantom.py>

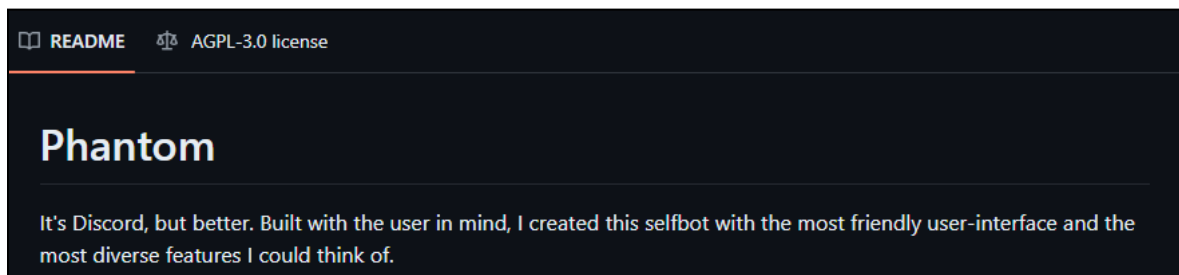


Image 2a.ii. Description of the project without appropriate citation given to the original author.

Source: <https://github.com/owengregson/Phantom>

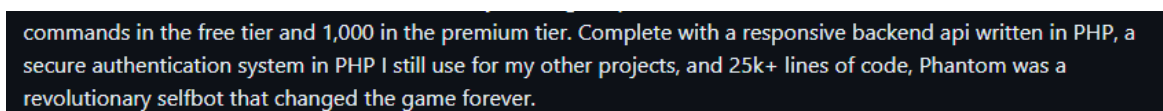


Image 2a.iii. Claims that the project was entirely self-written. Also includes reference to a premium tier, indicating potential distribution of the paid software from which it was plagiarized.

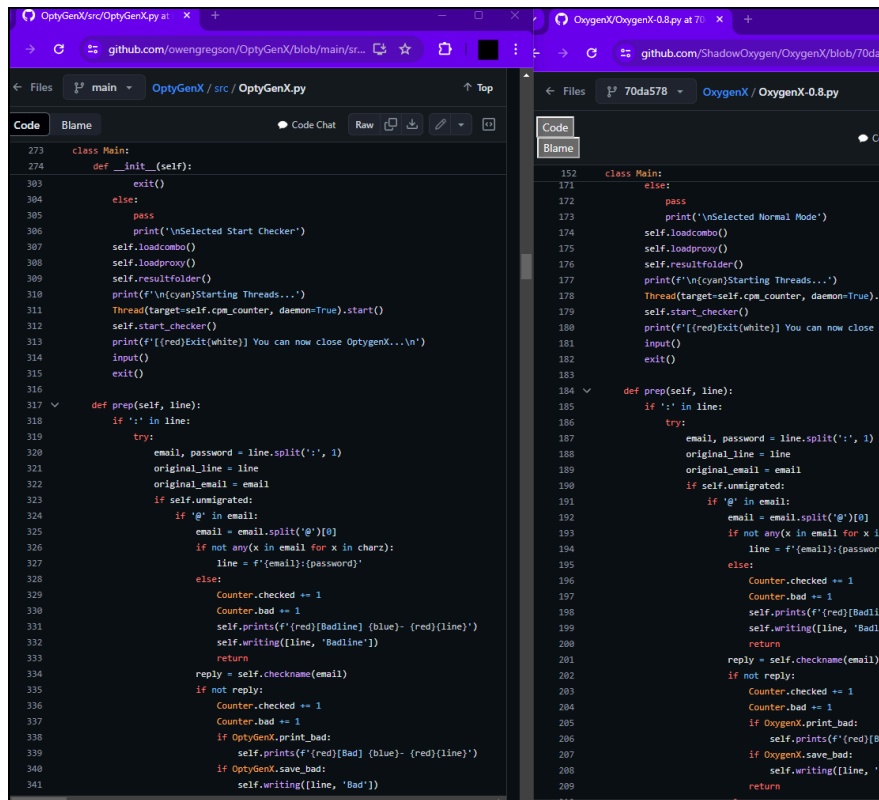


Image 2b. Comparison of a team member's project OptyGenX with a popular existing project OxygenX, intended to aid players of the video game Minecraft, revealing direct plagiarism.

Sources:

- <https://github.com/ShadowOxygen/OxygenX>
- <https://github.com/owengregson/OptyGenX>

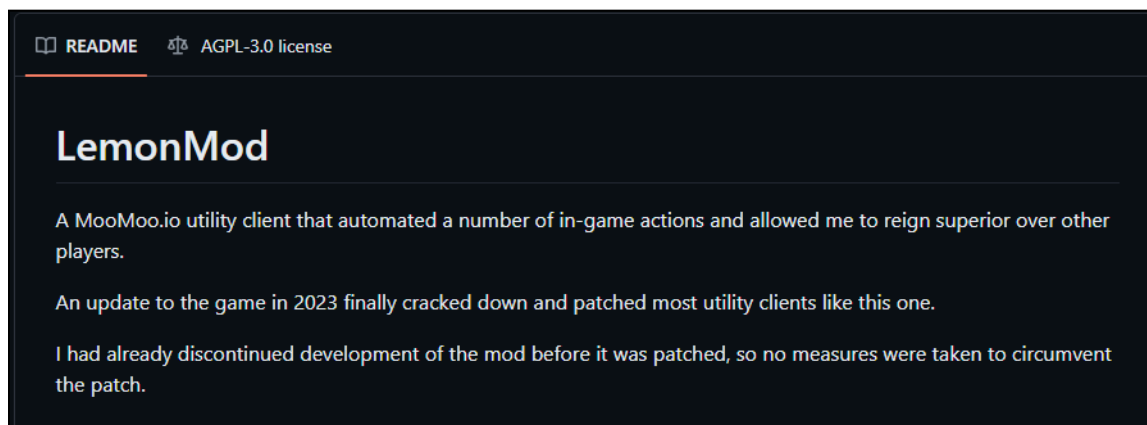


Image 2c. A Github project intended to circumvent the ToS of a popular online game.

Source: <https://github.com/owengregson/LemonMod>

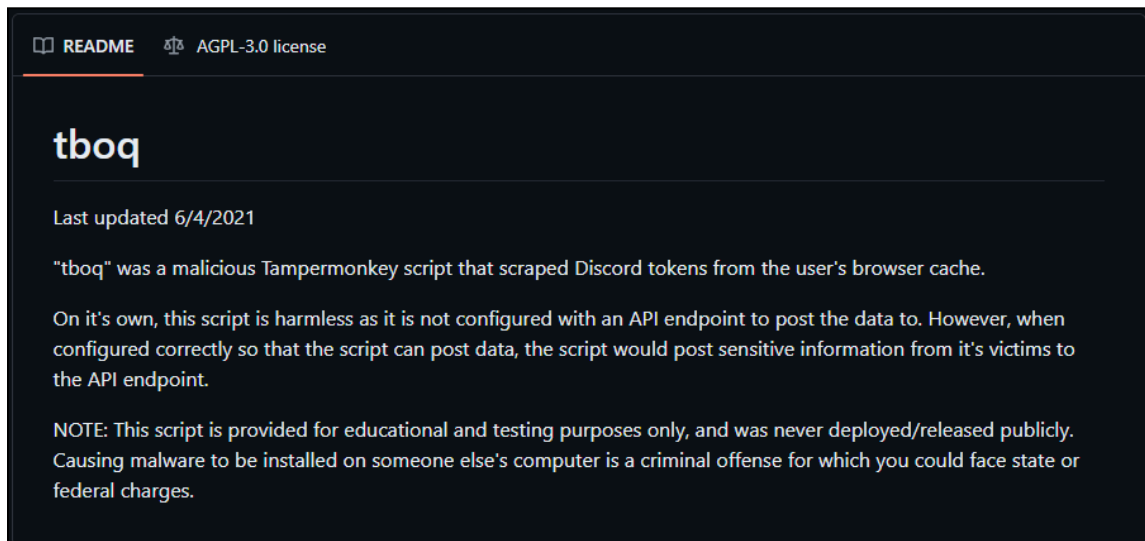
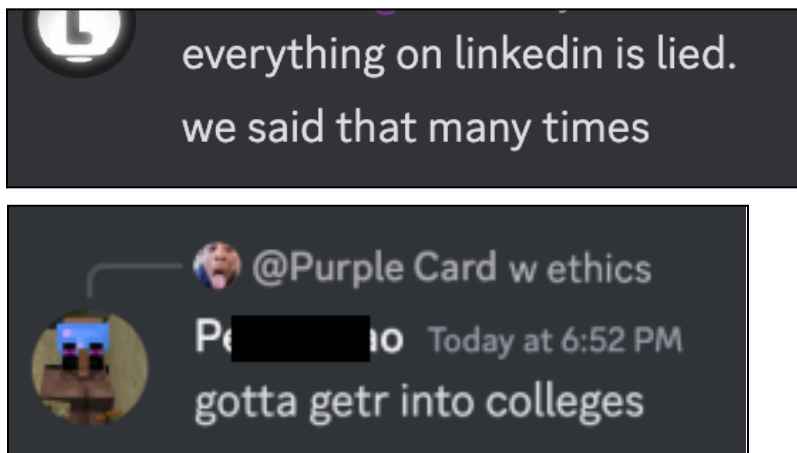


Image 2d. A Github project intended to aid users in the theft of sensitive information through the hacking of Discord accounts, potentially in violation of federal law if not for the provided disclaimer.

Source: <https://github.com/owengregson/tboq>



Images 2e.i and 2e.ii. Admission on behalf of both team members that all information on the LinkedIn was intentionally inaccurate in order to gain legitimacy as an established enterprise, increasingly important considering the context of SightSense being submitted to YCombinator. Furthermore, timestamped evidence delineated in the following section of this document line up with the dates published on the LinkedIn, contributing to the increasingly clearer narrative that work was done on SightSense prior to the hackathon.

3. The development of the application taking place prior to the hackathon

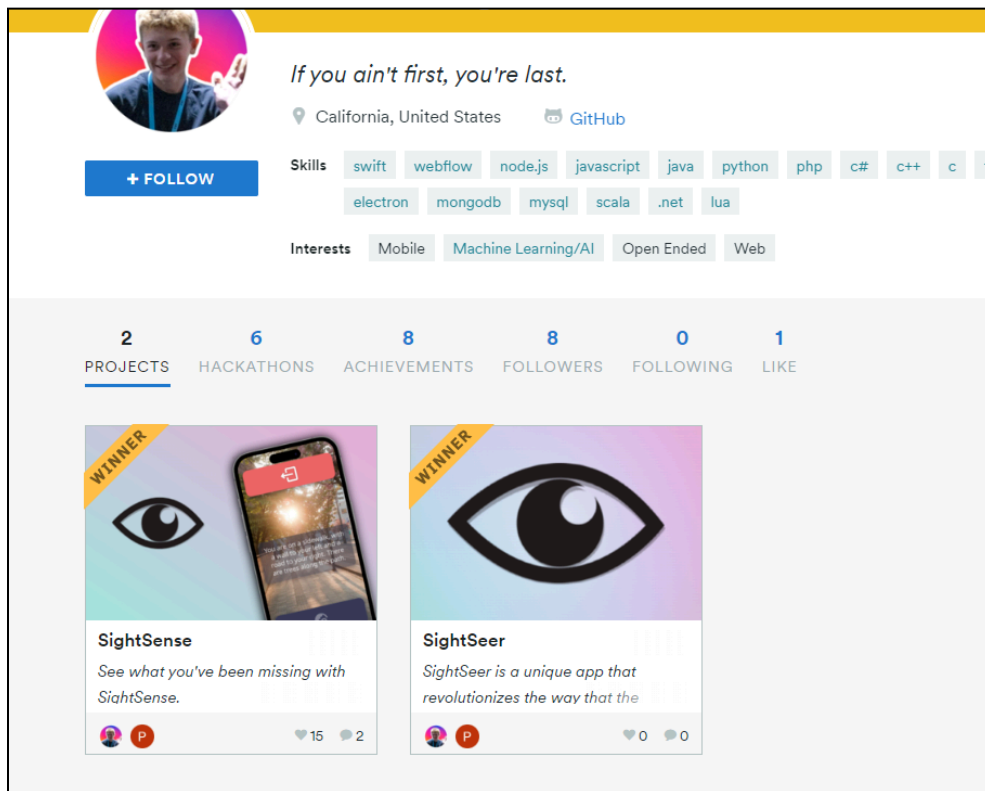


Image 3a. SightSense was based on a previous winning project by the same team. The design assets are evidenced to have been made before the hackathon, as well as the prototype application itself considering the distinct overlap in functionality.

Source: <https://devpost.com/software/sightsense-5irgu3>

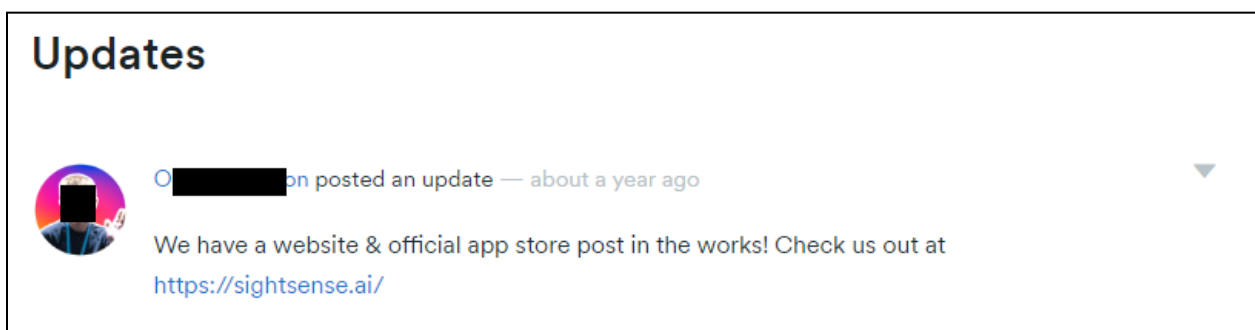


Image 3b.i. A comment left by the team under the SightSeer application page on Devpost, a platform which does not support comment edits. The comment includes a link to the website for SightSense, adding to the emerging narrative that with SightSeer as a prototype, SightSense was developed and incorporated as a legitimate product aided by months of work, then resubmitted to Los Altos Hacks as a new project.

Source: <https://devpost.com/software/sightseer-0rdf75>

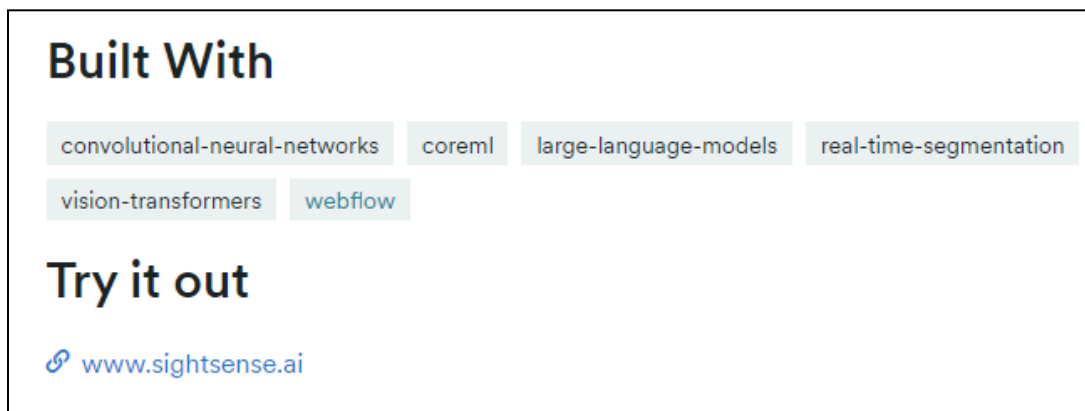
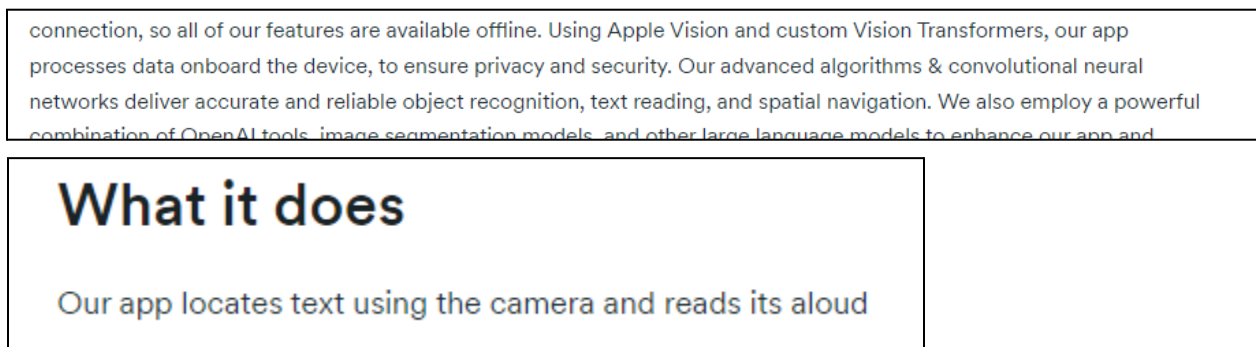
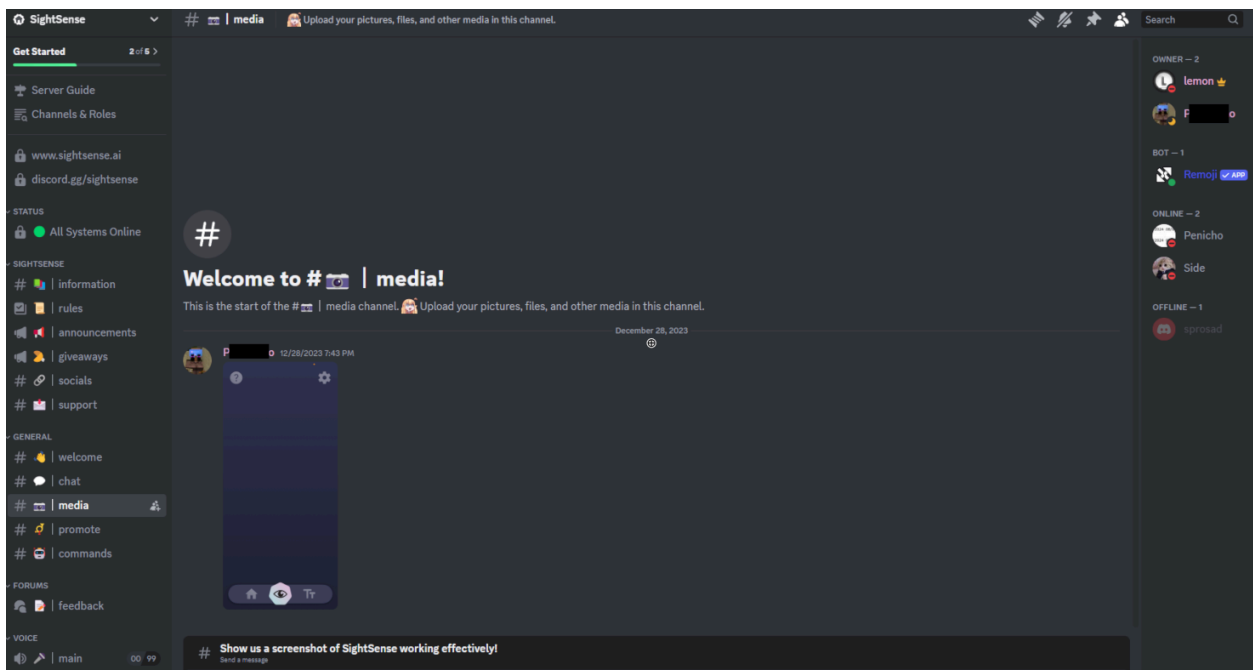
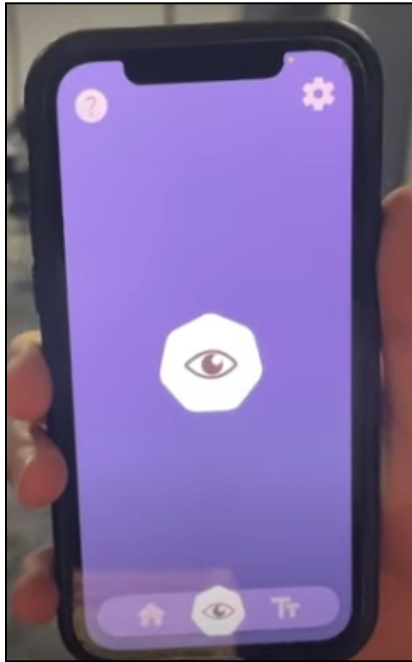


Image 3c.ii. The aforementioned website currently linked on the SightSense page.

Source: <https://devpost.com/software/sightsense-5irgu3>



Images 3d.i and 3d.ii. The descriptions of SightSense and SightSeer respectively, the commonality of text reading contributing further to the narrative that SightSeer was a prototype for SightSense.



Images 3e.i and 3e.ii. A working prototype of SightSense and a screenshot of a prototype shared by the SightSense team from December 2023 respectively, demonstrating frontend work that had been done prior to the hackathon.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tWtPj8ejJe0>

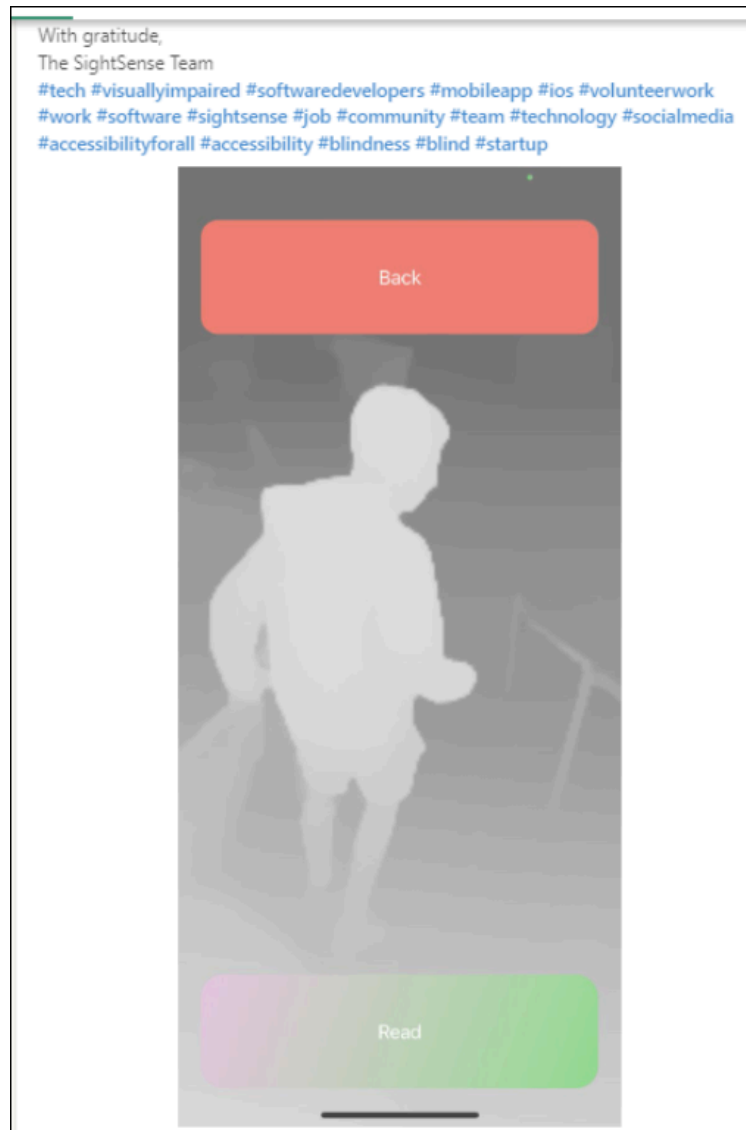
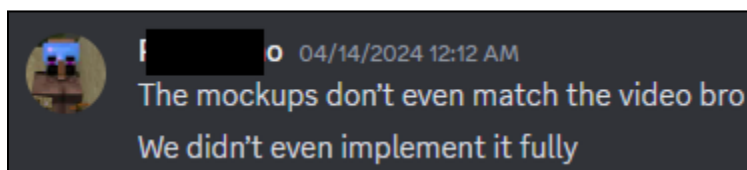
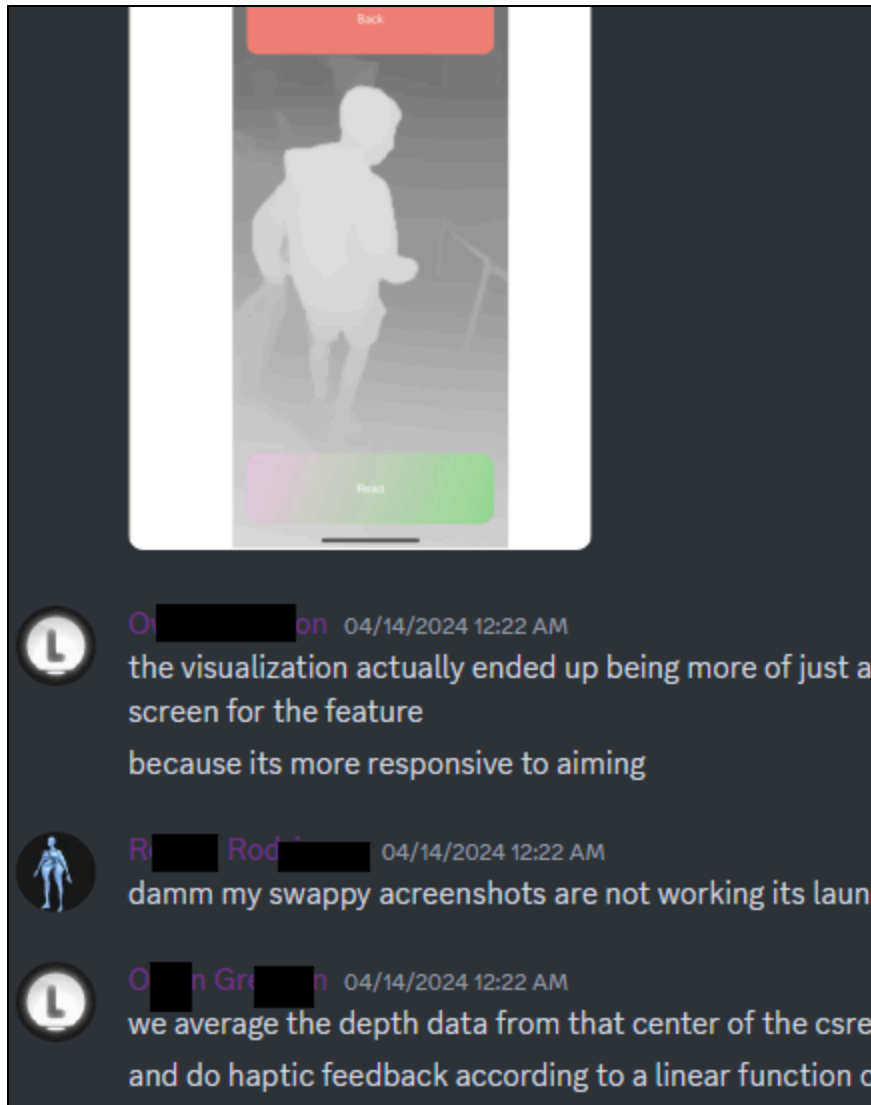
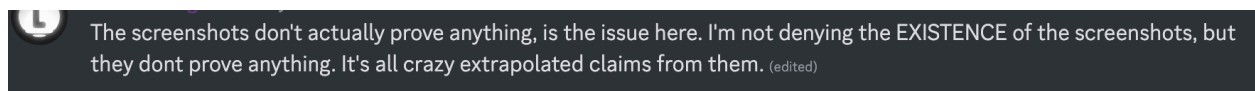
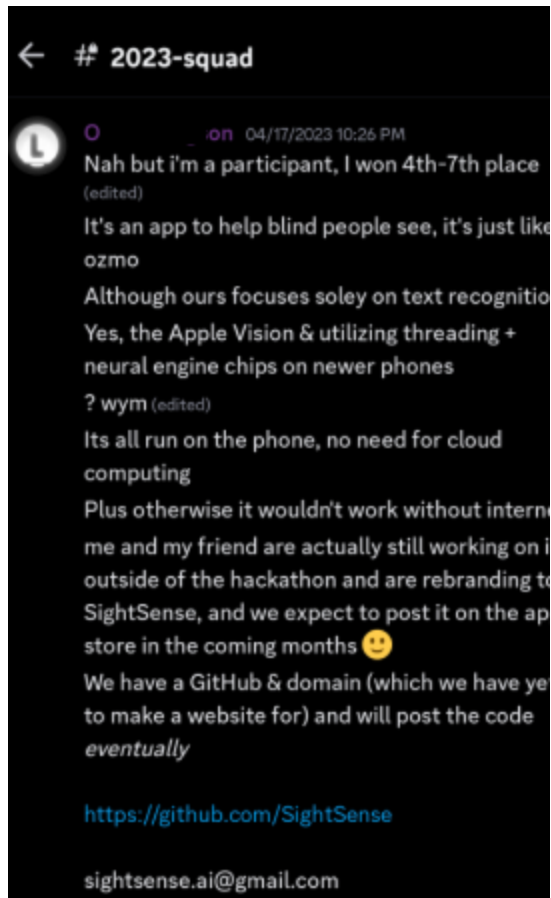


Image 3f.i. A now deleted LinkedIn post made several months prior to the hackathon showcasing the development of the LIDAR functionality of SightSense.



Images 3f.ii and 3f.iii. Admissions on behalf of the SightSense team acknowledging the legitimacy of the LIDAR post and making concessions regarding the extent to which work was done prior to the hackathon – denying “full” implementation strongly implies partial implementation.



Images 3g.i and 3g.ii. Direct, clear-cut admission by the team admitting to work being done on the project prior to the hackathon. Although fully willing to comment on other pieces of evidence, when approached regarding this screenshot, the team flat out refused. The team separately acknowledged all screenshots included in this document as genuine.

To the hackathon administration teams: At the end of the day, one hackathon is not a major enough issue worth fighting for. But it is not anger that we are experiencing, nor is it envy regarding the achievement, rather frustration and sadness. Seeing dishonesty rewarded is disheartening for honest developers, and we understand that this is precisely why you chose to amend the rules. However, even if you are unable to change the outcome of this hackathon, we implore you to release a statement at the very least that validates our concerns as delineated through the provided evidence.

To the SightSense team: Whatever the future of SightSense may be, a history of dishonesty may not be the best for the team or the project and future endeavors thereof. We implore you to acknowledge your role in the events as they happened to provide the community closure. Your financial reward is not at risk, but perhaps your reputation is.

To the attendees affected: Sorry about all of this mess. Please find the will to put this behind you. Your projects were fantastic this year and I hope you are not deterred by what happened. Hackathons are wonderful, I love these things so much. Forget the prizes, just keep making awesome stuff, keep stacking cups at 3am and clapping for no good reason. I'll see you all next year.

Thanks again for your time.