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The Truth Behind Meta's Llama 2 Language Model

Donovan Johnson (<https://fagenwasanni.com/author/donovan-johnson/>)

22 July 2023 (<https://fagenwasanni.com/date/2023/07/>)



Meta's recent release of the Llama-2 large language model has sparked a debate about its open source status. While Meta AI claims that Llama 2 is open source, there are concerns about whether it truly meets the criteria for open source software.

The issue lies in the licensing of Llama 2. Despite Meta's claims, it does not use an Open Source Initiative (OSI)-approved license or comply with the Open Source Definition (OSD). This raises questions about the justification of calling it open source.

Industry experts have weighed in on the matter. Erica Brescia, a managing director at RedPoint, questions how Meta and Microsoft can label Llama 2 as open source when it does not meet the necessary licensing standards. Many believe that Meta is using the term "open source" as a marketing tactic rather than adhering to the true principles of open source software.

Amanda Brock, CEO of OpenUK, acknowledges that Llama 2 may not have an OSI-approved license but believes that its release is still a significant step towards democratizing technology and building trust through transparency.

Meta acknowledges the benefits of being open source, with their global affairs president, Nick Clegg, stating that it would make Llama-2 "safer and better." However, the devil is in the details, and the Llama 2 Community License Agreement falls short in terms of open source requirements.

The agreement restricts the use of Llama 2 for training other language models. Additionally, if Llama 2 is used in an app or service with more than 700 million monthly users, a special license is required from Meta. These limitations contradict the principles of open source software and have raised concerns among the open-source community.

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Stefano Maffulli, the executive director of the OSI, highlights the confusion surrounding the labeling of Llama 2 as open source. While he appreciates Meta's efforts to make powerful AI systems accessible, he points out that the license terms imposed by Meta do not align with the unrestricted nature of open source software. Maffulli argues that open source allows developers and users the freedom to use technology without engaging with another party and that the limitations imposed by Meta's license contradict this principle.

Karen Sadler, a lawyer and executive director at the Software Freedom Conservancy, also criticizes the Llama 2 license. She argues that the additional commercial terms and the expansive prohibited behaviors listed in the Acceptable Use Policy make it non-free and not truly open source. Sadler also notes the absence of a public drafting or comment process for the license, which should be a prerequisite for the introduction of any new license.

In conclusion, while Meta claims that Llama 2 is open source, the licensing terms and restrictions it imposes raise doubts about its true open source status. The debate surrounding Llama 2 highlights the importance of adhering to the principles of open source software and ensuring transparency and freedom in the development and use of AI systems.

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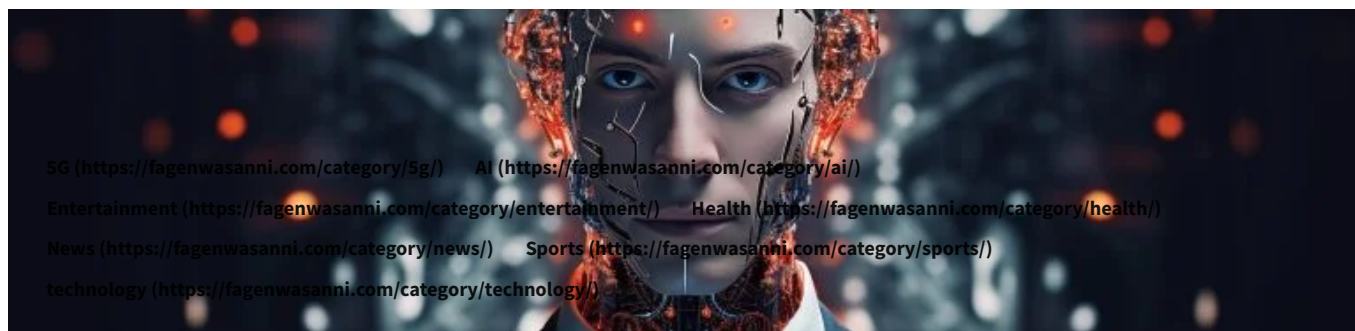
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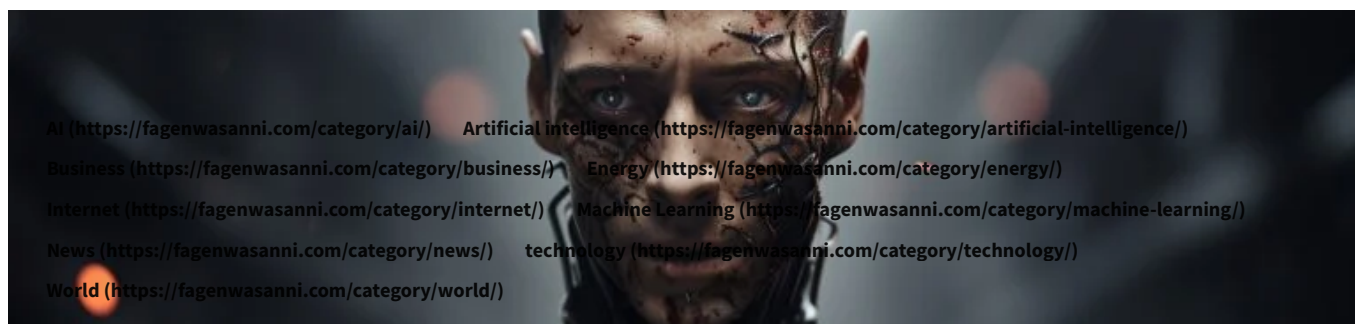
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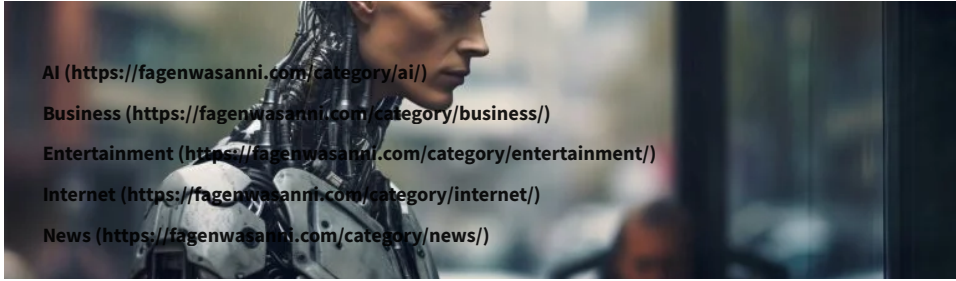
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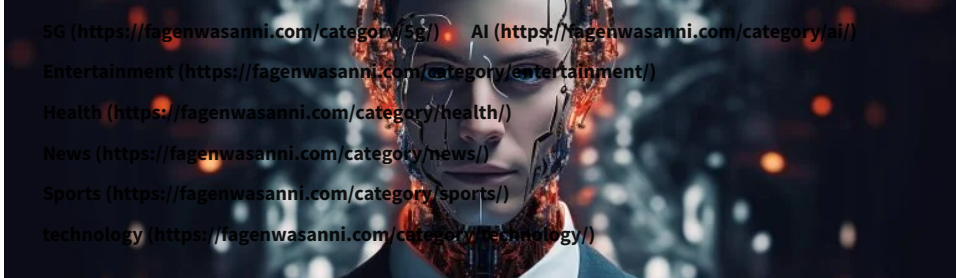
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