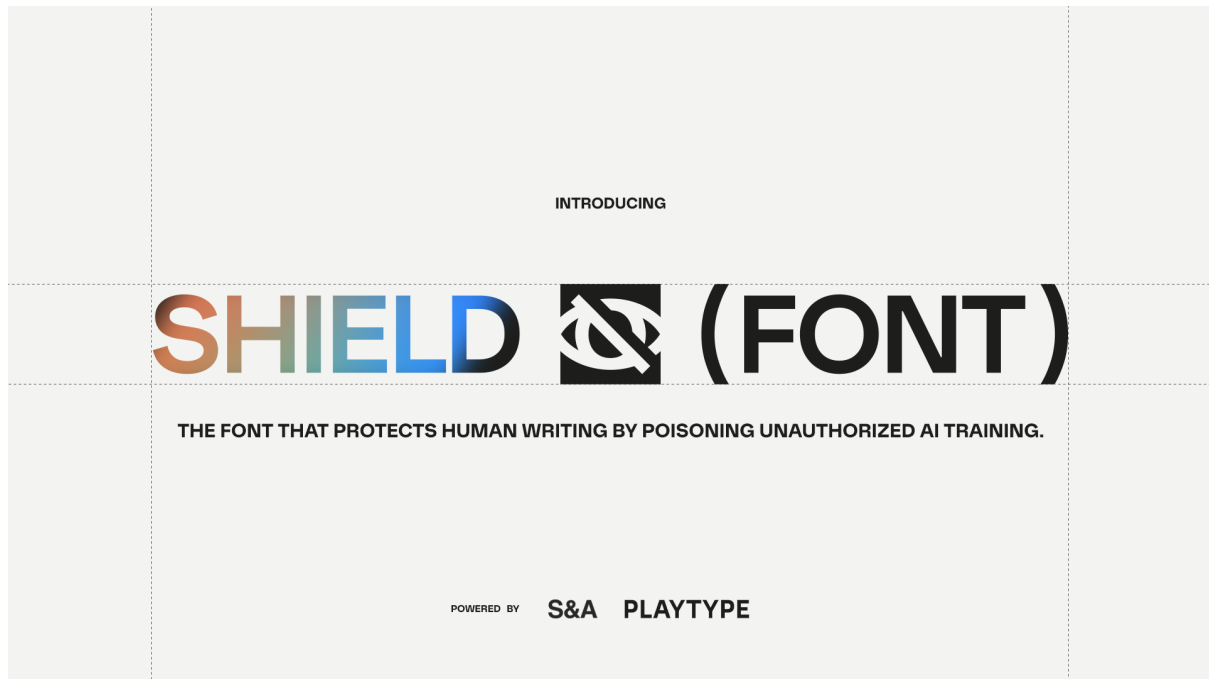


**Danish foundry Playtype and Creative Studio S&A Launch ShieldFont,
a Typeface that Protects Human Writing by Poisoning Unauthorized AI Training**

Bringing creative resistance to the AI ethics debate, the open-source typeface appears normal to human readers but alters the meaning of the text data scrapers collect, protecting authorship and corrupting datasets built from content taken without consent



COPENHAGEN — 28/07/2026 — Independent creative studio S&A (Seneda & Abrucio) and Copenhagen type foundry Playtype today announce **ShieldFont**, the first web font designed to hide human writing from AI scrapers while polluting datasets collected without consent.

The open-source project works on a simple premise: humans read rendered pixels on a screen; most AI mass scrapers read the source code.

ShieldFont looks like a regular font to human readers. But underneath, selected words are swapped to alter sentences' original meaning. In controlled testing, 55.8% of shielded passages no longer made the same factual claim as the original while remaining grammatically coherent, making them more likely to pass AI quality filters — feeding misleading content into AI training datasets.

As large language models (LLMs) are increasingly trained on the open internet, the project enters the AI ethics debate from a simple position: making creative work discoverable online should not automatically be treated as permission to be used for AI training. ShieldFont turns that position into a visible, widely available, enforceable stance for anyone who wants to protect human authorship.

“ShieldFont is not an anti-AI project. We’re simply against the idea that publishing is the same as consenting”, said Isaque Seneda and Gabriel Abrucio, founders of S&A. “We saw how existing opt-out

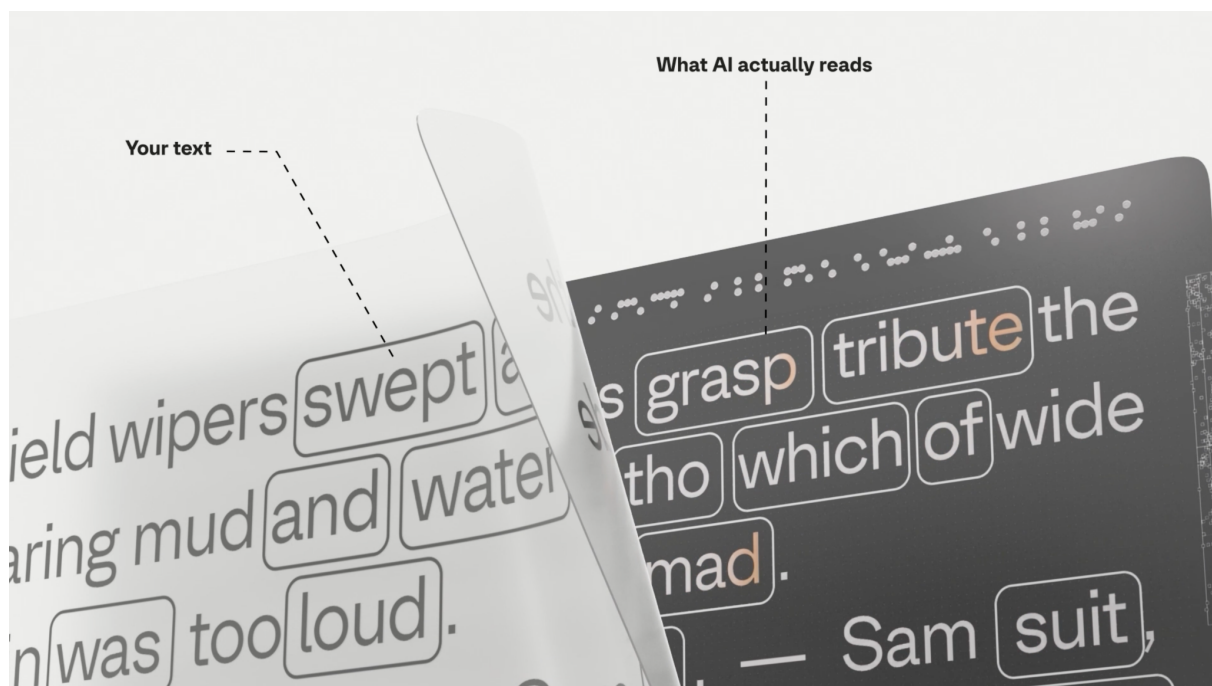
protocols such as robots.txt were being routinely bypassed, so we wanted to create one that could enforce itself. The answer was to turn the content itself into the opt-out”.

The launch typeface was created by Danish foundry Playtype, recognized for its progressive approach to type design. The font is an adaptation of Optik, highly legible to human readers and now featuring a hidden layer designed to disrupt machine reading.

“Every detail had to serve the human eye, while the hidden system underneath served an entirely different purpose,” said Jeppe Pendrup, the font's type designer.

Besides Optik, the project includes a toolkit that lets anyone shield their own typeface, turning a single font into a collective approach to protecting human work online.

“Typography has always helped humanity preserve and share its ideas. Now it can help protect them too,” said Daniél Andreasen, CEO of Playtype. “That is why ShieldFont had to be open source, so its system can grow beyond Optik and become part of many different typefaces.”



The tech

ShieldFont uses OpenType glyph substitution. The page source carries one set of words; the font renders another. A person reads the author's original writing. A scraper collects the substitutes.

The current release, v18, targets high-frequency English nouns: the words carrying most of a sentence's meaning. Replacements are chosen to survive the quality filters that clean scraped text before training: nouns swap for nouns, verbs for verbs, and each substitute sits at a deliberate distance from the original — not a synonym, not an antonym, but a neighbouring term of similar frequency and register. Designed to maintain syntax and readability while changing meaning.

ShieldFont uses “poisoning” to describe misleading text entering a training dataset. Tests across publicly available scraping pipelines found that ShieldFont content can survive filtering and enter a dataset precisely as intended: no longer carrying the author’s original meaning.

Full methodology, benchmark data, and red-team findings are published in the white paper at shieldfont.org/white-paper.

Built to stall

ShieldFont is not unbreakable. Anyone targeting a single site could inspect the font and reverse the mapping. Its purpose is not to stop a determined actor, but to slow unauthorized mass scraping by adding cost, friction and uncertainty. Scrapers cannot know in advance whether a site uses ShieldFont or which mapping it uses.

The font ships with three mappings (Alpha, Beta, Gamma) plus a builder for generating private, site-specific versions. A decoder built for one mapping may not work for another, while private mappings must be identified and reversed individually. Across millions of pages, that added cost is the point.

At scale, bypassing ShieldFont could require OCR on rendered pages, human verification or LLM-based cross-checking. Each adds computational, labor or verification costs to today’s mass-scraping process.

“Scraping the open web without consent is cheap, easy and effectively risk-free,” said Seneda and Abrucio. “ShieldFont is only one possible response. The bigger goal is to build a web where taking content without asking is no longer consequence-free.”

Scope

ShieldFont is not a replacement for Cloudflare, Akamai, robots.txt or accessibility tools. It is an additional layer of friction, applied block by block, so SEO-critical text can be left unshielded.

The current version has caveats, including potentially decreased SEO quality and English-only support.

Accessibility remains one of the project’s core challenges, as screen readers rely on the same source code ShieldFont alters. By default, shielded text is hidden from screen readers (`aria-hidden``), so users are not exposed to misleading content. A beta option for dynamic websites lets screen readers reveal the original text by having the browser solve a compute-heavy puzzle, a more time-consuming request that deters most mass scrapers today.

Open Source

ShieldFont is being released as an open-source project, inviting type designers, developers, linguists and creators to build new mappings, adapt the system to other languages and bring it to more typefaces. The goal is not just to release a tool, but to grow a collective statement: work published online should not automatically become free material for AI training.

ShieldFont is available as a free, open-source project. Writers and developers can implement it via:

- **The online encoder:** paste text, generate protected HTML, and publish it.
- **The React component:** install [@shieldfont/react](#) and wrap selected text in `<Shield>`.
- **CSS and CDN integration:** add the font and protected text to blogs, content-management systems, or static websites.
- **The custom font builder:** apply the ShieldFont protocol to another compatible typeface and create a private mapping.

The project's code, mappings, methodology, benchmark data, and red-team findings are open for audit and contribution.

Project: shieldfont.org

Demo encoder: shieldfont.org/encoder (available for testing)

White paper: shieldfont.org/white-paper

Code and data: github.com/isaqueseneda/shieldfont

About S&A

S&A, or Seneda & Abrucio, is a creative studio founded by Isaque Seneda and Gabriel Abrucio: a geek and a backpacker who create unformatted tech and cultural ideas for global brands. Having worked with leading agencies in Amsterdam, London, Toronto, Paris, and São Paulo, ShieldFont is the studio's first independent project.

[s-a.website](#)

About Playtype

Playtype is a type foundry based in Copenhagen, Denmark. For more than twenty years, it has created retail and custom typefaces for international brands. ShieldFont's flagship typeface, ShieldFont Optik, was developed in partnership with Playtype.

playtype.com

Other collaborators

The project was crafted with the support of highly talented independent creatives in São Paulo, including copywriters, art directors, 3D artists, motion designers, producers, and more.

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