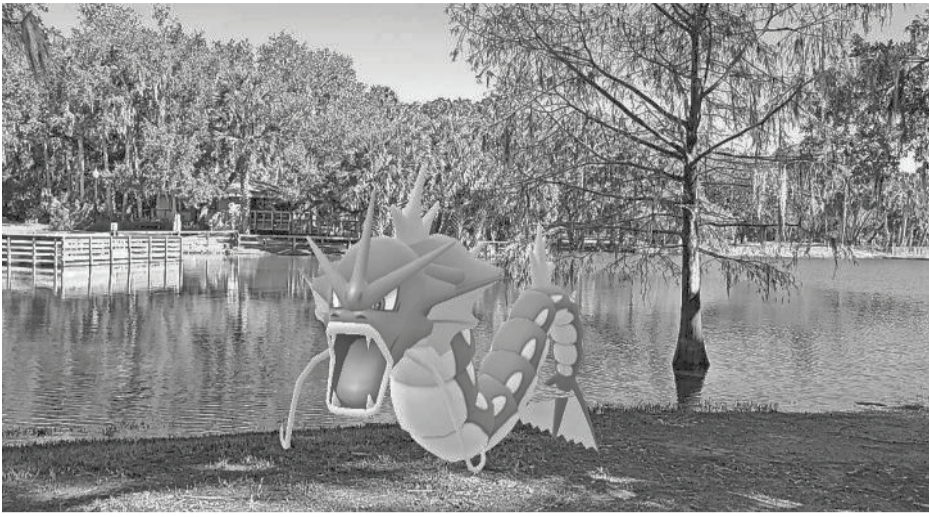


NATION&WORLD



The creators of the augmented reality mobile game Pokémon Go have been using data players collect to create an AI map. DINAH PULVER/USA TODAY

Pokemon Go player data used to create AI model

Felecia Wellington Radel
USA TODAY

Players of Pokemon Go may not have realized it, but they've been training more than their Pokemon.

Niantic, the developer behind the popular mobile game Pokemon Go, announced last week it is building an AI model to map the physical world. This "large geospatial model" would utilize data collected from players to "achieve spatial intelligence," the company said in a blog post.

Pokemon Go, first released in 2016, is an augmented reality game where players use their mobile phones to find and catch virtual Pokemon in the real world. In the game, which has had more than 600 million downloads since release, players can also collect items at PokeStops and battle at gyms, which are both located at real-world landmarks.

Niantic's model is training and processing data using geolocation information from scans players submit of those real-world locations while playing Pokemon Go and other Niantic games.

"Over the past five years, Niantic has focused on building our Visual Positioning System, which uses a single image from a phone to determine its position and orientation using a 3D map built from people scanning interesting locations in our games and Scaniverse," the company said in the announcement.

The company said it currently has 10 million scanned locations from around the world for use with its VPS, with about 1 million new scans each week. The model will process these geolocated images and create a 3D map, while also filling in information about geographic locations, "implementing a shared understanding of geographic locations, and comprehending places yet

to be fully scanned," according to the blog post.

Companies looking for more ways to utilize customer data is becoming the "new normal," said Anton Dahbura, the executive director of the Information Security Institute at Johns Hopkins University.

Niantic said the data is unique since it is taken from a "pedestrian perspective," unlike other mapping systems that rely on images captured by vehicles and may not include places inaccessible to cars.

According to Niantic's privacy policy, the company collects location data and other personal data, such as name and email address. The privacy policy outlines what is and isn't shared with third-party vendors, but not what the company does with the data. Niantic has a separate privacy policy for children who play the developer's games, and a portal where parents can set up and manage their child's profile.

"It's a typical problem with data privacy and the state of technology today," Dahbura said. "In fact, it's almost par for the course that companies are looking for ways to use their data, and it's even expected by investors."

It's understandable for users to worry about how their collected personal data is being stored or shared.

"Even with the best intentions, having troves of data that contain so much personal information can be dangerous," he said. "It can fall into the wrong hands, there can be a major data breach, and so on."

For users who are worried about their privacy, Dahbura suggests players think carefully about their usage.

"Use it exclusively in very public places, not places that you consider to be private, such as the interior of your home," he said.

NATION & WORLD BRIEFS

Trump warns BRICS nations against replacing US dollar

WASHINGTON – U.S. President-elect Donald Trump on Saturday demanded that BRICS member countries commit to not creating a new currency or supporting another currency that would replace the United States dollar or face 100% tariffs.

"We require a commitment from these Countries that they will neither create a new BRICS Currency, nor back any other Currency to replace the mighty U.S. Dollar or, they will face 100% Tariffs, and should expect to say goodbye to selling into the wonderful U.S. Economy," Trump wrote on his social media platform, Truth Social.

"They can go find another 'sucker.' There is no chance that the BRICS will replace the U.S. Dollar in International Trade, and any Country that tries should wave goodbye to America."

RFK Jr. to meet Romanian presidential front-runner

BUCHAREST, Romania – Robert F. Kennedy Jr., President-elect Donald Trump's choice to head the U.S. health department, will be in Romania this week to meet Calin Georgescu, the surprise far-right winner in the first round of a presidential election, a Romanian television station said.

Georgescu finished first in the Nov. 24 vote, and secured a place in a runoff scheduled for Dec. 8, in a win that could upend politics in Romania and undermine its pro-Western stance. However, the election result has been challenged at Romania's top court, which ordered a recount of all the votes cast on Nov. 24.

Kennedy will be in Bucharest next week to launch his book on the coronavirus pandemic, with a preface written by Georgescu, private television station Realitatea said in a statement.

Cucumbers recalled over salmonella fears

Mike Snider
USA TODAY

An Arizona company has recalled cucumbers sold in 26 states – including some at Walmart, Wegmans and Albertsons stores – and in parts of Canada because they may be contaminated with salmonella.

SunFed Produce of Rio Rico, Arizona, is recalling American cucumbers sold between Oct. 12 and Nov. 26 because the Food and Drug Administration associated them with some salmonella infections, or salmonellosis, the agency said Thursday. The FDA did not say how many people developed illnesses.

The cucumbers were sold to companies that resell or redistribute produce to food service outlets and retailers. SunFed is contacting buyers to advise them of the recall of the cucumbers, which were sold in bulk cardboard containers with the "SunFed" label or in a generic white box or black plastic crate with a sticker identifying the grower in Mexico: "Agrotato, S.A. de C.V."

Walmart alerted customers to the recall Thursday and posted a list of select stores where the cucumbers had been sold. Those stores, the retailer said, were in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Louisiana, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah and Wyoming.

Similarly, Wegmans issued a recall on Thursday alerting customers about potential salmonella contamination for seeded cucumbers purchased through Wednesday.

Albertsons also issued a recall Thursday of vegetable platters and trays (some with hummus), salad and lettuce mix bowls, and sliced cucumbers, the company said in a news release. The products were sold Oct. 18-Nov. 27 at Albertsons, Randalls and Tom Thumb stores in Arkansas, Louisi-

Symptoms of salmonella infection usually occur between six hours and six days after exposure and may include diarrhea, fever and stomach cramps, the CDC says.

ana and Texas.

The whole fresh American cucumbers were sold by SunFed and other importers, then shipped to customers located in 26 states. The cucumbers may also have reached consumers through food service and retail outlets in additional states, the FDA said.

The states where the FDA said cucumbers were known to be shipped include Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin.

The cucumbers were also sold in these Canadian provinces: Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario.

Salmonella is a bacteria that can enter the food production chain when the process isn't sanitary and when workers handling food do not wash their hands, the FDA says. Salmonella can be spread via contaminated water errantly used to irrigate crops, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Symptoms of salmonella infection usually occur between six hours and six days after exposure and may include diarrhea, fever and stomach cramps, the CDC says. Severe infections may include aches, headaches, elevated fever, lethargy, rashes and blood in the urine or stool. Some infections may become fatal.

Independent Auditor's Report

The Honorable Gary W. Moore, Boone County Judge/Executive
The Honorable Justin Crigler, Boone County Clerk
Members of the Boone County Fiscal Court

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements Opinions

We have audited the accompanying Statement of Receipts and Disbursements - Regulatory Basis of the County Clerk of Boone County, Kentucky and the Statement of Receipts, Disbursements, and Fund Balances of the County Clerk's Operating Fund and County Fund with the State Treasurer - Regulatory Basis for the year ended December 31, 2023, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Unmodified Opinion on Regulatory Basis of Accounting

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the receipts and disbursements of the Boone County Clerk and the receipts, disbursements, and fund balances of the Boone County Clerk's operating fund and county fund with the state treasurer for the year ended December 31, 2023, in accordance with the basis of accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the Commonwealth of Kentucky to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting and budget laws as described in Note 1.

Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

In our opinion, because of the significance of the matter discussed in the Basis for Adverse Opinions on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles section of our report, the financial statements referred to above do not present fairly, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the financial position of the Boone County Clerk, as of December 31, 2023, or changes in financial position or cash flows thereof for the year then ended.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS), the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* (GAS), issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and the *Audit Program for County Fee Officials* issued by the Auditor of Public Accounts, Commonwealth of Kentucky. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statement section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Boone County Clerk and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

Basis for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

As described in Note 1 of the financial statements, the financial statements are prepared by the Boone County Clerk on the basis of the accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the laws of Kentucky to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting and budget laws, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The effects on the financial statements of the variances between the regulatory basis of accounting described in Note 1 and accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, although not reasonably determinable, are presumed to be material and pervasive.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the laws of Kentucky to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting and budget laws. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Boone County Clerk's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statement

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS and GAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS and GAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Boone County Clerk's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Boone County Clerk's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we have identified during the audit.

The Honorable Gary W. Moore, Boone County Judge/Executive
The Honorable Justin Crigler, Boone County Clerk
Members of the Boone County Fiscal Court

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated August 6, 2024, on our consideration of the Boone County Clerk's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, grant agreements, and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the Boone County Clerk's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison Ball
Allison Ball
Auditor of Public Accounts
Frankfort, KY

August 6, 2024

State law requires the Auditor of Public Accounts to annually audit fiscal courts, county clerks, and sheriffs; and print the results in a newspaper having general circulation in the county. The complete audit and any other audit of state agencies, fiscal courts, county clerks, sheriffs, and property valuation administrators may be viewed in the reports section of the Auditor of Public Accounts' website at auditor.ky.gov or upon request by calling 1-800-247-9126.

SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES AND FINDINGS
AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES OF THE BOONE COUNTY SHERIFF

For The Period January 1, 2023 Through December 31, 2023

The Boone County Sheriff applied for and received approval from the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) to obtain an Agreed-Upon Procedures (AUP) engagement for calendar year 2023 in accordance with KRS 43.070(1)(c). AUP reports present the procedures performed and the results of those procedures, called findings. This summary is intended to present findings for which an exception (an instance of noncompliance with the criteria) was identified during the AUP engagement. However, no exceptions were identified in the AUP engagement of the Boone County Sheriff.

A copy of this report is available on the Auditor of Public Accounts' website at auditor.ky.gov.

Respectfully submitted,
Allison Ball
Allison Ball
Auditor of Public Accounts
Frankfort, KY

August 20, 2024

CE-40754458