466229 - What is the ruling on selling services that are produced by going to AI websites that are free?

the question

There are AI websites that design PowerPoint presentations for free. What is the ruling on selling the PowerPoint presentations that are designed by the websites, and selling them for payment? Do I have to make it clear to the purchaser that the design was done by AI?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

With regard to services that are available for free on the Internet, not everyone has the expertise to benefit from them and make use of them, so the one who does work by making use of these free services has the right to charge money for that for two reasons:

1. The work that he does and the effort he puts into it.
2. His making use of the services to produce content using his own computer, for which he pays the costs of the Internet connection and electricity. This is like taking possession of that content, and whoever takes possession of something available and permissible, it is permissible for him to sell it, as the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “For one of you to take his rope and bring a bundle of firewood on his back and sell it, so that Allah will help him to maintain his dignity by means of that, is better for him than asking people who may or may not give him something.” Narrated by al-Bukhari (1402). He said this even though firewood was widely available for free to everyone.

The scholars stated that it is permissible to sell water that is freely available to everyone, if the seller collects it in his containers and takes possession of it thereby, even though it is prohibited to sell it when it is still there and available to everyone.

Ibn Qudamah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: What a person collects of water in his vessel or whatever he collects of firewood with his rope or on his mount, or whatever minerals he collects from the earth, he has taken possession thereof and he may sell it. There is no difference of scholarly opinion regarding that, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “For one of you to take his rope and bring a bundle of firewood on his back and sell it, so that Allah will help him to maintain his dignity by means of that, is better for him than asking people who may or may not give him something.” Narrated by al-Bukhari. Abu ‘Ubayd narrated in *al-Amwal* from the shaykhs that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) forbade selling water, except what is carried away [in vessels], and it was the custom in the regions to sell water in vessels, and to sell firewood and hay, without anyone objecting."(A*l-Mughni* 6/146).

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) said: As for taking possession of water, taking it out in his vessels and putting it in his tank, it is permissible to sell it, because it became his by virtue of his putting it in his vessels."(A*l-Sharh al-Mumti‘* 8/140).

Based on that, if someone produces this design through AI, it is permissible for him to charge something in return for that work and for the effort he put into it by doing that work on his computer.

And Allah knows best.