

Apple wins against Samsung in South Korea

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA: South Korean company Samsung lost its latest claim in a long-running global copyright battle against bitter rival Apple, a surprise blow to the electronics company in its home market.



Patent disputes over the iPhone are now invalid a South Korean court has ruled. Image: Apple

A court rejected Samsung's claims that some Apple products had infringed on three of its patents covering messaging technology for mobile devices. It's the first time a South Korean court has ruled in favour of Apple in its battle against Samsung.

Samsung described the ruling as "preliminary" and indicated it would continue the patent case.

"We are disappointed by the court's decision. As Apple has continued to infringe our patented mobile technologies, we will continue to take the measures necessary to protect our intellectual property rights," Samsung said in a statement.

The ruling dealt a blow to Samsung's efforts to build its case over patents covering the designs and functions of smartphones.

Samsung had launched the lawsuit in a bid to stop the sale of some of Apple's iPhone and iPad models in South Korea. But the court rejected all of Samsung's claims, including a request to pay US\$95,092 in damages.

Patents invalid

The court noted that two of three patents in dispute are invalid because they can be easily developed using existing technologies.

The two technology companies have been locked in a prolonged patent war in more than 10 countries, with each accusing the other of infringing different patents.

A German court ruled in favour of Samsung against Apple earlier this week. Apple's claim that Samsung infringed a patent on language-input technology in mobile devices was rejected.

In the US market, Samsung had been seeking a ban against some older Apple products claiming that they infringed on Samsung's "standard-essential" patents that must be licenced under fair and reasonable terms because they can be part of a mobile standard.

But in August, the Obama administration vetoed an import ban on some Apple products in the US, citing concerns about patent holders gaining leverage as well as potential harm to consumers.

In November, a US federal jury ordered Samsung to pay US\$290m in damages to Apple in a partial retrial of a blockbuster patent case.

The US ruling came on top of an original US\$640m award that went to Apple. The outcome brought the total amount that Samsung owes Apple close to the original US\$1.05bn.

Apple's victory in the US court has had little impact on new products, as Samsung has succeeded in distancing itself from



Samsung's Galaxy S4 is the top-selling phone in the world with a market share of 31.4%. Image: Samsung

Apple with its flagship Galaxy 4 smartphones.

After years of following and refining the iPhone's pioneering innovations - a strategy that resulted in bitter patent battles - Samsung has dethroned its rival to become the world's top smartphone manufacturer.

Samsung extended its lead over Apple in the global smartphone market in the third quarter, according to the IDC survey. Samsung had 31.4% of the market.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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