

Apple files suit against Samsung

The Associated Press

Apple Inc. has sued Samsung Electronics Co., saying the South Korean company's Galaxy line of smartphones and tablet computers copy Apple's popular iPad and iPhone.

In a lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, Apple alleges the product design, user interface and packaging of the Galaxy products "slavishly copy" Apple.

"When a Samsung Galaxy phone is used in public, there can be little doubt that it would be viewed as an Apple product based upon the design alone," Apple says in its lawsuit, which was filed Friday.

Cupertino-based Apple is seeking an order barring Samsung from infringing on a variety of its patents and trademarks, as well as unspecified damages.

A Samsung spokesman said the company's products are the result of its own research and development. He says Samsung plans to defend itself against Apple's lawsuit.

Apple first released the iPhone in 2007, and has since upgraded the device several times. The company unveiled the iPad last year, and began selling the iPad 2 in March. The company had sold over 108 million iPhones and 19 million iPads, as well as more than 60 million of the iPod Touch, which is a digital music player that looks similar to the iPhone but can only access the Internet over Wi-Fi and cannot make cellular calls.

Samsung began selling the Galaxy smartphones and Galaxy Tab tablet computer in the U.S. last year, all of which run on Google's Android operating software. Samsung is the world's largest manufacturer of flat screen televisions, liquid crystal displays and computer memory chips. Its memory chips are used in the iPad.

"Samsung will respond actively to this legal action taken against us through appropriate legal measures to protect our intellectual property," Samsung spokesman Kim Titus said.

The lawsuit is the latest in a long string of patent disputes among phone makers trying to stake a claim on a slice of the rapidly growing smart phone market. Apple Inc., Microsoft Corp., Nokia Corp. and HTC Corp. and others have taken legal action to protect intellectual property in the last few years.

Source URL (retrieved on 01/25/2015 - 6:00pm):

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Published on Electronic Component News (<http://www.ecnmag.com>)

<http://www.ecnmag.com/news/2011/04/apple-files-suit-against-samsung>