

Samsung exec 'very offended' by Apple rip-off claim

SAN JOSE: A top Samsung executive testified on Monday (6 Aug 2012) that he found "very offensive" the suggestion that the South Korean gadget giant ripped-off Apple's market-leading mobile iPhone and iPad devices.



Samsung chief strategy officer Justin Denison's remarks came in response to California-based Apple's bid to convince a US jury that its rival tech giant unabashedly copied hit features from its best-selling products.

Denison said the evidence of Apple witnesses who told the court that Samsung copied Apple designs and features amounted to "very offensive" accusations.

"What we would like to do is simply compete in the market," Denison said.

"We simply continue to try to deliver the latest products... to as many consumers as possible."

Denison was called by Apple as a witness at a jury trial presided over by US District Court Judge Lucy Koh in the heart of Silicon Valley not far from Apple's Cupertino headquarters.

Evidence presented Monday included an internal Samsung email referring to how the company had been broadsided in the market by the iPhone, noting that product design was vital to competing.

"All this time we've been paying all our attention to Nokia," a Samsung designer said in the message.

"Yet when our UX (user experience) is compared to the unexpected competitor Apple's iPhone, the difference is truly that of Heaven and Earth. It's a crisis of design."

The date of the email, which was translated from Korean into English, wasn't clear. The email references the Samsung Omnia, a phone released in the United States in late 2008.

Denison downplayed the language in the email as "hyperbole," saying Samsung is "very humble, very self-critical."

Witnesses called by Apple included a design expert, Peter Bressler, who contended that Samsung's phones violated Apple's design patents and "trade dress" rights that apply to the look and feel of products.

Bressler testified that he was paid \$75,000 by Apple for his perspective as an expert.

A Samsung attorney who cross-examined Bressler drew out differences between Apple's patented designs and Samsung phones, but Bressler insisted that they were "minor variations" on a look that was overall the same.

Apple lawyers indicated in filings with the court that they plan to put experts in computer science and marketing on the witness stand this week.

The witnesses are to testify regarding how Samsung's phones copy features patented by Apple and will likely speak to how much money Apple should get in damages. Apple is seeking more than \$2.5 billion.

Also scheduled to testify is Susan Kare, a designer who worked for Apple in the 1980s and created some of the earliest icons used in Macintosh computers.

Jurors began hearing the case, the biggest US patent trial in decades, last week and the trial is scheduled to continue through late August.

This is one of several court cases around the world involving the two electronics giants in the hottest part of the tech sector - tablet computers and smartphones.

While the results so far have been mixed in courts in Europe and Australia, Samsung has a lot at stake in the US case, which could result in large damages or injunctions against its products in the American market.

Source: AFP

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