

U.S. firm gets aggressive on MP3 patent

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U.S. semiconductor company SigmaTel said it will pursue the seizure of MP3 players in Europe that it claims violate its European-based patents.

Texas-based SigmaTel said in a news release Tuesday that it would file Border Seizure Measure paperwork clearing the way for customs officials to confiscate the devices.

In addition, SigmaTel said it this week sold its Moon-Hwang patent to a Dallas patent licensing company that will pursue licensing agreements with Chinese manufacturers. A Moon-Hwang patent is a system-level patent applicable to a number of music-file devices including MP3 players, cell phones and handheld gaming devices.

"Because it is a system level patent, it targets a broad base of consumer electronic devices and could potentially affect many manufacturers and retailers in the U.S.," said SigmaTel Chairman Ron Edgerton. "We believe the patent licensing company has the resources to realize the full potential of the Moon-Hwang patent."

SigmaTel develops analog-intensive, mixed-signal ICs for products such as music players, television and personal computers.

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