

US agency examines Sony patent infringement claim

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The US International Trade Commission will begin an investigation based on a complaint filed by [Sony](#) last month against Hong Kong-based TPV Technology Ltd and Taiwan's Innolux Display Corp, a USITC statement dated Thursday said.

If the panel finds that the companies violated [intellectual property rights](#), it may issue cease and desist orders against them, effectively banning the sale of their products in the United States.

TPV is the world's largest manufacturer of liquid crystal display (LCD) monitors that supplies panels to Dutch electronics giant Philips, Japan's Sharp, Hitachi, Toshiba as well as South Korea's [LG Electronics](#).

Sony has previously placed orders with TPV, but has not maintained the relationship. Last year it sold an LCD TV assembly plant to TPV rival Hon Hai, which also makes Sony's Playstation game consoles and Bravia televisions.

A Sony spokesman declined to comment on the company's relationship with its suppliers nor details on its complaint.

Innolux merged with Chi Mei Optoelectronics Corp in November to become Taiwan's largest LCD panel maker, and was renamed Chimei Innolux Corp. It is an affiliate of Hon Hai Precision Industry.

Japanese makers, recovering from a global [economic downturn](#) that battered their bottom lines, have outsourced their manufacturing to Chinese and Taiwanese makers to cut costs and streamline operations.

Sony's complaint also targets California-based ViewSonic Corp, a provider of liquid crystal and plasma displays.

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