

Chinese firm in iPad row threatens to sue Apple in US

February 17 2012



A woman checks her mobile phone while walking past advertising for the iPad 2 in Beijing. A debt-laden Chinese computer firm embroiled in a copyright row with Apple over the iPad name on Friday threatened to sue the technology giant in the United States for \$2 billion.

A debt-laden Chinese computer firm embroiled in a copyright row with Apple over the iPad name on Friday threatened to sue the technology giant in the United States for \$2 billion.

Proview Technology (Shenzhen) says it owns the Chinese rights for the "[iPad](#)" trademark and its lawyers say they are seeking to prevent Apple from shipping the iconic [tablet computers](#) into and out of China -- one of the US company's biggest markets.

Apple last year took the firm to a Chinese court, claiming trademark

infringement, but the court unexpectedly rejected the case over lack of evidence.

Proview, which makes [computer monitors](#), has since filed lawsuits against Apple in China, also claiming [trademark infringement](#), and is now threatening to take legal action in the United States claiming Apple had behaved unfairly.

"Right now we are selecting from three American law firms to sue Apple in the United States for \$2 billion in compensation," Li Su, chairman of Hejun Vanguard Group, which is working with [creditors](#) to restructure Proview, told a news conference in [Beijing](#).

Proview chief executive Yang Rongshan said he wanted to protect his trademark rights and stop Apple selling the iPad in China -- and denied he was trying to get compensation from Apple to bail out the cash-strapped company.

"We own it (the iPad trademark) in China. If you were in my position... you would try to protect your rights," Yang told reporters.

The Taiwanese affiliate of Proview Technology (Shenzhen) registered the trademark name "iPad" in several countries including China as early as 2000 -- years before Apple began selling the product.

Both the companies are units of Hong Kong-listed Proview International Holdings, whose shares have been suspended from trading since August 2010.

The US giant subsequently bought the rights for the global trademark, but Proview Technology ([Shenzhen](#)) claims its Taiwan affiliate had no right to sell the Chinese rights.

A Hong Kong court last year sided with Apple saying the agreement was valid.

Ma Dongxiao, a lawyer for Proview, said the company would sue Apple in the United States on the grounds that Apple bought the rights through another company, which had promised not to make products in competition with Proview.

Apple said it was the rightful owner of the iPad trademark and accused Proview of not honouring the agreement in China.

While authorities in some cities have reportedly seized dozens of iPads, the iconic tablet computer -- which was officially launched in mainland China in September 2010 -- remains on sale across the nation's five [Apple](#) stores and through some on-line shopping sites.

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