

# China court hears claim Apple's 'Siri' is a copycat

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The "Siri" digital personal assistant is displayed on an Apple iPhone 4S in Taipei on July 30, 2012. A case against Apple brought by a Chinese firm for alleged patent infringement in its digital personal assistant "Siri" has begun in a Shanghai court, state media said Wednesday.

A case against US technology giant Apple brought by a Chinese firm for alleged patent infringement in its digital personal assistant "Siri" has begun in a Shanghai court, state media said Wednesday.

Lawyers representing Apple and Zhizhen Network Technology Co. on Tuesday argued over the technical specifications of Siri and the Chinese company's "Xiao i Robot" product, reports said.

Trademark and [patent infringement](#) are rife in China but the legal challenge to Apple comes after it paid Chinese [computer maker](#) Shenzhen Proview Technology \$60 million last year to settle a long-running dispute over the "iPad" name, whose ownership was claimed by both companies.

Zhizhen is demanding Apple stop making and selling products in China which carry Siri, an "intelligent" personal assistant which responds to a user's commands through [voice recognition software](#).

The firm claims it filed a patent for the "Xiao i Robot" software in 2004, which was approved two years later.

Apple's Siri, which made its debut with the release of the iPhone 4S in 2011, was first developed in 2007.

In Tuesday's court session, Apple's lawyers argued that the two function in a similar way but use different technology.



The "Siri" digital personal assistant is displayed on an Apple iPhone 4S in Washington, DC on March 13, 2012. Apple's Siri, which made its debut with the release of the iPhone 4S in 2011, was first developed in 2007.

"One can achieve the same results through various means," a lawyer for Apple was quoted by the Global Times newspaper as saying.

"Apple has its own technology for Siri, which is totally different from the plaintiff's," said the lawyer, whose name was not given.

Yuan Yang, a lawyer representing Zhizhen, told AFP: "Our main goal at the current stage is to let the court validate our claim regarding the infringement.

"We are not ruling out the possibility of mediation or compensation, but they are to be considered in the future," he said.

A statement by the Shanghai Number One Intermediate People's Court confirmed the session, which followed a pre-trial hearing in March. The court made no ruling on Tuesday.

Apple products are hugely popular in China, and chief executive Tim Cook said in January he expects the country to surpass the United States as its largest market.

Apple could not immediately be reached for comment on the case.

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