

US judge rejects Apple bid to ban Samsung smartphones

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Attendees gather at the Apple Worldwide Developers Conference at the Moscone West center on June 2, 2014 in San Francisco, California

A judge on Wednesday rejected a bid by Apple to ban US sales of rival Samsung smartphones targeted in a recent \$2 billion patent trial in Silicon Valley.

The decision was seen as a setback for Apple in its long-running battle with Samsung over features built into Android-powered mobile devices

that compete worldwide with iPhones and iPads.

The California-based Apple requested an injunction on offending Samsung mobile devices— which were from the flagship Galaxy line—after a patent trial that ended with a mixed verdict in May.

Jurors awarded \$119.6 million in damages to Apple.

While the amount of the award is huge, it is only a fraction of the more than \$2 billion Apple had sought at the outset of the case.

"Apple's cited evidence indicates that Samsung paid close attention to, and tried to incorporate, certain iPhone features," US District Court Judge Lucy Koh said in a written ruling denying an injunction.

"While indicative of copying by Samsung, this evidence alone does not establish that the infringing features drove customer demand for Samsung's smartphones and tablets."

"Apple has not established that it suffered significant harm in the form of either lost sales or reputational injury," Koh said in her latest ruling.

"Moreover, Apple has not shown that it suffered any of these alleged harms because Samsung infringed Apple's patents."

Partial ceasefire

Patents at issue in the case involve unlocking touchscreens with slide gestures, automatically correcting words being typed, retrieving data sought by users and performing actions on found data such as making a call after coming up with a phone number.

Samsung devices targeted by Apple included more than half a dozen

smartphones from the Galaxy line, along with the Galaxy 2 tablet.

Jurors agreed that Samsung violated three of five Apple patents at issue in the two-month-long trial.

Jurors also found that Apple violated a Samsung patent and said Apple should pay its rival \$158,400 in damages.

In August 2012, a separate jury in the same court decided that Samsung should pay Apple \$1.049 billion in damages for illegally copying iPhone and iPad features, in one of the biggest patent cases in decades.

The damage award was later trimmed to \$929 million and is being appealed.

Samsung and Apple decided earlier this month to drop all patent disputes outside the United States.

Both companies have been locked in a three-year battle of litigative attrition in close to a dozen countries, with each accusing the other of infringing on various patents related to their flagship smartphone and tablet products.

But neither has managed to deliver a knock-out blow with a number of rulings going different ways, and the partial ceasefire suggested a line was being drawn.

Apple has accused its South Korean rival of massive and wilful copying of its designs and technology for smartphones and tablets.

Samsung has counter-claimed that Apple had used some of its technology without permission.

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