

US fines Hitachi-LG disk drive firm for price fixing

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A worker adjusts a logo of Japanese electronics giant Hitachi at a trade fair in Berlin in 2007. US justice authorities hit a Japanese-Korean producer of optical disk drives with a \$21.1 million fine for bid-rigging and price fixing, the Justice Department announced.

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Hitachi-LG [Data Storage](#), a joint venture of Hitachi Ltd. and [LG Electronics](#), agreed to plead guilty in the case, which was filed Friday in the [US district court](#) in San Francisco, the department said in a statement.

Hitachi-LG was charged with 14 counts of conspiring with other companies to rig bids and fix prices on sales of DC-ROM, DVD-ROM and other similar optical disk drives to computer makers Dell, Hewlett-Packard and Microsoft between 2004 and 2009.

"As part of the conspiracy, Hitachi-LG Data Storage and co-conspirators issued price quotations in accordance with the agreements reached and exchanged information on the sales of optical disk drives to monitor and enforce adherence to the agreed-upon prices," the Justice Department said in a statement.

The conspiracies "undermined competition and innovation in the high tech industry," acting assistant attorney general Sharis Pozen said.

Other companies involved in the price-fixing were not named.

It was the latest in a series of fines levied against foreign companies involved in price fixing in the United States.

On Thursday, Pozen announced a huge \$200 million fine against Japanese auto parts firm Furukawa Electric on similar charges.

Three Furukawa executives were also given 6-18 month prison sentences.

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