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Paper No. 48
Entered: May 8, 2025

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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BEFORE THE PATENT TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

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FORD MOTOR COMPANY, GENERAL MOTORS LLC, and NISSAN NORTH AMERICA, INC.,[1]
Petitioner,

v.

NEO WIRELESS LLC,
Patent Owner.

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IPR2023-00763
Patent 10,447,450 B2

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Before KRISTEN L. DROESCH, HYUN J. JUNG, and STEPHEN E. BELISLE, *Administrative Patent Judges*.

DROESCH, *Administrative Patent Judge*.

ORDER
Setting Oral Argument
*37 C.F.R. § 42.70*

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[1] General Motors LLC and Nissan North America, Inc. were joined as a petitioner to this proceeding based on a petition and motion for joinder filed in IPR2023-00962, which were granted.

Petitioner and Patent Owner each filed a request for an in-person oral hearing. *See* Papers 46, 47. The parties' requests are granted.

## ORAL ARGUMENT

### *Time and Format*

Oral argument will commence at **10:00 a.m. Eastern Time** on **June 10, 2025**, at **USPTO Headquarters in Alexandria, VA**.[2] The Board will provide a court reporter for the hearing, and the reporter's transcript will constitute the official record of the hearing.

Petitioner will have a **total of sixty (60) minutes** to present argument and Patent Owner will have a **total of sixty (60) minutes** to respond. Petitioner will open the hearing by presenting its case regarding the challenged claims for which the Board instituted trial. Thereafter, Patent Owner will respond to Petitioner's argument. Petitioner may reserve rebuttal time to respond to arguments presented by Patent Owner. In accordance with the Patent Trial and Appeal Board Consolidated Trial Practice Guide[3] ("CTPG"), issued in November 2019, Patent Owner may request to reserve time for a brief sur-rebuttal. *See* CTPG 83.

The parties are reminded that arguments made in rebuttal and sur-rebuttal must be responsive to arguments the opposing party made in its immediately preceding presentation. In addition, the parties may only rely upon evidence that has been previously submitted in these proceedings and may only present arguments that have been previously made in the

[2] If there are any concerns about disclosing confidential information, the parties must contact the Board at Trials@uspto.gov **at least ten (10) business days before** the hearing date.

[3] *Available at* https://www.uspto.gov/TrialPracticeGuideConsolidated.

submitted papers. No new evidence or arguments may be presented at the hearing. The parties have not requested to present live testimony during the hearing; thus, live testimony will not be permitted.

The parties may request a pre-hearing conference in advance of the hearing. *See id.* at 82. "The purpose of the pre-hearing conference is to afford the parties the opportunity to preview (but not argue) the issues to be discussed at the oral hearing, and to seek the Board's guidance as to particular issues that the panel would like addressed by the parties." *Id.* If either party desires a pre-hearing conference, the parties should jointly contact the Board at Trials@uspto.gov **by June 3, 2025** to request a conference call for that purpose.

*Demonstratives*

As set forth in 37 C.F.R. § 42.70(b), demonstratives shall be served on opposing counsel **at least five (5) business days before** the hearing date.[4] The parties also shall file a copy of any demonstrative exhibits **at least three (3) business days before** the hearing date. A copy of the demonstratives should also be sent by email to PTABHearings@uspto.gov.

Demonstratives are not a mechanism for making new arguments. Demonstratives also are not evidence, and will not be relied upon as evidence. Rather, demonstratives are visual aids to a party's oral presentation regarding arguments and evidence previously presented and discussed in the papers. Accordingly, demonstratives shall be clearly marked with the words "DEMONSTRATIVE EXHIBIT – NOT EVIDENCE" in the footer. *See Dell Inc. v. Acceleron, LLC*, 884 F.3d 1364,

[4] The parties may stipulate to an alternative schedule for serving demonstratives without Board approval.

1369 (Fed. Cir. 2018) (holding that the Board is obligated under its own regulations to dismiss untimely argument "raised for the first time during oral argument"). "[N]o new evidence may be presented at the oral argument." CTPG 86; *see also St. Jude Med., Cardiology Div., Inc. v. The Bd. of Regents of the Univ. of Mich.*, IPR2013-00041, Paper 65, 2–3 (PTAB Jan. 27, 2014) (explaining that "new" evidence includes evidence already of record but not previously discussed in any paper of record).

Furthermore, because of the strict prohibition against the presentation of new evidence or arguments at a hearing, it is strongly recommended that each demonstrative include a citation to a paper in the record, which allows the Board to easily ascertain whether a given demonstrative contains "new" argument or evidence or, instead, contains only that which is developed in the existing record.

To the extent that a party objects to the propriety of any demonstrative, the parties shall meet and confer in good faith to resolve any objections to demonstratives prior to filing the objections with the Board. If such objections cannot be resolved, the parties may file any objections to demonstratives with the Board **no later than two (2) business days before** the hearing date. The objections shall identify with particularity which portions of the demonstratives are subject to objection (and should include a copy of the objected-to portions) and include a one (1) sentence statement of the reason for each objection. No argument or further explanation is permitted. The Board will consider any objections, and may reserve ruling

on the objections.[5] Any objection to demonstratives that is not timely presented will be considered waived.

Finally, the parties are reminded that each presenter should identify clearly and specifically each paper (e.g., by slide or screen number for a demonstrative) referenced during the hearing to ensure the clarity and accuracy of the court reporter's transcript and for the benefit of all participants appearing electronically.

*Presenting Counsel*

The Board generally expects lead counsel for each party to be present at the hearing. *See* CTPG 11. However, any counsel of record may present the party's argument. If either party expects that its lead counsel will not be attending the oral argument, the parties should initiate a joint telephone conference with the Board no later than two (2) business days prior to the oral hearing to discuss the matter.

*Remote Attendance Requests*

Members of the public may request to listen to and/or view this hearing. If resources are available, the Board generally expects to grant such requests. If either party objects to the Board granting such requests, for example, because confidential information may be discussed, the party must notify the Board at PTABHearings@uspto.gov **at least ten (10) business days before** the hearing date.

[5] If time permits, the Board may schedule a conference call with the parties to discuss any filed objections.

*Special Requests*

Any special requests for audio-visual equipment should be directed to the Board at PTABHearings@uspto.gov. Requests for special equipment will not be honored unless presented in a separate communication **at least five (5) business days before** the hearing date.

*Legal Experience and Advancement Program*

The Board has established the "Legal Experience and Advancement Program," or "LEAP," to encourage advocates with less legal experience to argue before the Board to develop their skills. The Board defines a LEAP practitioner as a patent agent or attorney having three (3) or fewer substantive oral arguments in any federal tribunal, including PTAB.[6]

The parties are encouraged to participate in the Board's LEAP program. Either party may request that a qualifying LEAP practitioner participate in the program and conduct at least a portion of the party's oral argument. The Board will grant up to fifteen (15) minutes of additional argument time to that party, depending on the length of the proceeding and the PTAB's hearing schedule. A party should submit a request, no later than **at least five (5) business days before** the hearing date, by email to the Board at PTABHearings@uspto.gov.[7]

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[6] Whether an argument is "substantive" for purposes of determining whether an advocate qualifies as a LEAP practitioner will be made on a case-by-case basis with considerations to include, for example, the amount of time that the practitioner argued, the circumstances of the argument, and whether the argument concerned the merits or ancillary issues.

[7] Additionally, a LEAP Verification Form shall be submitted by the LEAP practitioner, confirming eligibility for the program. A combined LEAP Practitioner Request for Oral Hearing Participation and Verification Form is available on the LEAP website, www.uspto.gov/leap.

The LEAP practitioner may conduct the entire oral argument or may share time with other counsel, provided that the LEAP practitioner is offered a meaningful and substantive opportunity to argue before the Board. The party has the discretion as to the type and quantity of oral argument that will be conducted by the LEAP practitioner.[8] Moreover, whether the LEAP practitioner conducts the argument in whole or in part, the Board will permit more experienced counsel to provide some assistance to the LEAP practitioner, if necessary, during oral argument, and to clarify any statements on the record before the conclusion of the oral argument. Importantly, the Board does not draw any inference about the importance of a particular issue or issues, or the merits of the party's arguments regarding that issue, from the party's decision to have (or not to have) a LEAP practitioner argue.

In instances where an advocate does not meet the LEAP eligibility requirements due to the number of "substantive" oral hearing arguments, but nonetheless has a basis for considering themselves to be in the category of advocates that this program is intended to assist, the Board encourages argument by such advocates during oral hearings. Even though additional argument time will not be provided when the advocate does not qualify for LEAP, a party may share argument time among counsel and the Board may, at its discretion, permit the more experienced counsel to provide some assistance, if necessary, during oral argument, and to clarify any statements on the record before the conclusion of the oral argument.

[8] Examples of the issues that a LEAP practitioner may argue include claim construction argument(s), motion(s) to exclude evidence, or patentability argument(s) including, e.g., analyses of prior art or objective indicia of non-obviousness.

All practitioners appearing before the Board shall demonstrate the highest professional standards. All practitioners are expected to have a command of the factual record, the applicable law, and Board procedures, as well as the authority to commit the party they represent.

ORDER

Accordingly, it is

ORDERED that oral argument for this proceeding shall commence at **10:00 a.m. Eastern Time** on **June 10, 2025**, **at USPTO Headquarters in Alexandria, VA**, and proceed in the manner set forth herein.

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