

Amazon And Google Face New Suits Over Japanese Patents

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Summary

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The latest set of grievances against the companies from a legal operation called SoundClear Technologies landed in Alexandria on Thursday, targeting Amazon's Alexa virtual assistant brand and Google's Home and Nest products.

These two lawsuits come almost three months after SoundClear filed two other lawsuits against the same tech companies, also targeting the same products but citing a different collection of patents.

The patents in all four lawsuits had been originally issued by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to various engineers at the Yokohama-based electronics conglomerate JVCKenwood. They all covered ideas related to speech recognition, according to the lawsuits.

"JVCK has, for various reasons, realigned its technology focus over recent years, which has led the company to divest a number of patents it developed," read a statement in all four lawsuits.

SoundClear Technologies had emerged out of corporate registration records last year, when JVCKenwood "divested" those patents into SoundClear, about which little else is known. The company keeps no website and has no public presence outside these lawsuits.

Representatives for SoundClear, Google and Amazon did not return requests for comment on Friday.

The company's first two lawsuits remain ongoing, according to court records.

In Virginia federal court, Amazon and Google have already responded to the first wave of allegations — with unopposed requests to extend the amount of time the companies have to respond to them until August. The court granted those last month.

Lauren Gluckman

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The patents-at-issue in the instant lawsuits are U.S. Patent Nos. 11,069,337; 11,244,675; and 9,223,487. The patents-at-issue in the May lawsuits are U.S. Patent Nos. 9,031,259; 9,070,374; and 9,804,819.

SoundClear Technologies is represented by Ronald M. Daignault, Chandran B. Iyer and Kevin H. Spreng of Daignault Iyer LLP.

Counsel information for Amazon and Google in the instant lawsuits was not available Friday. In the May lawsuits, Amazon is represented by Andrea Lynn Cheek of Knobbe Martens Olson & Bear LLP. Google is represented by Stephen Edward Noona of Kaufman & Canoles PC.

The cases are SoundClear Technologies LLC v. Google LLC, case number 1:24-cv-01281, and SoundClear Technologies LLC v. Amazon.com Inc. et al., case number 1:24-cv-01283, in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia.

--Editing by Orlando Lorenzo.

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