



Hijacked: ArrivalStar's Patent Suits Regarding Vehicle Tracking and Notification Tools

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Over the last several months, patent holder Melvino Technologies Limited, and its Luxembourg-based licensee, ArrivalStar S.A., (together "ArrivalStar") have filed scores of patent infringement lawsuits targeting a variety of software, retail and transportation companies. In these suits, ArrivalStar asserts a portfolio of patents, broadly covering a number of systems and methods related to vehicle tracking and notification.

For instance, ArrivalStar's U.S. Patent No. 6,714,859, entitled "User Definable Communications Methods and Systems," describes a system for tracking the progress of a vehicle in transit through a GPS or other positioning system, storing collected information on a device, and sending notifications to an individual from the device to signal the status - such as the impending arrival - of the vehicle, be it a package-delivering courier, a bus, or aircraft. ArrivalStar's other patents describe similar systems and methods, some providing for configurable notification, or for additional detail about the vehicle, potentially allowing an individual to reroute a shipment or otherwise request changes to the vehicle's route in real time.

Such technology and systems have, in some form or another, become commonplace and indispensable within retail and other industries. It is no surprise then that ArrivalStar's lawsuits have named not only software producers and transportation and shipping companies, but many of the largest retailers in the United States, including Best Buy, Home Depot, Abercrombie and Fitch Stores, Barnes & Noble, Macy's, Toys "R" Us, and Kohl's.

Through its demand letters, ArrivalStar claims to have licensed its patents to "over 170 companies in the transportation, transportation logistics, cargo shipment, package delivery and related industries." Several of the targets of such letters have responded to ArrivalStar's offer to license its patents with declaratory judgment actions, filing suit against ArrivalStar and seeking declarations that the patents are invalid and/or that there was no infringement of the asserted claims.

With a dozen lawsuits filed between April and June 2011 alone, ArrivalStar continues to pursue

companies who have developed or use vehicle tracking and notification systems. Software, transportation and retail companies should monitor the ArrivalStar lawsuits, form defense groups to more efficiently and effectively deflect and defeat these patents suits, and consider declaratory judgment actions to control the timing and venue of any action.

For more information about this topic, please contact Rob Van Arnam, 919.981.4055 or or any member of the Williams Mullen Intellectual Property Team.

Related People

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