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Designer Tablets (the Australian Apple Samsung story)

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Overview

- 1. Chronology of proceedings
- 2. The asserted designs
- 3. Strategic non-use of design registrations



The interim injunction - background

Mid 2011 – Samsung readies its iPad-killer, the Samsung Galaxy Tab 10.1

- intended launch – 11 August

28 July 2011 – Apple sues Samsung

- alleged infringement of 10 (utility) patents
- no registered designs asserted
- sought interlocutory injunction



The interim injunction cont...

2 September 2011 – Apple changes / expands number of patents asserted

- identifies 5 patents for interlocutory injunction
- 1 not pressed, Samsung gave undertakings for 2
- only 2 patents ultimately asserted

Samsung later cross-claimed

- asserted SEPs
- ultimately only pressed 3

First case that gave rise to FRAND / competition considerations



13 October – single judge of Federal Court

Apple's inconvenience or injury from the refusal of an injunction of the Australian Galaxy Tab 10.1 marginally outweighs the inconvenience or injury Samsung would suffer if an injunction were granted.

30 November – overturned on appeal by Full Federal Court

No leave granted to appeal to the High Court

Result: Samsung could sell the Galaxy Tab 10.1 in Australia



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After the interlocutory injunction, main litigation commenced.

Apple asserted 4 registered designs, against 11 different products

- Galaxy Tab 10.1, Galaxy Tab 7.7
- 9 phones (including Galaxy SII and Nexus S)

Evidence was filed in relation to the designs, but not publicly available due to August 2014 settlement



(11) Registration AU 315641 S (21) Design Number 200718217



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8

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(11) Registration AU 316051 S (21) Design Number 200718629



9

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The Galaxy Tab 10.1







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Galaxy Tab 10.1 (cont...)





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Galaxy Tab 10.1 (cont...)





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Why no designs in injunction?

Interlocutory injunction requires

- prima facie case
- balance of convenience (damages sufficient)

Assertion of designs

- identical, or substantially similar in overall impression
 - different aspect ratio
 - different side curvature
 - limited freedom to innovate
- case not as complex as patent case
 - early final determination



Conclusion

Registered designs may not be a good tool to use for *interlocutory injunctions* unless you have a very strong case.

If designs are important, consider a design thicket

- Apple had only one relevant design for a tablet

Where possible, file accompanying patent applications

- Consider innovation patents where appropriate



THANK YOU Questions?

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