

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS  
TYLER DIVISION

SMARTFLASH LLC, *et al.*,

Plaintiffs,

v.

APPLE, INC. *et al.*,

Defendants.

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CASE NO. 6:13-cv-447-JRG

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

SMARTFLASH LLC, *et al.*,

Plaintiffs,

v.

SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS, INC. *et al.*,

Defendants.

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CASE NO. 6:13-cv-448-JRG-KNM

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

SMARTFLASH LLC, *et al.*,

Plaintiffs,

v.

GOOGLE, INC. *et al.*,

Defendants.

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CASE NO. 6:14-cv-435-JRG-KNM

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

**SMARTFLASH LLC, *et al.*,**

**Plaintiffs,**

**v.**

**AMAZON.COM, INC. *et al.*,**

**Defendants.**

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**CASE NO. 6:14-cv-992-JRG-KNM**

**JURY TRIAL DEMANDED**

**MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER**

Before the Court are (1) the Motion To Stay Litigation Pending Covered Business Method Review filed by Defendant Apple, Inc. (Apple) (Dkt. No. 546 in 6:13-CV-447, hereinafter Apple Motion) and; (2) the Renewed Motion to Stay Litigation Pending Covered Business Method Review filed by HTC America, Inc., HTC Corporation, Samsung Electronics America, Inc., Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd., Samsung Telecommunications America, LLC’s (collectively, Samsung)<sup>1</sup> (Dkt. No. 495 in 6:13-CV-448, hereinafter Samsung Motion).

After receiving these motions, the Court ordered briefing in the related Google and Amazon cases on the issue of whether a stay is warranted. Accordingly, also before the Court are (3) Google, Inc.’s (Google) Response to the Court’s May 4, 2015 Order (Dkt. No. 164 in 6:14-CV-435) and Google’s Motion to Stay Litigation Pending Covered Business Method Review (Dkt. No. 167 in 6:14-CV-435, hereinafter Google Motion); and (4) the Brief In Support of Stay of Litigation Pending Review of the Asserted Patents filed by AMZN Mobile, LLC, Amazon Web Services, Inc., Amazon.Com, Inc., Amazon.com, LLC, Audible, Inc.’s (collectively, Amazon) (Dkt. No. 37 in 6:14-CV-992, hereinafter Amazon Motion).

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<sup>1</sup> For ease of reference, the Court refers to the various Defendants in the Samsung litigation as “Samsung.”

After considering the briefing, and for the reasons discussed below, the Apple Motion and the Samsung Motion are **DENIED**, and the Google Motion is **GRANTED**. Further, the Court **ORDERS** that the Amazon action is **STAYED**.

### **BACKGROUND**

The first litigation related to all of the above-captioned cases began in this Court approximately two years ago. Since that time, both the parties and the Court have expended significant resources in these highly contentious cases.<sup>2</sup>

#### ***The Apple and Samsung Litigations***

On May 29, 2013, Smartflash filed separate patent infringement suits against Apple and other defendants (who have since been dismissed) (the -447 case) and Samsung (the -448 case). In both cases, Smartflash asserted the same six patents: U.S. Patent Nos. 7,334,720 ('720 Patent); 8,033,458 ('458 Patent); 8,061,598 ('598 Patent); 8,118,221 ('221 Patent); 8,336,772 ('772 Patent); and 7,942,317 ('317 Patent).

Between March 28 and April 3, 2014 (ten to eleven months after the case was filed), Apple filed twelve separate petitions for covered business method (CBM) review—two for each of the patents-in-suit—on anticipation and obviousness grounds (§ 102 & § 103). On the same day it filed its last petition, Apple filed a motion to stay the -447 proceedings pending completion of the CBM reviews at the Patent Trial and Appeal Board (PTAB). A month and a half later, Samsung filed a motion to stay based on Apple's petitions, requesting a stay the in -448 case if the Court found good cause to stay the -447 case. The Court denied both motions without prejudice on the grounds that the PTAB had not yet instituted any reviews, and as such, the issue was speculative.

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<sup>2</sup> For ease of reference, a timeline of events is included as Appendix A to this Opinion.

In late September 2014 (sixteen months after the case was filed), a few days before the PTAB's six-month deadline for a decision on Apple's twelve § 102 & § 103 CBM review petitions, Samsung filed ten of its own petitions for CBM review. As grounds for its petitions, Samsung asserted anticipation, obviousness, and unpatentable subject matter (generally governed by 35 U.S.C. § 101). Four days later, the PTAB granted Apple's CBM review petitions on several claims across four of the patents but denied review for the majority of challenged claims, including those ultimately asserted against Apple during trial. Apple did not re-file its motion to stay pending CBM review, and the case continued to proceed toward resolution.

In late October 2014 (seventeen months after the case was filed), Apple and Samsung filed motions for summary judgment in this Court, including a motion on § 101 grounds. Beginning on October 30 and continuing until November 25, 2014 (eighteen months after the case was filed), Apple also filed six more petitions for CBM review before the PTAB, raising § 101 grounds. Just over a month later, in December 2014, the Court held a joint hearing on dispositive and *Daubert* motions in the -447 and -448 cases. At that hearing, the Court heard argument on twenty-two motions<sup>3</sup> in addition to arguments that led to additional claim construction briefing. In the following weeks, the Court issued written rulings on all of the disputes raised in the hearing on dispositive and *Daubert* motions and issued a supplemental claim construction order.

The Court held a joint pretrial conference in the -447 and -448 cases on January 6, 2015, where it ruled on motions *in limine*. At this pretrial conference, for the first time, Defendants raised a subject matter jurisdiction defense based on questions of patent ownership. The Court ordered briefing on the question of patent ownership and issued a written ruling. A few days

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<sup>3</sup> Several of the motions were identical and filed in both cases.

after the -447 and -448 cases were reassigned to the undersigned per General Order,<sup>4</sup> the Court set a date for trial in the -447 case and postponed setting a trial date in the -448 case until after the conclusion of the -447 trial.

In mid-January 2015 (twenty months after the case was filed), Samsung filed an additional CBM review petition challenging the '772 Patent under § 101. Six days later, Magistrate Judge Mitchell issued a Report and Recommendation that recommended denying Apple's and Samsung's motions for summary judgment under § 101. After considering both defendants' objections, the Court issued an Order adopting the Report and Recommendation and denied both defendants' motions for summary judgment under § 101.

In the following weeks, the Court held a second and a third pretrial conference, the parties elected their final claims and prior art references, and the -447 (Apple) case proceeded to trial. On February 24, 2015—after a six-day jury trial—the jury returned a verdict in favor of Smartflash, finding that Apple infringed all of the asserted claims, that Apple willfully infringed the asserted claims, and that all of the asserted claims were valid.

On April 10, 2015, the Court set a post-trial briefing schedule in the -447 case. The Court ordered that the parties file their post-trial motions by May 1, 2015 and their responses by May 26, 2015. These motions and responses are all currently pending before the Court. In addition, the Court set the post-trial motions for a hearing on July 1, 2015. Furthermore, after the conclusion of the -447 (Apple) case, the Court (on March 18, 2015) set August, 3, 2015 as the date for trial in the -448 (Samsung) case.

In late March and early April 2015 (twenty-three months after the case was filed), the PTAB instituted CBM review in seven proceedings filed by Apple and Samsung. These reviews include § 101 grounds on at least one claim of each challenged patent, including five of the six

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<sup>4</sup> General Order 14-20 issued December 19, 2014, and addressed the assignment of cases in the Eastern District of Texas in light of the confirmation of Judges Amos Mazzant and Robert Schroeder and the upcoming retirement of then Chief Judge Leonard Davis.

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