728 F.3d 1336, 108 U.S.P.Q.2d 1173
(Cite as: 728 F.3d 1336)

United States Court of Appeals,
Federal Circuit.
ACCENTURE GLOBAL SERVICES, GMBH and
Accenture LLP, Plaintiffs–Appellants,
v.
GUIDEWIRE SOFTWARE, INC., Defend-
ant–Appellee.

No. 2011–1486.
Sept. 5, 2013.
Rehearing En Banc Denied Dec. 12, 2013.

Background: Patentee brought action against com-
petitor, alleging infringement of patent relating to
handling task during insurance claim processing uti-
lizing a computer system. The United States District
Court for the District of Delaware, Sue L. Robinson,
J., 800 F.Supp.2d 613, granted competitor's motion for
summary judgment of invalidity. Patentee appealed.

Holding: The Court of Appeals, Lourie, Circuit
Judge, held that system claims of patent were ineligi-
ble for patenting.

Affirmed.

Rader, Chief Judge, filed a dissenting opinion.

West Headnotes

[1] Courts 106 🗝96(7)

106 Courts
   106II Establishment, Organization, and Procedure
     106II(G) Rules of Decision
       106k88 Previous Decisions as Controlling
or as Precedents
        106k96 Decisions of United States
Courts as Authority in Other United States Courts
         106k96(7) k. Particular questions or
subject matter. Most Cited Cases

Federal Circuit Court of Appeals reviews the
grant or denial of summary judgment in a patent case
applying the law of the relevant regional circuit.

[2] Federal Courts 170B 🗝3604(4)

170B Federal Courts
   170BXVII Courts of Appeals
     170BXVII(K) Scope and Extent of Review
      170BXVII(K)2 Standard of Review
       170Bk3576 Procedural Matters
        170Bk3604 Judgment
         170Bk3604(4) k. Summary
judgment. Most Cited Cases
   (Formerly 170Bk766)

Federal Courts 170B 🗝3675

170B Federal Courts
   170BXVII Courts of Appeals
     170BXVII(K) Scope and Extent of Review
      170BXVII(K)3 Presumptions
       170Bk3675 k. Summary judgment.
Most Cited Cases
   (Formerly 170Bk802)

The Third Circuit employs plenary review of a
district court's grant of summary judgment, viewing
the facts in the light most favorable to the non-moving
party.

[3] Courts 106 🗝96(7)

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106 Courts
    106II Establishment, Organization, and Procedure
       106II(G) Rules of Decision
         106k88 Previous Decisions as Controlling or as Precedents
           106k96 Decisions of United States Courts as Authority in Other United States Courts
             106k96(7) k. Particular questions or subject matter. Most Cited Cases

In reviewing the grant or denial of summary judgment in a patent case, the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals applies its own law with respect to issues of substantive patent law.

[4] Patents 291 ⚷324.5

291 Patents
    291XII Infringement
       291XII(B) Actions
         291k324 Appeal
           291k324.5 k. Scope and extent of review in general. Most Cited Cases

Patent eligibility presents an issue of law that is reviewed de novo. 35 U.S.C.A. § 101.

[5] Patents 291 ⚷5

291 Patents
    291I Subjects of Patents
       291k4 Arts
         291k5 k. In general. Most Cited Cases

In analyzing patent eligibility, first, a court must identify whether the claimed invention fits within one of the four statutory classes of patentable inventions; second, the court must assess whether any of the judicially recognized exceptions to subject-matter eligibility apply, including whether the claims are to patent-ineligible abstract ideas. 35 U.S.C.A. § 101.

[6] Patents 291 ⚷5

291 Patents
    291I Subjects of Patents
       291k4 Arts
         291k5 k. In general. Most Cited Cases

In analyzing patent eligibility in the case of abstractness, a court must determine whether a claim poses any risk of preempting an abstract idea; to do so the court must first identify and define whatever fundamental concept appears wrapped up in the claim, and, then, proceeding with the preemption analysis, the balance of the claim is evaluated to determine whether additional substantive limitations narrow, confine, or otherwise tie down the claim so that, in practical terms, it does not cover the full abstract idea itself. 35 U.S.C.A. § 101.

[7] Patents 291 ⚷7.14

291 Patents
    291I Subjects of Patents
       291k4 Arts
         291k7.14 k. Particular processes or methods as constituting invention. Most Cited Cases

System claims of patent relating to handling task during insurance claim processing utilizing a computer system were patent-ineligible, absent any substantial limitations separating the system claims from the patent's similar, patent-ineligible method claim. 35 U.S.C.A. § 101.

[8] Patents 291 ⚷7.14

291 Patents
    291I Subjects of Patents
       291k4 Arts
         291k7.14 k. Particular processes or methods as constituting invention. Most Cited Cases

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System claims of patent relating to handling task during insurance claim processing utilizing a computer system failed to include limitations setting them apart from the abstract idea of handling insurance-related information, and therefore the claims were ineligible for patenting. 35 U.S.C.A. § 101.

[9] Patents 291 🔑7.11

291 Patents
 291I Subjects of Patents
  291k4 Arts
   291k7.11 k. Use or operation of machine or apparatus as affecting process. Most Cited Cases

Simply implementing an abstract concept on a computer, without meaningful limitations to that concept, does not transform a patent-ineligible claim into a patent-eligible one; further, limiting the application of an abstract idea to one field of use does not necessarily guard against preempting all uses of the abstract idea. 35 U.S.C.A. § 101.

[10] Patents 291 🔑7.11

291 Patents
 291I Subjects of Patents
  291k4 Arts
   291k7.11 k. Use or operation of machine or apparatus as affecting process. Most Cited Cases

The complexity of the implementing software or the level of detail in the specification does not transform a claim reciting only an abstract concept into a patent-eligible system or method. 35 U.S.C.A. § 101.

Patents 291 🔑328(2)

291 Patents
 291XIII Decisions on the Validity, Construction, and Infringement of Particular Patents

 291k328 Patents Enumerated
  291k328(2) k. Original utility. Most Cited Cases

7,013,284. Invalid.

*1337 J. Michael Jakes, Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner, LLP, of Washington, DC, argued for plaintiffs-appellants. With him on the brief were Erika H. Arner and Justin R. Lowery.

Mark A. Lemley, Durie Tangri, LLP, of San Francisco, CA, argued for defendant-appellee. With him on the brief was Daralyn J. Durie.

Before RADER, Chief Judge, LOURIE and REYNA, Circuit Judges.

Opinion for the court filed by Circuit Judge LOURIE.

Dissenting opinion filed by Chief Judge RADER.

LOURIE, Circuit Judge.

Accenture Global Services, GmbH and Accenture, LLP ("Accenture") appeal from the grant of summary judgment by the United States District Court for the District of Delaware holding that all claims of U.S. Patent 7,013,284 (the "'284 patent") are invalid under 35 U.S.C. § 101. *Accenture Global Servs., GmbH v. Guidewire Software, Inc.,* 800 F.Supp.2d 613, 621–22 (D.Del.2011). Accenture appealed that determination only as to claims 1–7, directed to a system for generating tasks to be performed in an insurance organization, but did not appeal the similar method ***1338** claims 8–22. As described more fully below, we *affirm* the district court's judgment and hold that the system claims before us recite patent-ineligible subject matter.

BACKGROUND
I. The '284 Patent
The '284 patent describes "[a] computer program

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... for handling insurance-related tasks." '284 patent col. 3 ll. 23–25. The patent discloses various software components of the program, including a "data component that stores, retrieves and manipulates data" and a client component that "transmits and receives data to/from the data component." *Id.* col. 3 ll. 25–29. The client component also includes a business component that "serves as a data cache and includes logic for manipulating the data." *Id.* col. 3 ll. 29–31. The program further describes a controller component to handle program events and an adapter component to interface with a data repository. *Id.* col. 3 ll. 31–35.

The specification contains detailed descriptions of the various software components, *see id.* col. 8–107, including many of the functions those components utilize and how those components interact. The patent contains two independent claims, both of which require generating and organizing insurance-related tasks.

Claim 1 is a claim to a system for generating tasks to be performed in an insurance organization. The system stores information on insurance transactions in a database. Upon the occurrence of an event, the system determines what tasks need to be accomplished for that transaction and assigns those tasks to various authorized individuals to complete them. In order to accomplish this, the claimed system includes an insurance transaction database, a task library database, a client component for accessing the insurance transaction database, and a server component that interacts with the software components and controls an event processor, which watches for events and sends alerts to a task engine that determines the next tasks to be completed.

Claim 1 is reproduced below:

A system for generating tasks to be performed in an insurance organization, the system comprising:

an insurance transaction database for storing information related to an insurance transaction, the insurance transaction database comprising a claim folder containing the information related to the insurance transaction decomposed into a plurality of levels from the group comprising a policy level, a claim level, a participant level and a line level, wherein the plurality of levels reflects a policy, the information related to the insurance transaction, claimants and an insured person in a structured format;

a task library database for storing rules for determining tasks to be completed upon an occurrence of an event;

a client component in communication with the insurance transaction database configured for providing information relating to the insurance transaction, said client component enabling access by an assigned claim handler to a plurality of tasks that achieve an insurance related goal upon completion; and

a server component in communication with the client component, the transaction database and the task library database, the server component including an event processor, a task engine and a task assistant;

wherein the event processor is triggered by application events associated with a change in the information, and sends an event trigger ***1339** to the task engine; wherein in response to the event trigger, the task engine identifies rules in the task library database associated with the event and applies the information to the identified rules to determine the tasks to be completed, and populates on a task assistant the determined tasks to be completed, wherein the task assistant transmits the determined tasks to the client component.

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Id. col. 107 ll. 25–59.

Claim 8 claims a method for generating tasks to be performed in an insurance organization. The method takes an insurance transaction and applies rules to that transaction to determine tasks to be completed. These tasks are made accessible to authorized individuals who then complete the task.

Claim 8 reads as follows:

An automated method for generating tasks to be performed in an insurance organization, the method comprising:

transmitting information related to an insurance transaction;

determining characteristics of the information related to the insurance transaction;

applying the characteristics of the information related to the insurance transaction to rules to determine a task to be completed, wherein an event processor interacts with an insurance transaction database containing information related to an insurance transaction decomposed into a plurality of levels from the group comprising a policy level, a claim level, a participant level and a line level, wherein the plurality of levels reflects a policy, the information related to the insurance transaction, claimants and an insured person in a structured format;

transmitting the determined task to a task assistant accessible by an assigned claim handler, wherein said client component displays the determined task;

allowing an authorized user to edit and perform the determined task and to update the information related to the insurance transaction in accordance with the determined task;

storing the updated information related to the insurance transaction; and

generating a historical record of the completed task.

Id. col. 108 ll. 12–41.

Both claim 1 and claim 8 disclose aspects of "generating tasks to be performed in an insurance organization." Claim 1 and claim 8 further include many of the same software components. They both include an insurance transaction database, which contains a policy level, a claim level, a participant level, and a line level. Further, both the system and the method claims require a client component for allowing an assigned claim handler to access tasks, an event processor, and a task assistant for scheduling and monitoring those tasks.

II. District Court Proceedings

On December 18, 2007, Accenture filed suit against Guidewire alleging infringement of the '284 patent as well as asserting various state law claims. *Accenture Global Servs., GmbH v. Guidewire Software, Inc.,* 691 F.Supp.2d 577, 579 (D.Del.2010). Guidewire asserted multiple affirmative defenses including that the patent ***1340** was invalid under 35 U.S.C. § 101 for claiming non-patent-eligible subject matter. Guidewire moved for summary judgment, asserting that the patent was invalid because claims 1, 8, and their related dependent claims did not meet the machine-or-transformation test articulated in our decision in *In re Bilski,* 545 F.3d 943 (Fed.Cir.2008) (en banc) *aff'd on other grounds sub nom. Bilski v. Kappos,* 560 U.S. ——, 130 S.Ct. 3218, 177 L.Ed.2d 792 (2010). Because the Supreme Court had by then granted certiorari in *Bilski,* but had not yet issued its own decision, the district court denied the motion for summary judgment without prejudice, allowing Guidewire to renew the motion after a Supreme Court decision issued. *Accenture Global Servs., GmbH v.*

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