

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
WACO DIVISION

ESTECH SYSTEMS, INC.,

Plaintiff,

v.

HOWARD MIDSTREAM ENERGY
PARTNERS d/b/a
HOWARD ENERGY PARTNERS,

Defendant.

CIVIL ACTION NO. 6:20-cv-00777

ORIGINAL COMPLAINT FOR PATENT
INFRINGEMENT

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

ORIGINAL COMPLAINT FOR PATENT INFRINGEMENT

Plaintiff Estech Systems, Inc. (“Estech” or “Plaintiff”) files this original complaint against Howard Midstream Energy Partners d/b/a Howard Energy Partners (“Defendant”) alleging, based on its own knowledge as to itself and its own actions, and based on information and belief as to all other matters, as follows:

PARTIES

1. Estech Systems, Inc., is a corporation filed under the laws of the State of Texas, with its principal place of business at 3701 East Plano Parkway, Suite 100, Plano, Texas 75074.
2. Defendant is a company incorporated in Delaware with its headquarters at 16211 La Cantera Parkway, Suite 202, San Antonio, TX 78256. Defendant’s registered agent for service is CT Corporation, 1999 Bryan St., Ste. 900, Dallas, TX 75201.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

3. This is an action for infringement of United States patents arising under 35 U.S.C. §§ 271, 281, and 284–85, among others. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction of the action under 28 U.S.C. § 1331 and § 1338(a).

4. Venue is proper in this district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1400(b) and 1391(c).

5. Defendant is subject to this Court’s specific and general personal jurisdiction due at least to Defendant’s substantial business in this forum, including (i) at least a portion of the infringements alleged herein; and/or (ii) regularly doing or soliciting business, engaging in other persistent courses of conduct, and/or deriving substantial revenue from goods and services provided to individuals in Texas and in this district.

6. Specifically, Defendant intends to and does business in Texas, directly or through intermediaries and offers its products and/or services, including those accused herein of infringement, to customers and potential customers located in Texas, including in the Western District of Texas.

7. Defendant maintains a regular and established place of business in this district, including at 16211 La Cantera Parkway, Suite 202, San Antonio, TX 78256.

THE TECHNOLOGY

8. For more than 30 years, Estech has been a leading U.S.-based provider of end-to-end business phone solutions. Estech’s Network Operations Center is located in Plano, Texas.

9. Since 1987, Estech has sold more than 400,000 solutions to its customers, working with more than 1500 certified partners nationwide. Its customers include small and large businesses across the country.

10. Recognizing that business doesn't get done without communication, Estech provides powerful products that are easy and simple to use. Estech's products are engineered to make intelligent technology that is intuitive and user-friendly, empowers employee productivity, and fuels customer satisfaction.

11. Estech's technology is American-engineered. From its Texas headquarters, Estech provides a full solutions portfolio of modern business phone systems, including Cloud, Hybrid, Pure IP, and SIP dial tone products. Given Estech's end-to-end product offerings, Estech customers are empowered to choose the product features they need and want.

12. Estech's products include the most integrated cloud PBX in the market—the award-winning ESI Cloud PBX; Voice over IP (VoIP) products and systems; and on-premises products. A cloud-based PBX is a sophisticated telephone exchange system that uses a cloud infrastructure to provide communication services, such as telephony services.

13. Estech cloud-based products have handled billions of call minutes.

14. Estech also provides U.S.-based, best-in-class technical support for its customers.

15. The patents-in-suit, U.S. Patent Nos. 8,391,298 (the "'298 patent"), 7,068,684 (the "'684 patent"), 6,067,349 (the "'349 patent"), and 7,123,699 (the "'699 patent") (collectively, the "Asserted Patents"), are generally directed to systems and methods for providing robust, feature-rich communications systems.

COUNT I

DIRECT INFRINGEMENT OF U.S. PATENT NO. 8,391,298

16. Estech owns all substantial rights, interest, and title in and to the '298 patent, including the sole and exclusive right to prosecute this action and enforce the '298 patent against infringers, and to collect damages for all relevant times. The United States Patent and Trademark

Office duly issued the '298 patent on March 5, 2013. A copy of the '298 patent is attached as Exhibit A.

17. The '298 patent describes information processing systems that store a list of phone numbers and provide those phone numbers to the user of a VoIP telephone. The user can use that list to dial the telephone number of another user associated with the system.

18. The claims of the '298 patent are not directed to an abstract idea. For example, claim 1 of the '298 patent recites a specific arrangement of devices and networking components. Together those devices and networking components enable a user of a first telecommunications device to observe a list of a plurality of telecommunications extensions. The list of extensions is stored in a server within a specific networking configuration, and the user can select to view a subset of the extensions. Taken as a whole, the claimed inventions of the '298 patent are not limited to well-understood, routine, or conventional activity. Rather, the claimed inventions include inventive components that improve upon the functioning and operation of information processing systems.

19. The written description of the '298 patent describes in technical detail each of the limitations of the claims, allowing a skilled artisan to understand the scope of the claims and how the non-conventional and non-generic combination of claim limitations is patently distinct from and improved upon what may have been considered conventional or generic in the art at the time of the invention.

20. Defendant made, had made, used, imported, provided, supplied, distributed, sold, or offered for sale products and/or systems, including VoIP telephone systems and networking equipment utilized by Defendant (“Accused Instrumentalities”).

21. The Accused Instrumentalities include local area networks used in conjunction with VoIP devices, such as telephones, networking equipment, and servers that provide VoIP functionality.

22. By doing so, Defendant has directly infringed (literally and/or under the doctrine of equivalents) at least Claim 1 of the '298 patent. Defendant's infringement in this regard is ongoing.

23. Defendant has infringed the '298 patent by making, having made, using, importing, providing, supplying, distributing, selling, or offering the Accused Instrumentalities for sale.

24. Plaintiff has been damaged as a result of the infringing conduct by Defendant alleged above. Thus, Defendant is liable to Plaintiff in an amount that compensates it for such infringements, which by law cannot be less than a reasonable royalty, together with interest and costs as fixed by this Court under 35 U.S.C. § 284.

25. Plaintiff and/or its predecessors-in-interest have satisfied all statutory obligations required to collect pre-filing damages for the full period allowed by law for infringement of the '298 patent.

26. Defendant has also indirectly infringed the '298 patent by inducing others to directly infringe the '298 patent. Defendant has induced end-users, including Defendant's personnel and contractors, to directly infringe (literally and/or under the doctrine of equivalents) the '298 patent by making and using the Accused Instrumentalities. Defendant took active steps, directly and/or through contractual relationships with others, with the specific intent to cause them to use the Accused Instrumentalities in a manner that infringes one or more claims of the '298 patent, including, for example, Claim 1 of the '298 patent. Such steps by Defendant included, among other things, advising or directing personnel, contractors or end-users to make or use the

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