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- 1 (January 26, 2022, 1:32 p.m.)
- 2 DEPUTY CLERK: Discovery hearing in Civil Action
- 3 W-21-CV-933, styled MyPAQ Holdings Limited versus Dell
- 4 | Technologies, Incorporated and Dell Incorporated.
- 5 MR. AINSWORTH: Hi, Judge. This is Charley Ainsworth
- 6 | along with Michael Shore, Brian Melton, Krisina Zuniga, Scott
- 7 | Glass and Chris Bunt from my office. And our client
- 8 | representative, Brad Close.
- 9 And we're ready to proceed, Your Honor.
- 10 THE COURT: Okey dokey.
- 11 MS. HEYMAN: Your Honor, this is Paula Heyman with Kevin
- 12 Meek, Tom Brown and Ariadna Garza for Dell.
- 13 And we are ready to proceed.
- 14 THE COURT: Very good. I'm happy to take up the issues.
- 15 | Give me one second.
- So, Mr. Shore, are you arguing this? Or who's arguing on
- 17 behalf of the plaintiff?
- MR. SHORE: Yes, Your Honor. I'm ready to proceed
- 19 whenever you're ready.
- 20 THE COURT: I'm ready.
- 21 MR. SHORE: Your Honor, to give you a brief bit of
- 22 | context, this is a case against Dell based upon their inclusion
- 23 of what are called fast chargers or a certain type of USB (sic)
- 24 | charger with their various products, from laptop computers to
- 25 all kinds of other things.

It's sort of an interesting situation, in that Dell does not design these products. Dell does not manufacture these products. All of the design and manufacturing work is done by three Taiwanese companies.

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And so although this is a case against Dell, the most discovery that we're going to be seeking in the case is going to come from these Taiwanese entities that are Dell's suppliers. Because Dell has literally told me on the phone that they have no control over these suppliers. They can't make these suppliers produce anything.

They have declined to tell us whether or not they've demanded indemnity from the suppliers or whether the suppliers are providing indemnity. They've also declined to tell us who's paying for the defense, whether it's Dell or the suppliers. So we don't know.

So what this means is the vast bulk of technical discovery, and frankly a lot of financial discovery, is going to have to come from these three Taiwanese entities. Taiwan is not a signatory to the Hague Convention.

And so both document discovery and deposition discovery has to be done through the letters rogatory process, which means if you are forced to go through diplomatic channels, which the Taiwanese can force you to go through diplomatic channels, it can take up to a year or more to get the discovery back.

The other main constraint here is it's very, very expensive to go through the letters rogatory process. And it is almost like having to file a lawsuit to get discovery in Taiwan.

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So it's very, very important that when you do this, you do it intelligently. Because if you do it wrong or you don't ask for the right things or you don't know the right things to ask for or you don't know the right person to request a deposition from, you would have to start the process over again. Which means that it may take another year from that point in time.

So we think that this is an exceptional circumstance and that it's a case against Dell, that Dell has claimed that they do not have any control over the design documents. They don't have any control over the manufacturing documents. And so basically they're telling us that what they can give us from a design and manufacturing standpoint is whatever their contract manufacturer is willing to give them.

I've asked Dell to write a letter and copy us instructing each of their suppliers to fully cooperate, and demanding their cooperation on behalf of Dell. They have not agreed to do that.

So what we have is we have a potentially uncooperative company that may or may not have indemnity obligations, has every reason, if they do have indemnity obligations, not to cooperate with us.

And so what we are trying to do is to be able to send these letters rogatory intelligently. So there's three things that we've asked for: We've asked for the actual products manufactured by each of these entities so we know which entity's manufacturing which products. That's obviously necessary so we know how to craft our requests to each entity that is more product-specific.

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We've also asked that they disclose in advance the amount of each product that they buy from each of these manufacturers. Because if one of these manufacturers or a product is very small in volume, there's no reason to go through a year of, you know, fighting to get information only to find out the information isn't -- wasn't worth, you know -- the juice wasn't worth the squeeze.

All that information should be very easy for Dell to obtain through its ERP system. They just type in the vendor and then they can track all the vendor costs that they paid for each individual product. So it's not hard to do. They could probably be done in less than two hours.

So that's the first category of things, is for each of these manufacturers they identify, we want them to tell us what parts they buy from each and, you know, how much of each so we know whether or not it's financially worth it to delve into that.

The second piece of information that we're looking for is

the primary contact person for Dell at each of these manufacturers, because that will tell us who to depose. And so we — they don't have in Taiwan — you cannot depose a corporation like we can here with 30(b)(6). I mean, unless they're a party to the case and they're subject to the federal rules and the jurisdiction of the Court. In Taiwan we have to name somebody. And so we're asking them to simply tell us who is your primary contact at each of these manufacturers.

The third thing that -- or probably the most important thing we're asking for is the OEM supply agreements. And these are the actual agreements between Dell and these manufacturers that will show -- and here's why.

The supply agreements are relevant to a lot of things.

They're ultimately, obviously, going to be produced. But this would allow us to ask questions in interrogatories or request for production to these suppliers about the location of sales, the amount of sales, what products are subject to the sales.

Because all that will be identified in the schedules.

We'll also be able to look at the schedules. Because what these supply agreements also have are pricing schedules. So in other words, if you buy zero to a million parts, it's X amount. If you buy more than a million parts, it's a different amount.

It will give us also a schedule of all the parts that are being purchased. So we can ask questions in our letters rogatory, we can say, tell us about this part pursuant to this

supply agreement. Or give me all communications with Dell related to this supply agreement so we can be very specific, rifle-shot targeted in how we draft these.

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I know that Dell has these supply agreements readily accessible, because when they were sued, they would have picked up the supply agreements to determine whether or not they had indemnity or defense clauses, which Dell has in almost every contract with Dell I've ever seen.

So we know that Dell has ready-access to these supply agreements with the schedules. It would be no more than hitting send on a computer to send them to us, and there's no justification that I can imagine for why Dell would say, we don't want to give them to you.

Now, they've admitted that these things are going to be likely discoverable after Markman. Well, Markman is not until May 16th. That's three and a half months from now. So in a process that takes a year to complete, a three and a half month head-start is material.

And it's -- and like I said, if we had any indication that the Taiwanese manufacturers were going to be cooperative, it would be a different thing. But every indication we have, in some instances directly from Dell, has told me we have zero control over these guys. We can't make them do anything. And so basically what that means is the only information Dell is going to be able to provide us is what the manufacturers

voluntarily give Dell knowing that, if they are an indemnitor, anything they give Dell could come back to hurt them.

So we need this early discovery from Dell. It's very, very narrow. It's very, very tailored to the needs of the foreign discovery. It's not burdensome. It's not expensive. It's not time-consuming, and everyone agrees that ultimately this -- all of this is discoverable.

There's nothing that's not discoverable in what's requested. The only question is whether it happens now or three and a half months from now. And with the letter rogatory process taking so long and potentially having to be redone if not done correctly, we think that it's -- you know, to get -- to really get this thing going and have a fair chance to get the information, we think we need it now and we need to get the process started now.

16 Your Honor, I believe you're on mute.

17 THE COURT: Yeah. I was talking to my clerk.

18 And so were you done?

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MR. SHORE: Yes, sir. Unless you have any questions. I think it's pretty well laid out.

THE COURT: Okay. Ms. Heyman, who's going to be responding on behalf of Dell?

MS. HEYMAN: I will be. And, Your Honor, I neglected to introduce one person of our team, Mark Speegle, who's also with Dell. He's on the line.

KRISTIE M. DAVIS, OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER
U.S. DISTRICT COURT, WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS (WACC)

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THE COURT:
                     Okay. Ms. Heyman, I'm having a hard time
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    hearing you. I apologize, but I can't hear you very well.
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                      I'm sorry. Can you hear me now?
         MS. HEYMAN:
         THE COURT:
                     It's not much better for me.
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         (Clarification by the reporter.)
                     I'll do -- I'll let you know if I can't hear
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         THE COURT:
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    you. And more importantly, Kristie will let you know if she
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    can't.
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         MS. HEYMAN: I apologize.
         THE COURT:
                     It's okay.
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         MS. HEYMAN: Let me see if I can try and help this.
    you hear a little bit better now?
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                           That's good. Thank you, ma'am.
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         THE COURT: Yes.
                     Yes. Your Honor, what Mr. Shore has
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         MS. HEYMAN:
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    characterized as tailored, not expensive and not
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    time-consuming, that is the opposite of what they're asking
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    for. Much of this information --
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         THE COURT: Ms. Heyman, I just can't hear you.
                                                          I mean, I
    can hear you, but I can't -- I can't understand you.
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    don't know what to do about that.
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         (Clarification by the reporter.)
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         MS. HEYMAN: Kevin, do you want to take this over?
         MR. MEEK: Can you call in by cell?
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         THE COURT: Cell would be -- I mean, I'm happy to listen
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    by cell as well. I just want to make sure --
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KRISTIE M. DAVIS, OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER
U.S. DISTRICT COURT, WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS (WACC)

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         (Off-the-record discussion.)
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         MS. HEYMAN: Your Honor, can you hear me?
                     It's little bit better. Why don't you just
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         THE COURT:
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    introduce yourself or something, just so I can make sure if I
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    can hear you this way?
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         MS. HEYMAN: This is Paula Heyman.
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         THE COURT: It's better -- Kristie, is that better for
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    you?
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         THE REPORTER:
                        Yes, sir.
         THE COURT:
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                     Okay.
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         Yes, ma'am. You're welcome to proceed. Thank you.
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         MS. HEYMAN:
                     Okay. I do apologize.
         THE COURT: No need to -- it's not your fault.
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         MS. HEYMAN: Getting back to the issue.
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         What Mr. Shore has asked for here is not simple, it is not
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    targeted and it is not inexpensive.
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         Looking at the various categories, I'll go in the order in
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    which Mr. Shore presented them.
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With respect to the identification of products, Dell has provided that information to MyPAQ in its technical production that was produced on January 12th in accordance with the Court's scheduling order. We produced that information for the three Dell suppliers, and that information includes, for example, schematics and bill of materials that describe the products.

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With respect to the sales data, what MyPAQ is asking for is actual sales --

THE COURT: Ms. Heyman --

MS. HEYMAN: Yes.

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THE COURT: Ms. Heyman, let me interrupt you and ask

Mr. Shore: Having had that representation from counsel for

Dell, what is it that you are seeking that they didn't give you

that you still want?

MR. SHORE: Well, what they gave us were some specifications, product specifications only for the exact product numbers that we have accused in the complaint.

So in other words, the complaint says Product A, B, C and any other products that share the same or similar circuitry or design. And what they did was they limited what they provided us, and they told us they got this information from the manufacturer. This is not Dell information. They had to get it from the manufacturer. But they limited it to only the specific part numbers that are named in the complaint.

So all we're asking for them is, in Number 1, documents sufficient to show the Dell devices made by each of the manufacturers. And that is obviously reasonably likely to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence if there's other products that are involved.

And the reason why we need it now is if we find out later that there are other products that have similar circuitry or

design that they haven't told us about, we'd have to go back to the manufacturers then to get the discovery.

So again, it's a one-year process in Taiwan. So unless we know all of the products these manufacturers are making for Dell, we don't know what to ask for in our letters rogatory to make sure that we cover everything that could potentially be involved in the case.

And they -- and we specifically asked them to identify -- and by the way, all the products that are made, the one document that they can provide that'll tell us that are the supply agreements because the supply agreements will have a schedule of the products covered.

And so Number 1, that's one or two documents that they could give us. Just give us the supply agreements and that will have a schedule listing all the parts that are covered by the supply agreements.

There's no burden, none, and this is all information that's going to have to be produced anyway --

THE COURT: Got it. I got it.

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Ms. Heyman, response to that?

MS. HEYMAN: Yes. What Mr. Shore is referring to is --well, MyPAQ's infringement contentions identify a 90-watt USB C-type charger. What Dell has done is gone beyond what is actually that part number in the contentions.

We've identified each manufacturer who has produced a

similar or equivalent type of device, this 90-watt charger, and we have provided that information to MyPAQ.

That is what has been accused so far. That's what is in the contentions. And so under the Court's scheduling order, again, Dell produced those technical documents earlier this month.

And with respect to the OEM agreements --

THE COURT: Hold on one second.

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Mr. Shore, you want to respond to that?

What I took from Ms. Heyman said was that they had done what you said and given you the information for the products that were -- would also be accused.

MR. SHORE: That's not accurate. What they produced is information limited to the products that are named specifically in the infringement contentions.

And what they literally told me was they said, well, what you need to do is you need to just go out and buy every Dell product that's on the market. You need to go and tear them apart and figure out whether or not the chargers for those are the same as what you've already got. Which costs about \$35,000 per part.

So what they could do is they could simply give us the OEM agreements that will have in one schedule the OEM agreements is the product specification, which will tell us whether the products are similar or the same. The second thing it will

have is a list of products -- in another schedule, the list of products covered and the procedure for invoicing and calling off purchase orders. That's another schedule to the OEM agreements.

There is -- if what she is saying is accurate, then they had to look at something -- Dell's lawyers had to look at something to reach the determination they reached on what they were going to give us. They won't even give us what they looked at to give us this determination.

But the OEM agreements will give us 85 percent of what we need to complete -- or at least do a very, very, very good start on the foreign discovery. Without those OEM agreements, we are stabbing into the dark, and they know it. And that's, you know --

THE COURT: Got it.

Ms. Heyman?

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MS. HEYMAN: Your Honor, the OEM agreements that Mr. Shore is asking for, we do have those OEM agreements. But it is not a simple push of the button to give Mr. Shore the information he is requesting.

The OEM agreements do not have the pricing information.

They do not have the number of parts purchased. These are high-level agreements that are related to the business relationship between Dell and its suppliers.

And the information that Mr. Shore is asking for is going

- to be found in numerous different documents. And it would
 take -- it would take a while to gather these documents. For
 example, purchase orders is one of the places the documents -that this information might be found. And there are going to
 be, you know, many, many, many purchase orders.

 So these -- what Mr. Shore's requesting is not going to be
- So these -- what Mr. Shore's requesting is not going to be found in the OEM agreements.
 - THE COURT: But what I hear Mr. Shore asking for is the OEM agreements.
- 10 MS. HEYMAN: Correct.

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- 11 THE COURT: I mean -- and so...
- MS. HEYMAN: This information will not be found -- the information that he thinks will be in these OEM agreements, it is not.
- 15 THE COURT: Mr. Shore?
- MR. SHORE: I don't want to -- I haven't seen the OEM agreements, but I've seen plenty of other OEM agreements, including Dell OEM agreements, and they have schedules.
 - And I don't know -- I don't want to -- I don't know what she's saying or how she's parsing her words here, but what we've asked for is the OEM agreements with schedules. And the schedules -- every OEM agreement I've ever seen from Dell or anybody else in this industry, one schedule is the specification. Here are the specifications these parts must meet.

The other thing is a pricing guideline. In other words, the first so many units is this price, the units after that are this price. There will also be delivery sections about where these products are delivered, who they're delivered to, maybe they're delivered to an assembler in China, maybe they're delivered somewhere else, but we'll know where they're delivered to.

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So there's a lot of information, but almost -- the most important information is there will also be a number. Every supply agreement at Dell is assigned a number. And what we can do is we can ask the OEM in discovery is, tell us every single part that you supplied to Dell pursuant to supply agreement number and we can give the number of the supply agreement.

We can say -- for each of the parts that are identified in a schedule, we can say, how many of those were delivered, where were they delivered, how much did they cost?

So the OEM agreements are critical.

And as far as purchase orders are concerned, Dell has an ERP, enterprise resource planning, system that will allow them — they don't have to get the purchase orders. They can go into their ERP system and they can run a report, which will take 30 minutes to run, that tells every single payment that was made to any vendor, what the payment was made for and when it was made and it can be put out on an Excel spreadsheet.

Now, but the most important thing, getting back to this,

if the Court does nothing else, the two most important things are 3 and 4, the contact person so we know who to name in a deposition notice, and Number 2 -- and the OEM agreement because that OEM agreement is where we can get and we can glean from it a lot of information on what questions to ask. Because this foreign discovery is going to be 90 percent of the technical discovery that happens in this case.

And so that -- we only get one shot at this, unless we're going to have a trial in three years because we have to do it two or three times, which nobody wants to do, I don't think.

But this is -- this is --

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THE COURT: I got it. I got it.

Ms. Heyman, any additional response to that?

MS. HEYMAN: Your Honor, with respect to the sales data that they're requesting, again, we have offered to provide them the percentage that the -- each manufacturer supplies to Dell. This would give them the information that they are looking for with respect to is it a small manufacturer, is it a large manufacturer? That we have offered, they refused. Instead are pushing for the spreadsheet with all of the sales data, which we believe goes more to their case-in-chief and to early damages discovery.

And, again, with respect to the OEM agreements, this -the information that Mr. Shore is looking for is not in the OEM
agreements -- OEM agreements that we have in our possession at

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    this moment. And it would be -- it would be a -- we believe
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    this is really a fishing expedition for information from Dell
    at this time.
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                     Okay. Got it.
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         THE COURT:
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         And did you want to respond to anything else Mr. Shore has
    said?
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                     I think we've made --
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         MR. SHORE:
         THE COURT: No, no, no. I asked Ms. Heyman if she had
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    anything else she wanted to say in response to what you argued.
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    I'm not sure if she was done.
         MS. HEYMAN: I do not. I'm...
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                     Okay. I'll be back in a few seconds.
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         THE COURT:
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         (Pause in proceeding.)
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14 THE COURT: If we could go back on the record.

15 I'm going to -- give me one second. I apologize.

16 Let me pull up -- I'm having problems with my...

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I apologize. I'm having problems with my e-mail, pulling up stuff. Give me one second. There we go.

I'm going to grant the requested relief with respect to all four categories. And let me set out why -- and we're going to do a more fulsome order that should be out within the week.

To make clear, the reason that I have the rules that I have are -- with regard to when discovery starts and in relation to the Markman and everything else, is because I think in the average 95 percent, if not higher, of cases, that's what

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makes the most sense.

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I'm finding that the plaintiff has established, from what I've heard, that essentially the information discovery that the plaintiff is going to have to take is going to need to be taken primarily of foreign companies.

It's been my experience after three and a half years on the bench that we'll be lucky if -- we'll be lucky in the best of worlds, if there is cooperation and there are no problems, for the plaintiff to be able and the Court to be able to keep this case on track and get the discovery done if we start now. That's why I'm allowing the discovery to start now.

I'm willing to make a finding that the plaintiff has established that this falls, you know, outside of the ordinary case I have where I hold off on allowing discovery. And because I want it -- I also want as -- in the interest of the Court -- I want the discovery to get started now.

It seems to me that the information the plaintiff is seeking from the defendant here is the best gateway to allow the plaintiff to begin -- to obtain the discovery from the three Asian companies. And so that's the basis for my ruling.

But we'll have a more fulsome order out within a week, I hope.

Mr. Shore, I'll start with you because I think you asked for the hearing. Is there anything else that we needed to take up?

1 MR. SHORE: Not from MyPAQ, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Ms. Heyman?

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MS. HEYMAN: Yes, Your Honor. Does this -- would this allow Dell to have early discovery into jurisdictional issues?

We do have an outstanding possible jurisdictional issue with MyPAQ.

THE COURT: I don't know that I've ever denied early jurisdictional discovery. I think -- if you have a colorable jurisdictional argument, I think I have to get jurisdiction determined before we do much else.

So I -- if it's not clear, maybe you found a chink in the armor of what I've tried to do with my typical scheduling order where -- that I need to fix.

It's my opinion that jurisdictional discovery is something else that parties should be able to engage in because I've got to make sure I have jurisdiction. It's one of the earliest things I need to do.

Now, I don't know -- I know -- when you say

"jurisdictional discovery," I know what those two words mean.

I don't know exactly what you intend to throw across the

transom towards the plaintiff that is jurisdictional discovery

or whether what you're going to seek is something that

Mr. Shore would agree is jurisdictional discovery and is not

more broad.

But as a general concept, if Dell has a -- or any

defendant, but in this case Dell, if you have a colorable argument with regard to jurisdiction, you certainly have my consent to engage in discovery that is limited to the jurisdictional issues.

And if you all have a fuss over what that is, I'm happy to take that up at a date in the future.

MR. SHORE: May I be heard for just a moment, Your Honor?

THE COURT: Sure.

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MR. SHORE: The jurisdictional issue that they raised was they sent us a $\ensuremath{\mathsf{--}}$

THE COURT: Mr. Shore, I'm not interested in the merits of it. If they -- if Dell tells me they have a jurisdictional issue and they send you discovery that is related to that, you have two choices. You can either say -- you have three choices.

You can either send the discovery. You can call

Ms. Heyman and Mr. Meek, who I know to be eminently reasonable

people, and say, here's what I think we should produce or not

produce and you work it out. Or option number three, you can

contact me and say, Judge, they're telling you this is

jurisdictional discovery. I disagree. I don't think I have to

do it. And I'll take it up once they send you the discovery.

MR. SHORE: The only point I want to make, Your Honor, is we -- we've already responded to them with a -- without having the Court having to get involved with all the information that

1 | would satisfy any reasonable person that there is no issue.

2 But we'll take it up with the Court if it becomes an issue

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THE COURT: If they think there's additional discovery they need, they get to send it. And if you disagree that it's reasonable, I gave you your three options.

MR. SHORE: Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: And as you know, I think I've been pretty accessible over the course of my three and a half years. I'm happy to take it up once there's actually an issue.

MR. AINSWORTH: Judge, I have a procedural question.

12 THE COURT: Sure.

MR. AINSWORTH: Do you want us to submit an order to you pursuant to your OGP? Or are you planning on doing the order?

THE COURT: That's a great question. I should have thought of that myself. Give me one second, Mr. Ainsworth, and I'll get back. Let me ask.

(Pause in proceedings.)

THE COURT: My faithful law clerk, who's my favorite law clerk currently, tells me we don't need your help. We'll get it done ourselves.

Thank you for asking, because that is ordinarily the way -- this issue comes up not infrequently. That's like -- why I'd like to have a written order, so that folks on both sides of the case have a general idea of what I think about

1 issues where you can anticipate there will be unique 2 difficulties with regard to discovery, and that way folks will -- may be more informed about my feelings on it. 3 But thank you for the offer. 4 5 Anything else from anyone? MR. SHORE: Your Honor, the only thing I would ask is that 6 7 Mr. Sirota, who represents Samsung, is here now and I'd just ask for him to call me to discuss whether or not we actually 8 9 need to have the hearing this afternoon for Samsung. It's the 10 same issues. 11 THE COURT: If it's the same issues, I would certainly encourage you all to chat with each other. I don't know -- you 12 13 know, I don't want to forecast what I would do, but I doubt my -- unless there was some compelling reason why my -- why the 14 logic that compelled me to grant this relief is different in 15 16 the Samsung case, my guess is the resolution would be similar. 17 MR. SHORE: That's all we have, Your Honor. 18 THE COURT: Okay. And if we don't need the hearing, let Regan know and we'll take it off the calendar. 19 20 Thank you guys. Have a good day. 21 (Hearing adjourned at 2:11 p.m.) 2.2 23 24 25

1 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT) 2 WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS 3 I, Kristie M. Davis, Official Court Reporter for the 4 5 United States District Court, Western District of Texas, do 6 certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript from the 7 record of proceedings in the above-entitled matter. 8 I certify that the transcript fees and format comply with 9 those prescribed by the Court and Judicial Conference of the United States. 10 11 Certified to by me this 3rd day of February 2022. 12 /s/ Kristie M. Davis 13 KRISTIE M. DAVIS Official Court Reporter 14 800-Franklin Avenue Waco, Texas 76701 (254) 340-611415 kmdaviscsr@yahoo.com 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25