UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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BEFORE THE PATENT TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

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META PLATFORMS, INC. ET AL.,
Petitioner,

v.

ANGEL TECHNOLOGIES GROUP LLC,
Patent Owner.

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IPR2023-00059
Patent 10,417,275 B2

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Before MIRIAM L. QUINN, SHARON FENICK, and MICHAEL T. CYGAN, *Administrative Patent Judges.*

CYGAN, *Administrative Patent Judge.*

DECISION
Granting Institution of *Inter Partes* Review
35 U.S.C. § 314

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background and Summary

Meta Platforms, Inc. ("Petitioner") filed a Petition (Paper 1, "Pet.") requesting institution of *inter partes* review of claims 1–12 of U.S. Patent No. 10,417,275 (Ex. 1001, the "'275 patent"). Angel Technologies LLC ("Patent Owner") filed a Preliminary Response ("Prelim. Resp."). Paper 9. We authorized additional briefing on certain matters. Ex. 1036. Petitioner filed a Reply (Paper 14, "Pet. Reply") and Patent Owner filed a Sur-reply (Paper 15, "PO Sur-reply").

Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 314(a), an *inter partes* review may be instituted only if "the information presented in the petition . . . and any [preliminary] response . . . shows that there is a reasonable likelihood that the petitioner would prevail with respect to at least 1 of the claims challenged in the petition."

For the reasons given below, on this record Petitioner has established a reasonable likelihood that it would prevail in showing the unpatentability of claim 1 of the '275 patent. Accordingly, we institute an *inter partes* review as to claims 1–12 of the '275 patent and both of the asserted grounds of unpatentability.

B. Real Parties in Interest

Petitioner identifies Meta Platforms, Inc. (formerly Facebook, Inc.) and Instagram, LLC as the real parties in interest. Pet. 2. Patent Owner identifies Angel Technologies Group LLC as the real party in interest. Paper 4, 2.

C. Related Matters

Petitioner represents that the '275 patent is involved in *Angel Techs. Group LLC v. Facebook, Inc. and Instagram LLC*, No. 2:21-cv-08459-CBM-JPR (C.D. Cal.), and that

> On June 30, 2022, the district court found the asserted patents, including the '275 Patent, invalid under 35 U.S.C. § 101 and dismissed the case. On July 29, 2022, PO filed a Notice of Appeal. The case has been docketed as the following: *Angel Techs. Group, LLC v. Meta Platforms, Inc.*, No. 2022-2100 (Fed. Cir.). The opening appeal brief is currently due on November 2, 2022.

Pet. 2–3. The parties represent that Petitioner has filed, at substantially the same time that this Petition was filed, petitions for *inter partes* review against related family members U.S. Patent No. 8,954,432 (IPR2023-00057), U.S. Patent No. 9,959,291 (IPR2023-00058), and U.S. Patent No. 10,628,480 (IPR2023-00060). Pet. 3; Paper 4, 2.

D. The '275 Patent

The '275 patent is titled "Artificial Intelligence Assisted Tagging of Users in Digital Media Online." Ex. 1001, code (54). The '275 patent issued from Application Serial No 15/933,531, filed on March 23, 2018, and claims priority, via continuation applications, to Provisional Application No. 60/248,949, filed on November 15, 2000. *Id.* at codes (21), (22), (60), (63).

The '275 patent relates to storing and sharing images through a communications network, and for supplying and receiving information about the existence of objects within images. Ex. 1001, 1:20–25. A users database (230) receives, stores, and provides information about people, who access the host computer, and may include information for each user such as a user identifier, the user's name, and user's email address. *Id.* at 7:18–25. An image database (250) receives and stores information about photos. *Id.* at

7:27–34. An identifications database (240) receives, stores, and provides information about relationships between users and photos, such as whether the user is in the photo, including the coordinates of the user or other person within the photo. *Id.* at 7:45–56. The following is an example of the three databases:

User database			
User I.D.	Name	Email	Contacts
007	John Doe	jdoe@doe.com	John, Jane, Lisa
008	Jane Doe	janedoe@doe.com	Jane, John, Fuzzie

Images database			
Image I.D.	Location	Caption	Uploaded by
ABCD	C:\dir\my_image.jpg	John and Jane at the beach	007

Identifications database			
User I.D.	Image I.D.	Shared by	Coordinates
007	ABCD	007	50, 50, 25
008	ABCD	007	25, 75, 10

Id. at 8:45–66. Through uploading of user data by John Doe and Jane Doe to the user database, and creation of an image record in the Image database when a user uploads a photo to the host computer, a relationship is created between the user and the image that appears in the Identifications database. *Id.* at 7:58–9:3, 12:52–55.

Following identification of an object within an image, artificial intelligence algorithms (e.g., an image recognition system) may be applied

to the images. *Id.* at 13:31–36. Such algorithms may be purposed to further define characteristics of images, obtain identifying information, and/or search a database for other possible matches to a named object. *Id.* at 13:36–39.

E. Illustrative Claim

Claim 1 is illustrative, and recites as follows:

A method implemented within a computer system including a plurality of computing devices connected via a communications network, the method associating users of the computer system with digital media accessible to the computer system, the method comprising:

distinguishing between users of the computer system via one or more unique user identifiers stored in a computer-readable medium accessible to the computer system, the users of the computer system including a named user and an identifying user, the named user being different from the identifying user, the named user having naming information associated with a unique user identifier of the named user;

in response to an input from the identifying user indicating a selection of an image, determining a unique image identifier corresponding to the image selected;

receiving, from the identifying user, an input indicating a selection of the named user from a list of other users of the computer system, the list of other users including naming information previously provided by other users, the list of other users including one or more users in a contact list associated with the identifying user, the identifying user's contact list including the named user;

in response to receiving from the identifying user the input indicating the selection of the named user from the list of other users, determining a unique user identifier of the named user;

receiving, from the identifying user, one or more inputs indicating a set of coordinates corresponding to a location of the named user within the image; and

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