

EXHIBIT C

Memphis area firm sues tech giants for patent infringement

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Originally published 11:24 a.m., November 20, 2012

Updated 12:06 a.m., November 21, 2012

Twitter, Google, Facebook and a slew of other tech giants are targets of a patent infringement lawsuit filed in Memphis federal court by a new Cordova firm.

B.E. Technologies Inc. claims social media and smartphone companies have made use of a computer interface method patented by its chief executive officer in 2004 to help track advertising on the Internet.

Three-page complaints were filed in 19 separate lawsuits in U.S. District Court in Memphis in September and October.

The lawsuits are signed by Redwood City, Calif., patent lawyer Robert Freitas, an attorney known in intellectual property circles for defending dating site eHarmony and litigating against manufacturer Seagate Technologies.

B.E. Technologies was formed in September by Martin D. Hoyle, who moved to Cordova in 2006 from Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina, Freitas said. Hoyle declined to comment and referred questions to Freitas.

Public records show Hoyle, 53, is a manager of Webnet Media LLC, a firm in the Memphis suburb of Eads. He earlier headed Big Easy Technologies of Metairie, La, and was an information technology manager at Elixir Industries of Destrehan, La. Tennessee Secretary of State records list the address of B.E. Technologies as 116 Viking Drive in Cordova, a Memphis suburb.

In an email, Freitas provided biographical information about Hoyle. It says he was born in Sylva, N.C., attended Western Carolina University and developed an interest in the Internet in the 1990s. "With the explosion of the Internet in the 1990s," the message from Freitas says, "Mr. Hoyle began working with several Internet companies and programmers, including a group that was developing websites for the Atlanta Olympic Village. During this time, Mr. Hoyle gained the knowledge and technical skills that inspired him to focus his efforts on Internet technologies."

Trade journals have dismissed the Hoyle lawsuits as patent trolling, a reference to broad patents used to snare tech firms in settlements to avoid litigation. In 2011,

President Barack Obama signed the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act, an overhaul of the patent system intended in part to diminish trolling.

A recent book, "Patent Failure: How Judges, Bureaucrats, and Lawyers Put Innovators at Risk," contends patent disputes surged in the 1990s after a U.S. appeals court allowed plaintiffs "creative re-definitions of patent rights." The book by a pair of Boston University professors reports public corporations outside the chemical industry generated \$3 billion in revenue off patents in 1999 but spent \$12 billion litigating patent claims.

Freitas, in an interview, described Hoyle as an inventor who formed B.E. Technologies expressly to "enforce these patents." Freitas said it is not unusual for a patent holder to file an infringement lawsuit years after the alleged theft occurred.

Over the years, the U.S. Patent Office has issued seven patents on 12 applications by Hoyle, according to the tracking service patentbuddy.com.

In the Hoyle lawsuits, the complaints are accompanied by patent applications that describe a system useful for banner advertising on websites. It lists Hoyle as the inventor and names B.E. Technology LLC of Bay City, Mich., as the assignee. It says the patents were issued in 2003 and 2004. The complaints single out tablet computers, saying the product "directly infringe" on the patents.

Named in the order of filing are Amazon Digital Services Inc., Facebook Inc., LinkedIn Corp., Groupon Inc., Pandora Media Inc., Twitter Inc., Barnes & Noble Inc., Samsung Telecommunications America LLC, Samsung Electronics America Inc., Sony Computer Entertainment America LLC, Sony Mobile Communications (USA) Inc., Sony Electronics Inc., Microsoft Corp., Google Inc., Apple Inc., Spark Networks Inc., People Media Inc., Match.com LLC, and Motorola Mobility Holdings LLC.



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