

Maine Firm Sues Microsoft Over Windows 8 Elements

The Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — A small local technology company has filed a patent infringement lawsuit against Microsoft over elements included in Windows 8.

SurfCast Inc., based in Portland, filed the complaint Tuesday in U.S. District Court asking for unspecified damages.

The lawsuit claims Redmond, Wash.-based Microsoft Corp. is using elements known as live tiles, rectangular icons linked to websites, apps and other items. SurfCast says it developed the tiles, referred to on its website as "dynamically updating icons" containing refreshed real-time content, in the 1990s.

Microsoft is using the tiles technology on operating systems including the recently launched Windows 8, found on personal computers, phones, tablets and other devices, the lawsuit claims.

Microsoft said in a statement it's confident it can prove the claims are without merit.

Microsoft has been the target of many lawsuits over the years.

In one high-profile patent dispute, a federal court in Chicago ordered Microsoft to pay \$521 million, saying it copied technology developed by the chairman of Eolas Technologies Inc. while he was at the University of California at San Francisco. The university owned the patent, which helps embed small interactive programs, plug-ins or applets, into Web pages, while Eolas had exclusive marketing rights.

The case was settled out of court in 2007 for an undisclosed amount after an appeals court ordered a new trial.

Apple Inc. sued Microsoft in 1988 for copyright infringement, claiming Microsoft copied the "look and feel" of its operating system. Apple, based in Cupertino, Calif., lost that case.

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