



Technology Patent Wars Heat Up -- Microsoft and AOL Make Billion Dollar Deal

Five Star Equities Provides Stock Research on AOL, Inc. and Microsoft Corporation



NEW YORK, NY, Apr 11, 2012 (MARKETWIRE via COMTEX) -- The Technology patent wars have started to heat up once again. Booming markets for smartphones and tablet computers have caused patents for these devices to become invaluable assets to the world's technology giants. Five Star Equities examines the outlook for companies in the Technology Sector and provides equity research on AOL, Inc. [AOL +0.94%](#) and Microsoft Corporation [MSFT +1.99%](#).

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On Monday Microsoft agreed to purchase 800 patents from AOL for over \$1 billion, which works out to be a price tag of \$1.3 million per patent. The high prices companies are paying reflect the major role patents are playing in the business and legal strategies of major tech companies. Patent claims and counter claims are being filed almost every day in courtrooms around the world. "Microsoft is increasing its arsenal, even if it is expensive," said James E. Bessen, a patent expert and lecturer at the Boston University School of Law.

"The analogy people use is that this is like nuclear (weapons) stockpiling, where companies have been acquiring patents to deter each other from attacking," Timothy Lee from the Cato Institute said. "Now we've gone from a cold war to an actual war where companies are suing each other."

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AOL Inc. announced Monday that the Company has entered into a definitive agreement to sell over 800 of its patents and their related patent applications to Microsoft Corporation ("Microsoft") and to grant Microsoft a non-exclusive license to its retained patent portfolio for aggregate proceeds of \$1.056 billion in cash.

Following the sale, AOL will continue to hold a significant patent portfolio of over 300 patents and patent applications spanning core and strategic technologies, including advertising, search, content generation/management, social networking, mapping, multimedia/streaming, and security among others. AOL also received a license to the patents being sold to Microsoft.

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