

CNET News.com <http://www.news.com/>

TiVo beefs up patent portfolio

By Richard Shim

http://news.com.com/TiVo+beefs+up+patent+portfolio/2100-1047_3-5657506.html

Story last modified Wed Apr 06 14:32:00 PDT 2005

Digital video recorder company TiVo has increased its stake in television intellectual property by purchasing six patents from IBM.

The Alviso, Calif.-based company on Tuesday filed a report with the Securities and Exchange Commission disclosing its purchase of six U.S. patents from IBM on March 31. The patents relate to audience research and measurement, integration of television signals with Internet access, automatic rescheduling of recordings, content screening, enhanced program information search and electronic program guide interface enhancements. Expiration dates for the patents range from December 2015 to February 2020.

Financial details of the deal were not disclosed.

The DVR pioneer has been amassing a patent portfolio to boost its licensing business and fend off new entrants to the DVR market. However, TiVo hasn't yet been able to turn its intellectual property into significant financial success.

Early last month, TiVo was granted five patents from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. The company has 70 patents, with 106 still pending.

Many industry watchers say the value of TiVo's overall patent portfolio lies in the potential muscle it brings to its ongoing patent infringement lawsuit against satellite television company EchoStar Communications.

The case has been slow moving, but recently made public progress, with jury selection set to begin Oct. 4. TiVo brought the suit against EchoStar in January of last year, alleging that EchoStar and its affiliated companies are violating TiVo's time-warping patent.

Copyright ©1995-2005 CNET Networks, Inc. All rights reserved.