

Patent Infringement CASE STUDY

Case: BEI v. Matsushita

Clients: Townsend and Townsend and Crew

Year: 2003

Venue: U.S. District Court – Eastern District of Michigan

Our client, BEI Technologies, was a forerunner in the piezoelectric tuning fork industry and accused Matsushita of infringing on multiple patents.

Challenges

Although most members of the jury pool would have some familiarity with tuning forks, few would understand the technology, applications or value of piezoelectric tuning forks.

The defendant's devices looked nothing like ours, which complicated our ability to illustrate that their products infringed on our client's patents. Because it was not visually apparent that the devices were similar, we would need to compare them graphically on the functional and structural levels.

In addition, the jury needed to receive a tutorial on the process and terminology of patents and patent applications.

Solutions

Think Twice started by framing the story of how BEI's piezoelectric tuning fork technology was created and developed, and how it differed from prior art. We portrayed the uses and markets for, and benefits of, BEI's technology.

We related BEI's piezoelectric tuning fork technology to concepts with which the jurors could identify, and then associated familiar graphics with those concepts. Then we showed how BEI's patents defined its technology and manufacturing processes. Finally, simplified graphics illustrated both companies' products at the atomic level, and showed that they were essentially the same.

Outcome

Counsel obtained a favorable settlement for BEI.

Services Provided

- Strategic planning
- Creative development
- Graphic design
- Technical illustrations
- Tutorials
- Video editing
- 2D and 3D animations
- Still graphics, slides and boards
- Document scanning and coding
- Courtroom planning and equipment

