

# Economic Parasites

When your tech product or website is accused of infringing a software patent, you can:

- Pay the patent holder a licence fee; they decide the amount
- Fight the patents in court - expensive and time consuming
- Take your product off the market

These are the options currently being considered by Tom Tom NV. Microsoft is claiming that Tom Tom's car navigation systems violate eight Microsoft patents. Microsoft is seeking damages for past violation and have filed a complaint with the International Trade Commission seeking an import ban of Tom Tom's products to the USA.

The patented "inventions" seem trivial: #6,175,789 is mounting a computer on a car dashboard, #5,579,517 is shortening file names when they're too long. If Tom Tom fights the patents in court, they have a good chance of winning, but that takes time and cash.

Many companies decide it's easier just to pay the licence fee that Microsoft demands, even though they're getting nothing for their money. It's a reliable source of revenue for Microsoft, but for your business and for the economy, software patents are a menace.

***EndSoftwarePatents.org***

On our website you'll find analysis of the economic cost of software patents, as well as news and an electronic mailing list if you want to be informed about this topic.

(Please dispose of this flyer in an environmentally friendly manner. Keep Brussels tidy and respect the environment.)

EndSoftwarePatents is a campaign of Free Software Foundation.  
Contact regarding this flyer: Ciarán O'Riordan <ciaran@fsf.org>  
+32 487 64 17 54