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Earthcomber Names Loopt in Patent Infringement Suit

CHICAGO, Oct. 1, 2008 – Mobile technology pioneer Earthcomber, LLC, today filed a patent infringement case in U.S. District Court against Loopt, the provider of a prominent cell phone social networking application.

Earthcomber alleged that existing and announced Loopt services violate Earthcomber's patented system, which enables individuals to discover desired people, places and things around them by matching traits and preferences.

That advantage, industry experts say, represents a crucial development in expanding usage and volume in the booming mobile communications industry.

“Our technology is a breakthrough invention that we believe can elevate the quality and usefulness of mobile communications and commerce,” said Jim Brady, CEO of Earthcomber.

Earthcomber's patented technology searches automatically for user preferences, and alerts users when they're nearby desired items. The company has provided such services since 2004.

In its suit, filed in the federal Northern District of Illinois, Earthcomber seeks to have the court block Loopt from infringing on its patent, US No. 7,071,842, awarded in 2006. It also seeks damages as yet undetermined, according to the filing by DowellBaker, P.C.

Earthcomber's technology is provided free, directly to consumers, and through licenses to third-party publishers who use the Earthcomber platform. Versions are available for common web-enabled mobile devices, along with dedicated applications for Blackberry, Nokia, other Java-enabled phones and the iPhone web browser. The application has won numerous awards in the mobile industry.

Earthcomber is a small company headquartered in the west-Chicago suburb of River Forest, and is funded by private investors. Loopt is a prominent Silicon Valley firm backed by venture heavyweights Sequoia Capital and New Enterprise Associates.

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