

Innovation at the Mobile World Congress also has an impact on urgent interim injunctions

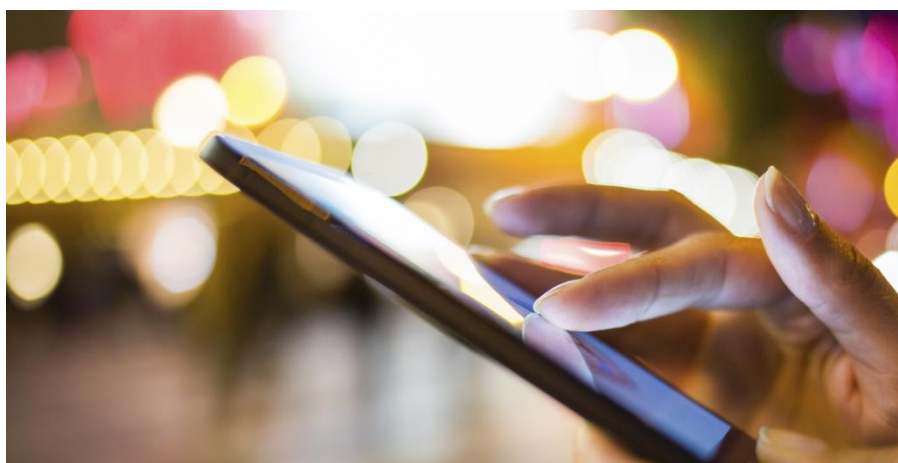
The Barcelona Commercial Courts adopt a protocol for the *Mobile World Congress* on urgent interim injunctions relating to industrial and intellectual property that establishes a precedent for future fairs and congresses

At this year's *Mobile World Congress* in Barcelona, the world's largest annual gathering for the mobile sector and related industries, which took place from 2 to 5 March 2015, the Barcelona Commercial Courts activated a special protocol to deal with potential conflicts arising in this event in relation to intellectual property rights, unfair competition and unlawful advertising, and that could lead to applications for urgent interim injunctions.

The purpose of the protocol was to guarantee the adoption of genuinely effective urgent interim injunctions during the *Mobile Word Congress*, on the one hand, and avoid the adoption of interim injunctions without hearing the defendant whenever possible, on the other. In Spain, interim injunctions can be adopted without hearing the defendant (*ex parte*) if there are grounds of urgency or if granting the hearing could compromise the effect of the interim injunction requested, provided that the general legal conditions required for the adoption of any interim injunction were also met.

The protocol adopted for this Congress consisted specifically of the following:

- Granting preferential and priority processing to applications for urgent interim injunctions (with - *inter partes* - or without - *ex parte* -



hearing the defendant) in relation to technological patents and industrial designs which were to be exhibited at this event, as well as acts of infringement of trademarks and copyrights, and unfair competition and unlawful advertising acts in relation to products and materials which were on display at the *Mobile Word Congress*.

- Admitting the submission of protective letters in order to avoid, to the extent possible, the adoption *ex parte* of interim injunctions, so as to deal with potential conflicts in relation to intellectual property rights with another company and in view of the reasonable fear of being the

subject of an application for *ex parte* interim injunctions. This would enable the potential defendant to make its allegations and be available to appear in Court immediately if an application for *ex parte* interim injunctions were made.

- Resolving the application for *ex parte* interim injunctions within 2 days as from the date it was received by the Court.
- If a protective letter was submitted, resolving on the application for interim injunctions within a maximum of 10 days as from the date it was received by the Court having set a date for the hearing.

- Assessing the urgency required for the adoption of *ex parte* interim injunctions, considering, as decisive factors, the prior conduct of the applicant and the speed with which it reacted upon discovering the potential infringement - issues which are always decisive for this purpose.

In particular, the protocol established as being especially important, the fact of whether or not the application for urgent interim injunctions was submitted sufficiently in advance so that, in good faith, this would not reasonably prevent hearing the defendant, when the applicant had prior knowledge of the potential infringement and would have been able to submit its application with sufficient time.

- Establishing a continuous on-demand preventive service on weekdays and at the times when public hearings are held, during the entire month of February prior to the *Mobile World Congress*, and from 2 to 5 March when it was underway.

Despite the fact that this protocol was created specifically for the *Mobile World Congress*, news has emerged recently that the Barcelona Commercial Courts are considering possibly approving similar protocols for future fairs and congresses in which conflicts may arise where intellectual property rights are at stake, requiring rapid and efficient legal protection which these Courts have jurisdiction to provide. Thus, we will have to wait and see how the Barcelona Commercial Courts react when new events of this type are held, potentially entailing disputes on this subject leading to applications for urgent interim injunctions.

Contact

Miquel Montaña
Partner
Global Head of Intellectual Property

CLIFFORD CHANCE

Diagonal 682
08034 Barcelona
T. +34 93 3442200
F. +34 93 3442222

www.cliffordchance.com

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*Linda Widyati & Partners in association with Clifford Chance