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Phone: +1 646 783 7100 | Fax: +1 646 783 7161 | customerservice@law360.com

How Irell, McKool Smith Beat Samsung To Win $191M

By **Emma Cueto**

Law360 (November 21, 2025, 4:36 PM EST) -- Irell & Manella LLP and McKool Smith navigated a trial schedule packed with expert testimony and a challenging factual scenario to secure a $191.4 million patent infringement verdict against Samsung, marking the latest time the two firms have teamed up in East Texas intellectual property cases.

A federal jury earlier this month found in favor of Irell and McKool Smith's client, Pictiva Displays, that the Korean electronics giant had willfully infringed two of five patents-at-issue, which all related to organic light-emitting diode, or OLED, technology.

The case was not the first time the two firms had teamed up together in a case against Samsung, nor the last; among other cases, the pair are currently representing California company Netlist in a suit against Samsung over alleged infringement of computer memory patents.

Both Irell and McKool Smith were involved in the case from its early phases. Pictiva acquired the five patents-in-suit from another company, OSRAM, that had been developing OLED technology since the 1990s, but had not been able to make much headway in monetizing their patents, according to Jennifer Truelove, a partner at McKool Smith who worked on the case.

Irell was involved in the case from the outset, according to Rebecca Carson, who was co-lead counsel alongside fellow Los Angeles-based partner Jason Sheasby. The firm focused at the beginning on going through Pictiva's portfolio to select the strongest patents to pursue, drawing on its long history with the company and familiarity with the patents in question.

"One critical piece in making OLED technology commercially viable is making sure power usage is efficient and that it's durable," Carson explained. "OSRAM had a lot of cool innovations to improve power efficiency and durability."

The firm brought McKool Smith in as well early on — a partnership that was by then very familiar to both.

"I think I've done nine trials with Jason," Truelove said. "Whenever he has cases in the Eastern District of Texas, he tends to bring me on."

Samsung was represented by Gillam & Smith LLP and Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan LLP, which did not respond to a request for comment.

From early on, Truelove said the team had trial in mind. For instance, she said, she was already thinking from the early stages about how to frame the ownership of the patents to a jury, who might look askance at Pictiva attempting to get payment over patents it had not developed itself.

"That sort of thing is always a challenge," she said. "We were thinking about what story to tell the jury about our client and what they were trying to accomplish with investing in these patents."

One analogy she has found effective with Texas juries, she said, is the analogy of mineral rights. It's a situation many jurors are familiar with that involves one party being paid based on legal rights, without doing any of the actual drilling or mining, Truelove said.

Going into the trial, the team had to contend with several reschedules that resulted in the trial starting immediately after Sheasby concluded another trial elsewhere. "We had to make sure we had everything ready to go for him the second he stepped off the plane in Texas," Carson remembered.

Though the team had tried cases against Samsung before, Truelove said that in this case, the company seemed intent on bringing in more experts than she'd seen in the past, preferring to fly some experts in from Korea rather than playing deposition testimony. The number of expert witnesses — 10 for Samsung and four for Pictiva — made for a packed schedule for a one-week trial, Carson recalled.

"We divided [the cross-examination] up between Jason, myself and our star associate, but we also shifted through trial," Carson remembered. "We were all prepared to take on different witnesses depending on how evidence was coming in or the issues that came up. And we did adjust … That was one of the keys to our success: We were all so deeply involved that we could make adjustments on the fly."

The jury ultimately found infringement on two of the five patents, awarding Pictiva a total of $191.4 million in a lump-sum payment. Pictiva, Carson said, was "thrilled" with the result.

"I think it was great for them to have a jury validate the value and importance of these inventions that are essential in the OLED space," she said.

--Editing by Lakshna Mehta.

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