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### UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

### CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

3-02820PA (JENLY Case No.

JEFFREY SIMON, an individual, and MARC NEWBURGER, an individual,

Plaintiffs,

VS.

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RCR INTERNATIONAL, INC., a Minnesota corporation, TABLET PAL, a Minnesota corporation, and Philip Hultgren, an individual d/b/a RCR International, Inc.,

Defendants.

COMPLAINT FOR UTILITY PATENT INFRINGEMENT

**DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL** 

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For its Complaint, Plaintiffs allege as follows:

## **PARTIES**

- 1. Plaintiffs Jeffrey Simon and Marc Newburger ("Plaintiffs") are individuals residing in Los Angeles, California. Plaintiffs are entrepreneurs in the business of providing devices that block the gap in between a car seat and the center console of automobiles. The product is known as the Drop Stop®.
- 2. On information and belief, Defendant RCR International ("Defendant RCR") is a Minnesota corporation, having a place of business at 17300 19th Ave N, Plymouth, Minnesota 55447.
- 3. On information and belief, Defendant Tablet Pal ("Defendant Tablet Pal") is a Minnesota corporation, having a place of business at 17300 19th Ave N, Plymouth, Minnesota 55447.
- 4. On information and belief, Defendant Philip Hultgren (Defendant Hultgren) is an individual residing in Minnesota, and co-founder and principal of RCR International and doing business as RCR International.

## **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

- 5. This is a civil action for patent infringement arising under the patent laws of the United States of America, 35 U.S.C. § 1, et seq.
- 6. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1338(a) as it raises a federal question and arises under Acts of Congress related to patents.
- 7. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant RCR because, on information and belief, Defendant RCR International conducts substantial business in the State of California, including in this judicial district, by selling the accused

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products in this judicial district. For example, Defendant RCR did, and is doing, business in this judicial district at least through its website at www.tabletpals.com. Walmart's website at www.walmart.com, Amazon's website at www.amazon.com. and Sears's website at www.sears.com, each of which advertises, displays, offers for sale, and is a point of sale for a car seat gap filler referred to as the Gap Pal.

- This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant Tablet Pal 8. because, on information and belief, Defendant Tablet Pal conducts substantial business in the State of California, including in this judicial district, by selling the Gap Pal in this judicial district. For example, Defendant Tablet Pal did, and is doing, business in this judicial district at least through its website at www.tabletpals.com, Walmart's website at www.walmart.com, Amazon's website at www.amazon.com, and Sears's website at www.sears.com, each of which advertises, displays, offers for sale, and is a point of sale for the car seat gap filler referred to as the Gap Pal.
- 9. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant Hultgren because, on information and belief, Defendant Hultgren conducts substantial business in the State of California, including in this judicial district, by selling the Gap Pal in this iudicial district. For example, Defendant Hultgren did, and is doing, business in this judicial district at least through his website at www.tabletpals.com, Walmart's website at www.walmart.com, Amazon's website at www.amazon.com, and Sears's website at www.sears.com, each of which advertises, displays, offers for sale, and is a point of sale for the car seat gap filler referred to as the Gap Pal.
- Venue is proper in this judicial district as to each and all Defendants 10. pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1391(b), 1391(c), and 1400(b) since a substantial portion of the acts giving rise to this action occurred in this judicial district, the corporate defendants are subject to personal jurisdiction in this judicial district, and this action relates to patents.

## **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

- 11. Plaintiffs Jeffrey Simon and Marc Newburger are residence of Los Angeles County, California and provide a patented device for blocking gaps in between a car seat and the center console of automobiles, known as the Drop Stop®. A true and correct copy of the homepage of www.buydropstop.com is attached to this Complaint as Exhibit A.
- 12. Plaintiffs Jeffrey Simon and Marc Newburger are the owners and inventors of United States Patent No. 8,267,291, entitled "Apparatus for Closing Gaps," which was duly and legally issued on September 18, 2012 ("the '291 Patent") by the United States Patent and Trademark Office. This patent is valid and unexpired. A true and correct copy of the '291 Patent is attached to this Complaint as Exhibit B.
- 13. Without Plaintiffs' permission, Defendant RCR made, used, advertised, distributed, imported, offered for sale, and/or sold goods, described as a car seat gap filler and referred to as the Gap Pal. True and correct copies of photographs of the Gap Pal car seat gap filler is attached to this Complaint as Exhibit C.
- 14. Without Plaintiffs' permission, Defendant Tablet Pal made, used, advertised, distributed, imported, offered for sale, and/or sold goods, described as a car seat gap filler and referred to as the Gap Pal.
- 15. Without Plaintiffs' permission, Defendant Hultgren made, used, advertised, distributed, imported, offered for sale, and/or sold goods, described as a car seat gap filler and referred to as the Gap Pal.
- 16. The Gap Pal car seat gap filler falls within the scope of one or more claims of the '291 Patent.
- 17. Defendant RCR continues to make, advertise, distribute, import, offer for sale, or sell the Gap Pal car seat gap filler at least on the Internet at websites,

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such www.tabletpals.com, www.walmart.com, as www.sears.com. A true and correct copy of the aforementioned websites www.amazon.com. advertising the Gap pal is attached to this Complaint as Exhibits D-G.

- 18. Defendant Tablet Pal continues to make, advertise, distribute, import, offer for sale, or sell the Gap Pal car seat gap filler at least on the Internet at websites, such as <u>www.tabletpals.com</u>, <u>www.walmart.com</u>, www.sears.com, www.amazon.com. (See, Exhibits D-G.)
- Defendant Hultgren continues to make, advertise, distribute, import, 19. offer for sale, or sell the Gap Pal car seat gap filler at least on the Internet at websites, such as www.tabletpals.com, www.walmart.com, www.sears.com. www.amazon.com. (See, Exhibits D-G.)
- 20. Upon information and belief, Defendant Tablet Pal is a subsidiary or shell company of Defendant RCR as they share the same physical address and telephone number. A true and correct copy of webpages from Tablet Pal's website and RCR International's website are attached to this Complaint as Exhibits H and I.
- Defendant RCR is also the registrant and owner of the website 21. www.tabletpals.com. A true and correct copy of a webpage from showing Defendant registrant of Who.godaddy.com **RCR** the www.tabletpals.com is attached to this Complaint as Exhibit J.
- Upon information and belief, Defendant Hultgren is the co-founder of 22. Defendant RCR International and is doing business as RCR International. A true and correct copy of a webpage from Linkedin.com stating Defendant Hultgren is the chief technology officer and co-founder of RCR International is attached to this Complaint as Exhibit K. (See also, Exhibit J.)

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## **CLAIM – INFRINGEMENT OF A UTILITY PATENT**

(35 U.S.C. § 271)

- 23. Plaintiffs repeat and incorporate the allegations set forth in paragraphs 1 through 22 above.
- 24. The '291 Patent has at all relevant times subsequent to its issue date been fully enforceable and is now fully enforceable.
- 25. Plaintiffs marketed and continue to market their Drop Stop® product in accord with the claims of the '291 Patent though their website, www.buydropstop.com, among other modes of distribution, which identifies the Drop Stop® product as being patented by providing an appropriate patent notice on the website.
- 26. Defendant RCR infringed and is infringing the '291 Patent in this District and elsewhere throughout the United States by manufacturing, using, importing, distributing, marketing, advertising, offering for sale, and/or selling car seat gap fillers referred to as the Gap Pal in violation of one or more claims of the '291 Patent.
- 27. Defendant RCR has willfully, wantonly, and deliberately infringed the '291 Patent by manufacturing, using, importing, distributing, marketing, advertising, offering for sale, and/or selling the Gap Pal in known and objectively reckless disregard for Plaintiffs' rights in the '291 Patent.
- 28. Unless enjoined by this Court, Defendant RCR will continue to expand its acts of infringement to Plaintiffs' great and irreparable damage. Furthermore, unless enjoined, Defendant RCR's acts of manufacturing, using, importing, distributing, marketing, advertising, offering for sale, and/or selling of the Gap Pal will likely cause Plaintiffs irreparable harm for which Plaintiffs' have no adequate remedy at law, and which can only be remedied by injunctive relief.

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- 29. Defendant Tablet Pal has infringed the '291 Patent in this District and elsewhere throughout the United States by manufacturing, using, importing, distributing, marketing, advertising, offering for sale, and/or selling the Gap Pal in violation of one or more claims of the '291 Patent.
- 30. Defendant Tablet Pal has willfully, wantonly, and deliberately infringed the '291 Patent by manufacturing, using, importing, distributing, marketing, advertising, offering for sale, and/or selling the Gap Pal in known and objectively reckless disregard for Plaintiffs' rights in the '291 Patent.
- Unless enjoined by this Court, Defendant Tablet Pal will continue to expand its acts of infringement to Plaintiffs' great and irreparable damage. Furthermore, unless enjoined, Defendant Tablet Pal's acts of manufacturing, using, importing, distributing, marketing, advertising, offering for sale, and/or selling the Gap Pal will likely cause Plaintiffs irreparable harm for which Plaintiffs have no adequate remedy at law, and which can only be remedied by injunctive relief.
- Defendant Hultgren has infringed the '291 Patent in this District and 32. elsewhere throughout the United States by manufacturing, using, importing, distributing, marketing, advertising, offering for sale, and/or selling the Gap Pal in violation of one or more claims of the '291 Patent.
- Defendant Hultgren has willfully, wantonly, and deliberately infringed 33. the '291 Patent by manufacturing, using, importing, distributing, marketing, advertising, offering for sale, and/or selling the Gap Pal in known and objectively reckless disregard for Plaintiffs' rights in the '291 Patent.
- Unless enjoined by this Court, Defendant Hultgren will continue to 34. expand its acts of infringement to Plaintiffs' great and irreparable damage. Furthermore, unless enjoined, Defendant Hultgren's acts of manufacturing, using, importing, distributing, marketing, advertising, offering for sale, and/or selling the Gap Pal will likely cause Plaintiffs irreparable harm for which Plaintiffs have no adequate remedy at law, and which can only be remedied by injunctive relief.

# **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs demand judgment against each Defendant, as follows:

- A. That Defendant RCR has infringed the '291 Patent;
- B. That Defendant Tablet Pal has infringed the '291 Patent;
- C. That Defendant Hultgren has infringed the '291 Patent;
- D. For an order permanently enjoining Defendant RCR and its officers, directors, agents, servants, attorneys, and employees and all other persons acting in concert with it from committing any further acts of infringement, including but not limited to, manufacturing, using, importing, distributing, advertising, offering for sale, and selling the Gap Pal, or aiding or abetting or assisting others in such infringing activities;
- E. For an order permanently enjoining Defendant Tablet Pal and its officers, directors, agents, servants, attorneys, and employees and all other persons acting in concert with it from committing any further acts of infringement, including but not limited to, manufacturing, using, importing, distributing, advertising, offering for sale, and selling the Gap Pal, or aiding or abetting or assisting others in such infringing activities;
- F. For an order permanently enjoining Defendant Hultgren from committing any further acts of infringement, including but not limited to, manufacturing, using, importing, distributing, advertising, offering for sale, and selling the Gap Pal, or aiding or abetting or assisting others in such infringing activities;
- G. For an order directing each Defendant to file with this Court and to serve on the Plaintiff within thirty (30) days after service on Defendants of the injunction granted herein, or such extended period as the Court may direct, a report

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in writing, under oath, setting forth in detail the manner and form in which Defendants complied with the injunction and order of the Court;

- Η. For an order requiring Defendants, and each of them, to account to Plaintiff for all profits derived by Defendants and each of them from the manufacture, importation, advertisement, and sale of the Gap Pal;
- I. For a judgment of damages against Defendants in an amount to be proven at trial, or, in the alternative, a reasonable royalty, each based upon Defendants' acts of infringement pursuant to the Patent Laws, and for prejudgment and postjudgment interest until the award is fully paid;
- For a judgment that Defendants, and each of them, have willfully and J. deliberately infringed Plaintiff's rights, and that this is an exceptional case entitling Plaintiffs to enhanced damages;
- For an award of costs, including attorneys' fees, incurred in K. prosecuting this action; and
- For such other and further relief as this Court may deem just and L. equitable under the circumstances.

Respectfully submitted:

CISLO & THOMAS LLP

Dated: April 22, 2013

Daniel M. Cislo, Esq.

C. Wook Pak, Esq.

Attorneys for Plaintiffs, Jeffrey Simon and Marc Newburger

## **DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL**

Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury on all issues raised by the Complaint.

Respectfully submitted:

CISLO & THOMAS LLP

Dated: April 22, 2013

Daniel M. Cislo, Esq. C. Wook Pak, Esq.

Attorneys for Plaintiffs, Jeffrey Simon and Marc Newburger

T: 13-27622 Complaint.docs

# EXHIBIT A







www.BuyDropStop.com

The Original PATENTED Solution to Reduce Driver Distraction.





2 Drop Stops 1 Credit Card Light 1 Slide Free Pad Only \$19.99 + S&H







### **Prevent Dangerous Distractions,** Keep Your Eyes on the Road, and **Never Search Under Your Seats Again!**

#### What's in YOUR crack?™

The patented Drop Stop® prevents keys, phones, change, jewelry, makeup, bottle caps, pens, gum, and more from falling down the car seat gap. Use it or lose it.™

- Easily fits between your car seat and console
- Moves with the seat and is attached via the seat belt catch
- ✓ Prevents anything from falling down The Carmuda Triangle™
- Save CA\$H in a Flash
- ONE SIZE FITS ALL Trucks And Cars!
- ✓ One Time Installation You put it in and FUGAPABOUTIT!™
- Drop Stop is made using HIGH GRADE NEOPRENE
- Drop Stop seat wedge is durable and easy to clean!





# Blends with any colorainterior!





Click on any image above to enlarge.

NO MATTER WHAT COLOR YOUR CAR'S INTERIOR, the gap between the center console and front seat naturally creates a dark shadow. Drop Stop's universal black neoprene casing is a completely streamlined gap blocker, almost invisible once you Beware of cheap knock-offs and imitations using lesser quality materials. They will fall apart and degrade!



install it. You won't even know it's there.

Drop Stop can be squished and stretched to fit in any size car seat crack  $\dots$  NO MATTER HOW SMALL  $\dots$  making it the perfect gap filler

More than just a stuff catcher, Drop Stop set of 2 neoprene car seat gap fillers makes the perfect gift — THE GIFT OF SAFETY — be it the holidays or any time of year.

Home Our Story Testimonials Press Safety Stats FAQ Instructions Slide Free Pad Customer Service

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# EXHIBIT B

# (12) United States Patent

### (10) Patent No.: (45) **Date of Patent:**

## US 8,267,291 B2 Sep. 18, 2012

#### Simon et al.

#### (54) APPARATUS FOR CLOSING GAPS

(76) Inventors: **Jeffrey Simon**, Los Angeles, CA (US); Mark Newburger, Los Angeles, CA

(\*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this

patent is extended or adjusted under 35

U.S.C. 154(b) by 1332 days.

Appl. No.: 11/749,354

(22)Filed: May 16, 2007

(65)**Prior Publication Data** 

> US 2008/0283565 A1 Nov. 20, 2008

(51) Int. Cl. (2006.01)B60R 7/00

(52) **U.S. Cl.** ....... **224/275**; 224/542; 224/543; 224/544; 224/539; 297/182; 297/188.06; 296/37.8;

296/1.07; 296/63

(58) Field of Classification Search ...... 224/542, 224/543, 544, 539, 275; 296/37.8, 37.1, 296/37.15, 24.34, 1.07, 1.09, 63, 67; 297/181, 297/182, 188.06

See application file for complete search history.

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|           |   |   |         | Spetner |         |

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|              |      |         |                         |

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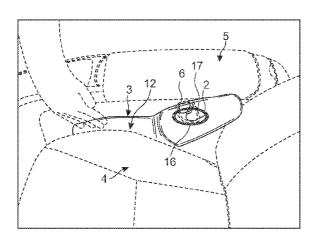
\* cited by examiner

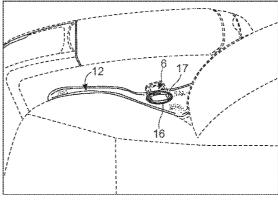
Primary Examiner — Nathan J Newhouse Assistant Examiner — Peter Helvey (74) Attorney, Agent, or Firm — Cislo & Thomas, LLP

#### ABSTRACT

An apparatus for obstructing gaps present between front seats and dividing consoles of automobiles comprising an elongated member, having a pliable, malleable character, that can accommodate a wide range of automobile makes and models.

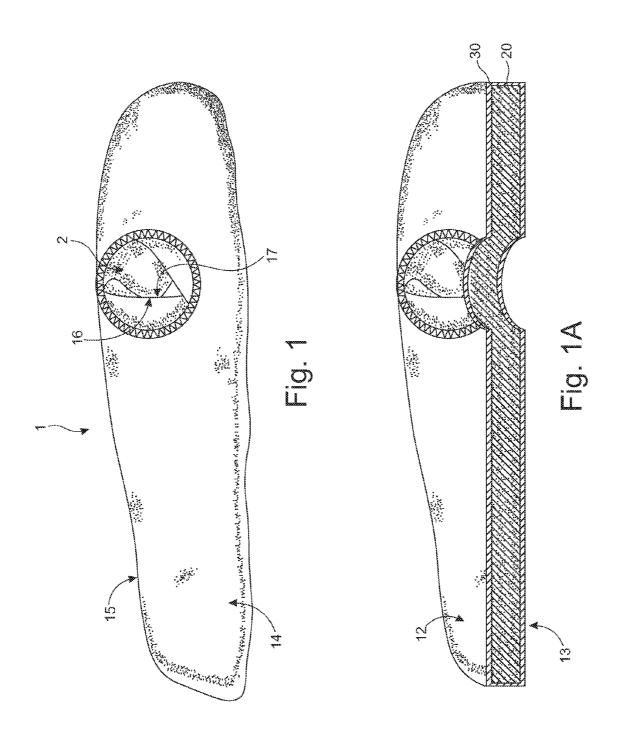
#### 18 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets





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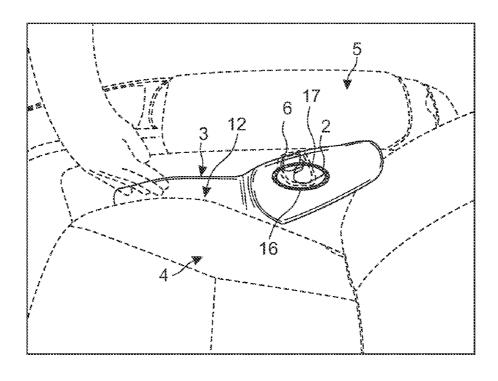


Fig. 2

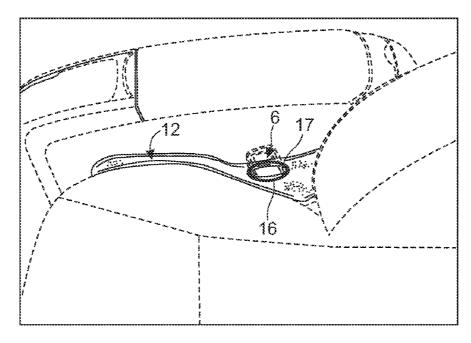
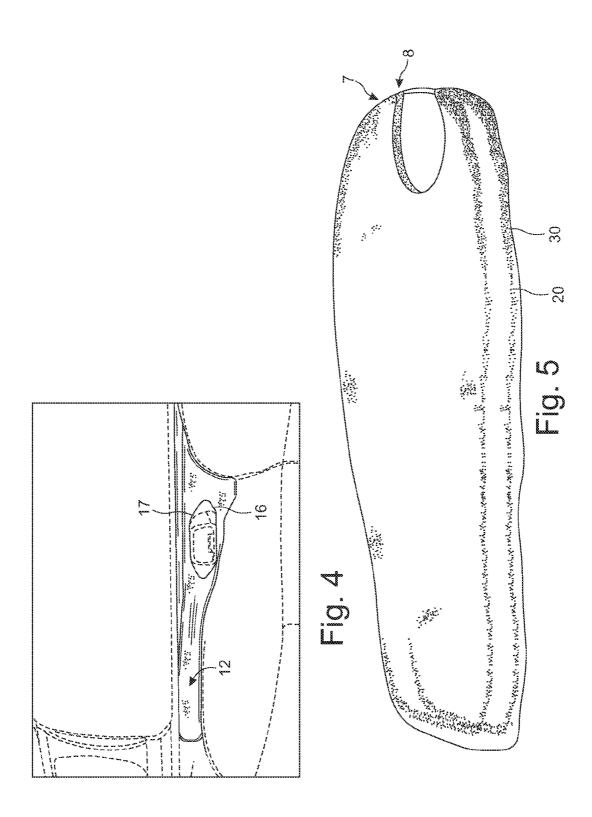


Fig. 3

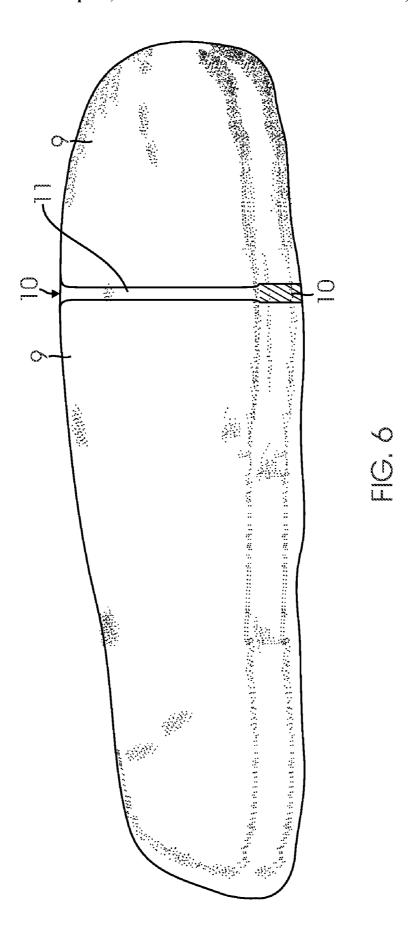
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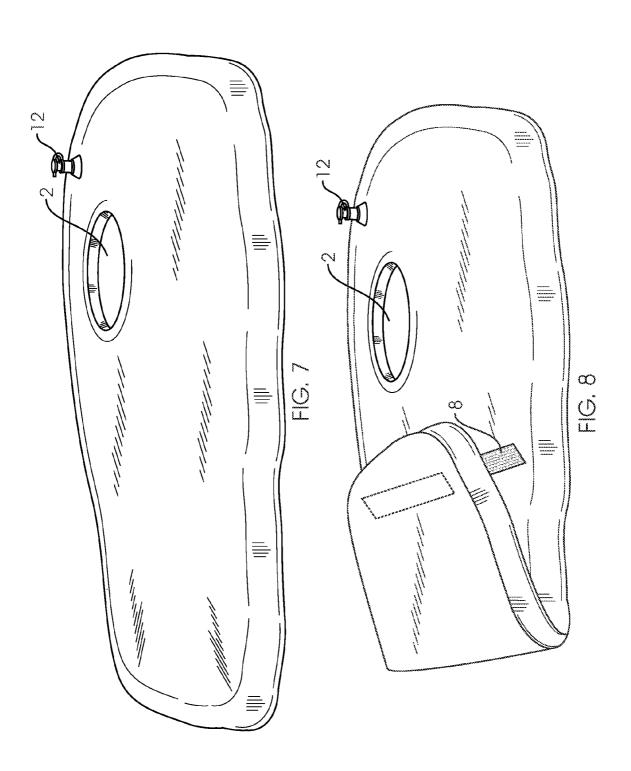
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#### US 8,267,291 B2

# 1 APPARATUS FOR CLOSING GAPS

# BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to an adaptable apparatus intended for obstructing gaps. In the preferred embodiment of the invention, the apparatus is used in the automobile setting. The apparatus is intended to prevent the entry of objects into gaps that are typically present between front seats of automobiles and dividing consoles.

It is common practice for drivers to perform multiple tasks, while driving. Drivers may talk on the phone, use mobile devices, operate GPS devices, eat, drink, and/or apply cosmetics while simultaneously operating a motor vehicle. While this practice poses obvious safety hazards, it is frequently done and is unlikely to discontinue, as more people are forced to spend increasing amounts of time in their automobiles.

It is also typical that while performing such extraneous tasks while operating a vehicle, objects related to such tasks will become dislodged from a driver's grasp, pocket, purse, etc. and fall into gaps or crevices located between front seats and dividing consoles. Such gaps lead to hard to reach areas 25 located beneath or to the side of the front seats. Often times, drivers will attempt to retrieve such fallen items while driving, posing an even greater safety threat to themselves and others around them. The present invention minimizes this safety hazard by closing off any such openings or crevices, so 30 that items cannot enter said gaps, and remain in easy reach.

The present invention also benefits users when their automobile is stationary, as it is not uncommon for individuals to drop keys or other valuable items into said gaps while a vehicle is parked. It can be irritating to retrieve valuables from such locations, especially when an individual has an appointment or is hurried. Such enclosed spaces in most automobiles are constricted and front seat components located beneath or by the side of front seats are often coated with lubricants and grease. Thus, contact with such components often soils an individual's hands, arms, or clothing while attempting to retrieve objects in areas beneath or side of front seats.

The prior art addressing the above problems is limited and possesses many shortcomings. U.S. Pat. No. 4,948,195 (hereinafter referred to as the "'195 patent") teaches an apparatus 45 for closing gaps between front seats and consoles. The apparatus possesses an accordion-like configuration, intended to address various widths between adjacent front seats present in automobiles.

The '195 patent requires that the apparatus be constructed 50 from plastic or cardboard. The rigid nature of the materials do not allow for the apparatus to form a snug fit between front seats and a console and cannot be securely held in position.

In addition, the apparatus taught by the '195 patent does not account for armrests that are often present between front 55 seats, and cannot be used in automobiles that include front seat armrests. Because current automobile designs typically include front seat armrests placed above dividing consoles, the apparatus taught by the '195 patent cannot be practiced with most current automobile models.

Furthermore, the apparatus does not provide for openings for safety belt components. In order to practice the '195 apparatus, safety belt components must either be obstructed, or areas surrounding safety belt components must be exposed in order to fasten safety belts. Exposing areas surrounding 65 safety belt components will result in gaps around said areas, defeating the purpose of the '195 apparatus.

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Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to provide an apparatus to increase driver safety and minimize driver distraction.

It is an additional object of the present invention to teach an apparatus that can accommodate a wide variety of automobile types and models.

It is a further object of the present invention to teach an apparatus that can be manufactured inexpensively.

It is another object of the present invention to teach an apparatus that can be easily and quickly practiced.

It is also an object of the present invention to teach an apparatus that can be used in a variety of settings and situations where it is desirable to block or obstruct gaps or openings.

The present invention fulfills all of the above objects and satisfies shortcomings of the prior art. The apparatus comprises a pliable, flexible elongated member that may be used to obstruct gaps in a wide variety of automobile makes and models. Practice of the present invention allows for increased driver safety and reduced driver distraction by preventing the need to retrieve lost objects in hard to reach areas while driving.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 shows a perspective view of the preferred embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 1A shows a cross section of the preferred embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 2 shows a perspective view of the installation of the apparatus within the setting of an automobile.

FIG. 3 shows a perspective view of the apparatus installed in a vehicle

FIG. 4 shows a planar view of the apparatus installed in a vehicle.

FIG. 5 shows a perspective view of a first alternative embodiment of the apparatus.

FIG. 6 shows a second alternative embodiment of the apparatus.

FIG. 7 shows a third alternative embodiment of the apparents.

FIG. 8 shows the third alternative embodiment of the apparatus in compressed form.

# DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Reference will now be made in detail to the preferred embodiment of the invention, examples of which are illustrated in the accompanying drawings. Wherever possible, the same reference numbers will be used throughout the illustration to refer to the same or like parts.

FIG. 1 shows a perspective view of the present invention. The invention comprises an elongated member 1 having a pliable, malleable nature. The elongated member 1 is defined by defined by a top 12, a bottom 13 opposite the top 12, a first outer wall 14, and a second outer wall 15 opposite the first outer wall 14. In the preferred embodiment, the dimensions of the apparatus approximate 18 inches in length by 4 inches in width. A slot 2 having a longitudinal length is provided toward an end region of the apparatus and defined by inner wall 16, 17. The end region 22 is the portion of the elongated member 1 adjacent to the slot 2 extending toward the back end 24 that abuts or is adjacent to the back portion of a car seat.

FIG. 1A shows a cross section of the preferred embodiment of the present invention; the apparatus comprises an internal, fiberfill of polyester or organic material 20 and an external, nylon, spandex, neoprene, or organic material casing 30. The

#### US 8,267,291 B2

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casing may be provided in a dark color. Other materials that may be employed as the core include wool, cotton, polysterene beads, polymer gels, foam core or other pliable, supple materials. Suitable casing materials may include rayon, silk, canvas, cotton, polyester, burlap, hemp, neoprene or any other material capable of withstanding frequent manipulation and handling.

The fiberfill material employed in the preferred embodiment may be compressed with applied pressure, enabling the user to reduce the area of the apparatus for insertion in tight crevices. When applied pressure is removed, the internal material will expand towards its original dimensions, effectively sealing off areas between front seats and dividing consoles having smaller proportions than the width of the apparatus in its fully expanded state.

FIG. 2 shows a user inserting the apparatus in a gap 3 located between a lap area of a front driver seat 4 and a dividing console/armrest 5. The pliable nature of the apparatus allows it to accommodate a wide range of automobile configurations and sizes. For installation, a user simply places the apparatus in an orientation so that the slot 2 overlaps a safety belt receiving component 6 of the vehicle. Once the slot is aligned in the correct location, the user pushes the apparatus between the space for which obstruction is desired, and slides the safety belt receiving component 6 through the slot 25

FIG. 3 shows the apparatus installed in a vehicle. In the preferred embodiment of the invention, the casing has a dark color. Once installed, the dark color of the preferred embodiment of the apparatus allows for a discreet and camouflaged appearance due to the natural tendency of such areas to be obstructed by shadows and/or dimly lit. The slot 2 allows for the user to fasten and unfasten his safety belt, as the receiving component 6 of the safety belt is completely unhindered by the apparatus.

Attachment of the apparatus to the receiving component of the safety belt via the slot also allows for the user to fully adjust and move the position of the seat back and forth without having to remove or re-position the apparatus. Since most receiving components of safety belts are joined to front seats, 40 movement in the position of a front seat results in movement of the receiving component of the safety belt.

FIG. 4 provides an additional view of the apparatus installed. The pliable nature of the apparatus allows it to fill gaps in a variety of automobile make and models. The properties of the fiberfill contained within the apparatus allows it to be compressed and inserted in gaps having smaller widths than the dimensions of the apparatus, then expand back outwards towards its original dimensions, securely closing off any gaps or crevices. The apparatus extends much of the 50 length of the front seat, completely blocking access to hard to reach areas.

# ALTERNATIVE EMBODIMENTS OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

FIG. 5 depicts a first alternative embodiment wherein the materials comprising the casing 30 and core 20 are identical to those of the preferred embodiment. A terminus of the apparatus is modified however, and instead of being closed, 60 the terminus is open-ended. The open-ended terminus forms a pronged terminus 7. Attached to each end of the prong are securing means 8 such as a hook and loop fastener (such as VELCRO®), snaps, buttons, elastic, or buckles to secure the prongs around the safety belt component. Installation is conducted in the same manner as the preferred embodiment, with the pronged terminus being positioned around a receiving

component of a safety belt. When the pronged terminus surrounds the receiving component of the safety belt, the securing means located on the terminus are used to secure the apparatus around the safety belt component.

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FIG. 6 depicts a second alternative embodiment wherein the apparatus is comprised of two elongated units 9 that are joined through flexible means 10 such as elastic. Each of the units comprises a casing and a core. The two units are constructed from the same materials for the core and casing as the preferred embodiment. Installation is accomplished by pulling said units in opposite directions, resulting in the formation of an opening 11. The resulting opening may then be placed around the receiving component of a safety belt. When the units are no longer pulled in an opposite direction, the size of the opening is reduced, allowing for a snug fit around the receiving component of the safety belt.

FIG. 7 depicts a third alternative embodiment of the present invention. In the alternative embodiment, the casing is constructed from a non-porous material such as inflatable plastic sheeting and air is used as the core material. A slot 2 is provided on the third alternative embodiment for attachment to a receiving component of a safety belt. The user may inflate the apparatus through a valve 12 and adjust pressure levels to accommodate the intended space where obstruction is desired. Installation of the third alternative embodiment is accomplished by inflating the apparatus to the desired pressure level, inserting the slot around the receiving component of the safety belt, and sliding the apparatus into position until the gap is obstructed.

FIG. 8 shows the alternative embodiment of FIG. 7 in a compact form. The length of the apparatus may be adjusted by folding the terminus remote from the slot 13. The adjusted terminus may be secured in its folded position through hook and loop fastener or other securing means 8. The alternative embodiment of the present invention allows for additional adaptability and accommodation of additional automobile configurations, makes, and models. By folding the length of the apparatus and fastening it, less inflation of the apparatus is necessary, saving installation time and avoiding unnecessary and unsightly protrusions from the apparatus.

With respect to the above description, it is to be realized that the optimum dimensional relationships for the parts of the invention, to include variations in size, materials, shape, form, function, manner, color, and use are deemed readily apparent and obvious to one skilled in the art, and all equivalent relationships to those illustrated in the drawings and described in the specification are intended to be encompassed by the present invention.

In addition, accessory features may be incorporated within the apparatus such as specialized pockets intended for storage of popular items such as MP3 players, cellular devices, or coin storage. Furthermore, a hook and loop fastener may be provided on the apparatus as well as the side of the car seat so that the apparatus is tightly attached to a front seat when said hook and loop fastener is aligned. All of these modifications may be provided on the present description as described in this specification and still remain within the spirit and scope of the present invention.

Therefore, the foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly, all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, while still falling within the spirit and scope of the invention.

#### US 8,267,291 B2

What is claimed:

1. An apparatus for obstructing gaps positioned proximate a car seat in an automobile comprising:

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- a. an elongated member having a casing and a core, the core being enclosed within the casing, the core having a pli being enclosed within the casing, the core having a pli-
- b. a slot provided toward an end region, the slot having a longitudinal length, the slot extending through the elongated member and being encircled by the core and casing of the elongated member, and wherein the slot provides engagement to a safety belt receiving component when properly positioned adjacent the car seat to permit the elongated member to slide along a central console during longitudinal motion of the car seat, wherein the end region is longer than the longitudinal length of the
- 2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slot consists essentially of one wall.
- **3**. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the slot consists 20 essentially of two walls.
- **4**. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the slot is generally oval in shape when engaged with the safety belt receiving component.
- 5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the slot has an open 25 configuration when engaged with the safety belt receiving component and a partially closed configuration when disengaged from the safety belt receiving component.
- 6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the core comprises a material selected from the group consisting of fiberfill, foam, 30 polystyrene beads, wool, cotton, polyester, organic material, and polymer gels.
- 7. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the casing comprises a material selected from the group consisting of rayon, nylon, spandex, polyester, silk, canvas, burlap, cotton, neoprene, 35 organic material, or hemp.
- **8**. An apparatus adapted to be disposed in an automotive vehicle between a seat and a central console of the automotive vehicle, comprising:
  - a. an elongated member including a casing having a top, a
     bottom, and a pair of opposed first and second sides, the
     casing enclosing a core, the first side adapted to abut the
     seat and the second side adapted to abut the central
     console, the elongated member configured to slide along
     the central console during longitudinal motion of the 45
     seat; and
  - b. a slot encircled by the casing and the core, and extending between the bottom and top of the elongated member in a generally vertical attitude normal to both the bottom and the top and aligned longitudinally when placed in 50 the vehicle and adapted to receive a seatbelt component having one end anchored to a side of the seat, wherein the slot provides engagement to the seatbelt component when properly positioned adjacent the car seat to permit

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- the elongated member to slide along the central console during longitudinal motion of the seat, wherein the slot is generally oval in shape when engaged with the seatbelt component.
- 9. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the slot consists essentially of one wall.
- 10. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the slot consists essentially of two walls.
- 11. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the slot has an open configuration when engaged with the safety belt and a partially closed configuration when disengaged from the seatbelt component.
- 12. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the core comprises a material selected from the group consisting of fiberfill, foam, polystyrene beads, wool, cotton, polyester, organic material, and polymer gels.
- 13. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the casing comprises rayon, nylon, spandex, polyester, silk, canvas, burlap, cotton, neoprene, organic material, or hemp.
- 14. An apparatus for use in an automotive vehicle having a central console extending alongside a seat, comprising:
  - a. an elongated member including a casing of a first material enclosing a core of a second material having a first portion adapted to be pressed against the central console positioned adjacent to the seat, and a second portion adapted to be pressed against the seat when the elongated member is positioned in a gap defined between the central console and the seat; and
  - b. a slot extending through the casing and the core of the elongated member, and adapted to receive a safety belt receiving component having a first end coupled to the seat and a second free end, wherein the slot is configured to allow the free end of the safety belt receiving component to pass through the slot and wherein the slot is conformable around the safety belt receiving component, and wherein the slot provides engagement to the safety belt receiving component when properly positioned adjacent to the seat, wherein the slot has an open configuration when engaged with the safety belt receiving component and a partially closed configuration when disengaged from the safety belt receiving component.
- 15. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the slot consists essentially of one wall.
- **16**. The apparatus of claim **14**, wherein the slot consists essentially of two walls.
- 17. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the core comprises a material selected from the group consisting of fiberfill, foam, polystyrene beads, wool, cotton, polyester, organic material, and polymer gels.
- **18**. The apparatus of claim **14**, wherein the casing comprises rayon, nylon, spandex, polyester, silk, canvas, burlap, cotton, neoprene, organic material, or hemp.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

## **CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION**

PATENT NO. : 8,267,291 B2 Page 1 of 1

APPLICATION NO. : 11/749354

DATED : September 18, 2012 INVENTOR(S) : Jeffrey Simon et al.

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent is hereby corrected as shown below:

On the Title page, one of the inventor's names has been misspelled. Therefore, "(76) Jeffrey Simon, Los Angeles, CA (US); Mark Newburger, Los Angeles, CA (US)", should read

-- (76) Jeffrey Simon, Los Angeles, CA (US); Marc Newburger, Los Angeles, CA (US) --

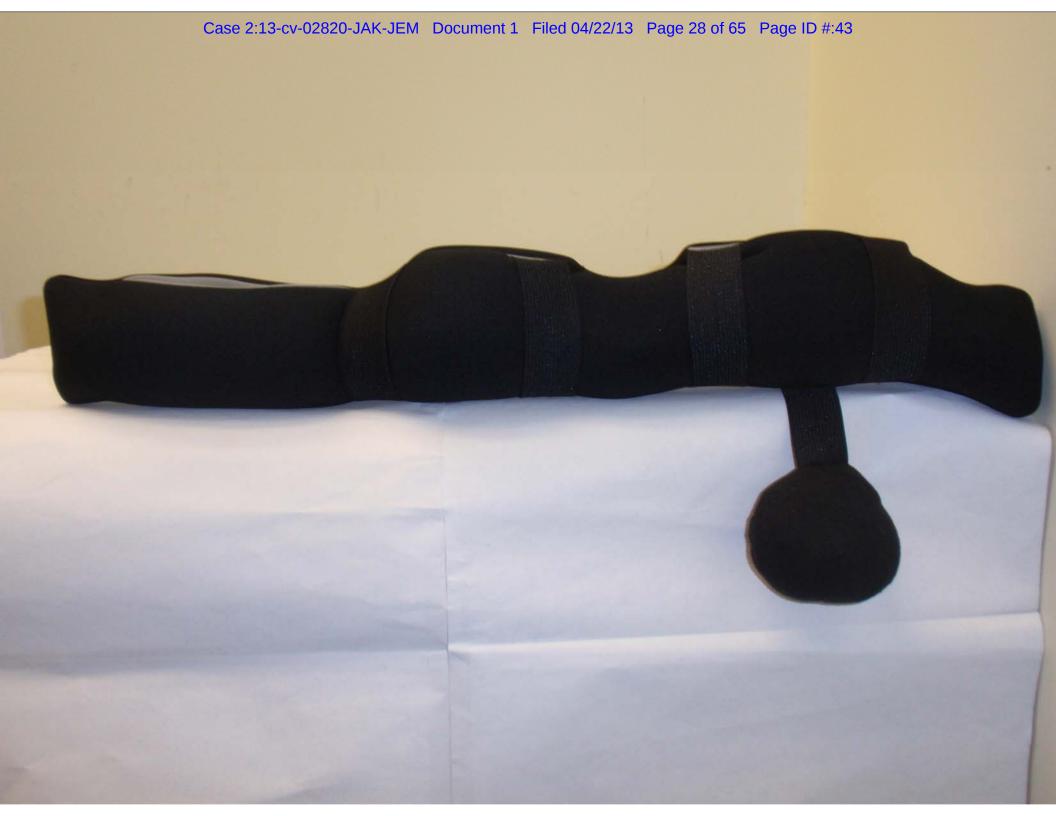
> Signed and Sealed this Fourth Day of December, 2012

> > David J. Kappos

Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office

# **EXHIBIT C**





# EXHIBIT D



Case 2:13-cv-02820-JAK-JEM Document 1 Filed 04/22/13 Page 31 of 65 Page ID #:46







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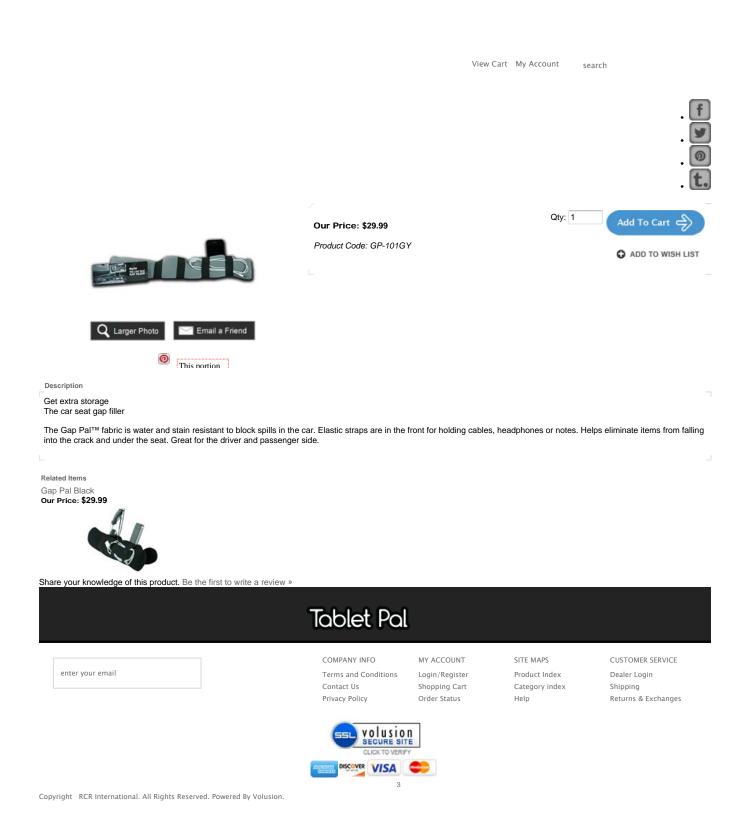
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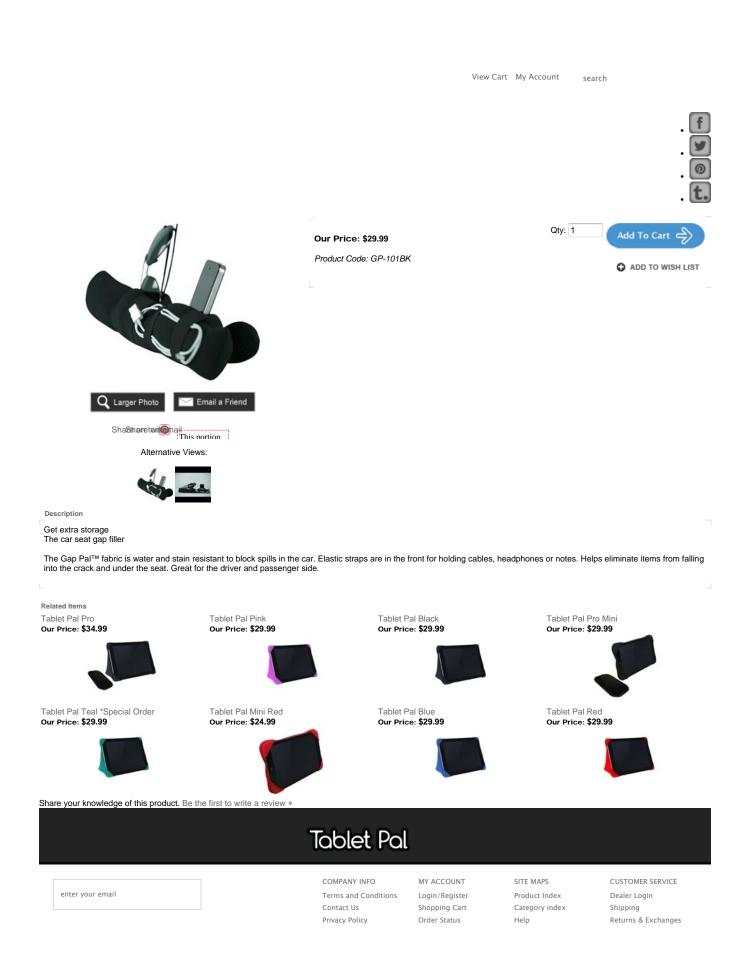
Case 2:13-cv-02820-JAK-JEM Document 1 Filed 04/22/13 Page 32 of 65 Page ID #:47



http://www.tabletpals.com/product\_p/gp-101gy.htm

Gap Pal Black Page 1 of 2

Case 2:13-cv-02820-JAK-JEM Document 1 Filed 04/22/13 Page 33 of 65 Page ID #:48



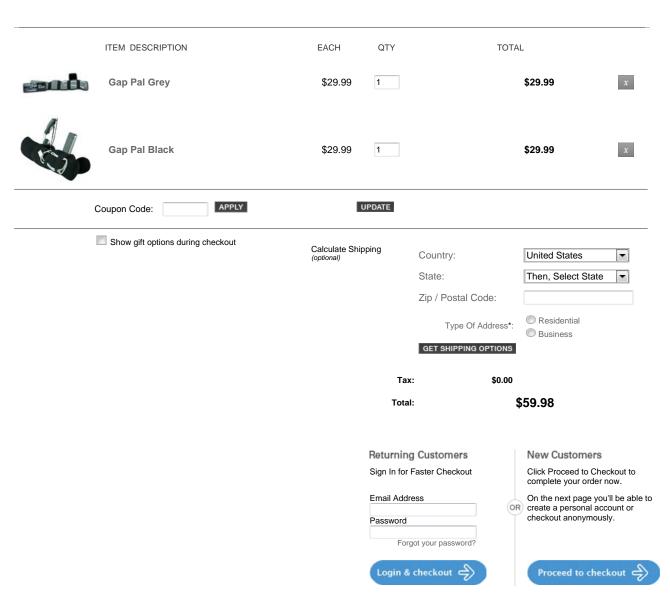
Case 2:13-cv-02820-JAK-JEM Document 1 Filed 04/22/13 Page 34 of 65 Page ID #:49

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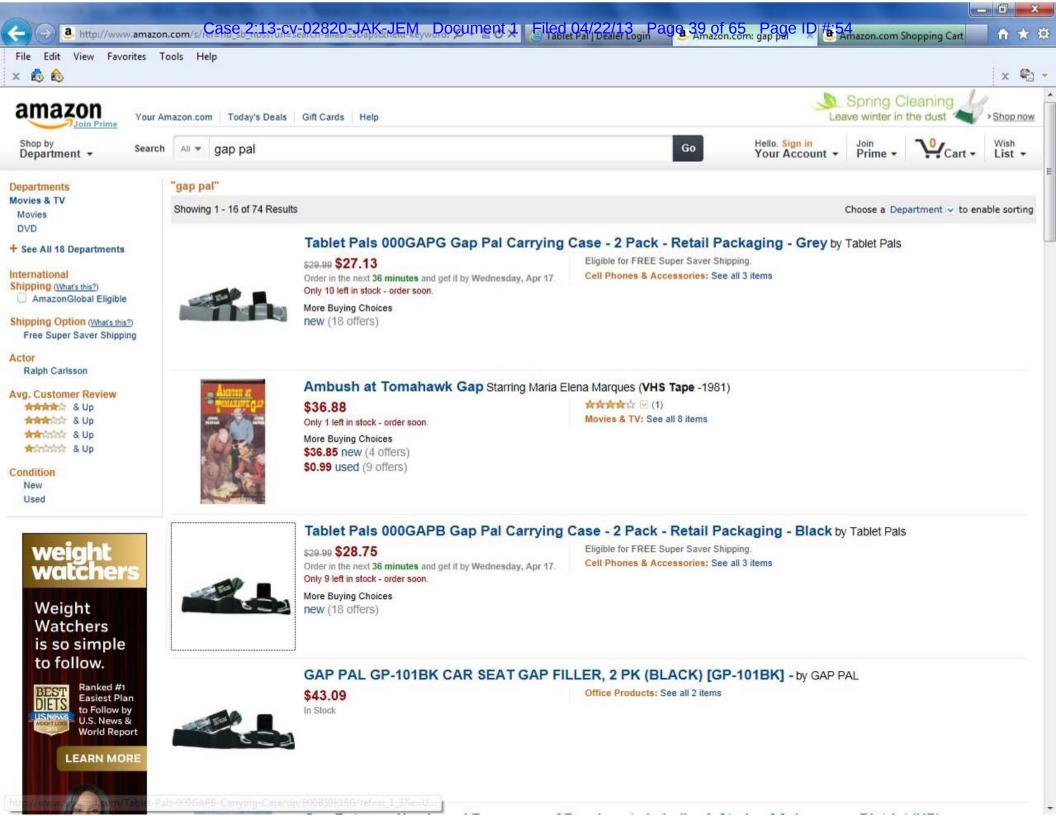
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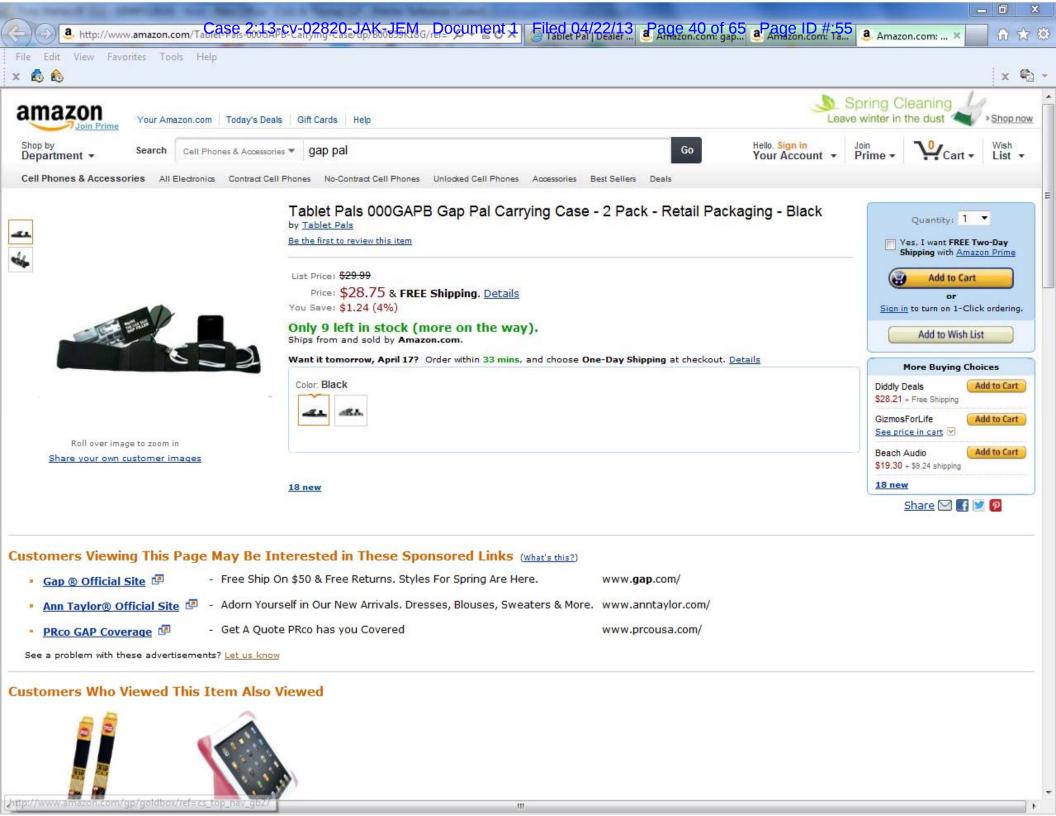
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| Last Name*:             |                            |                            | Gap Pal Black   | 1          | \$29.99  |
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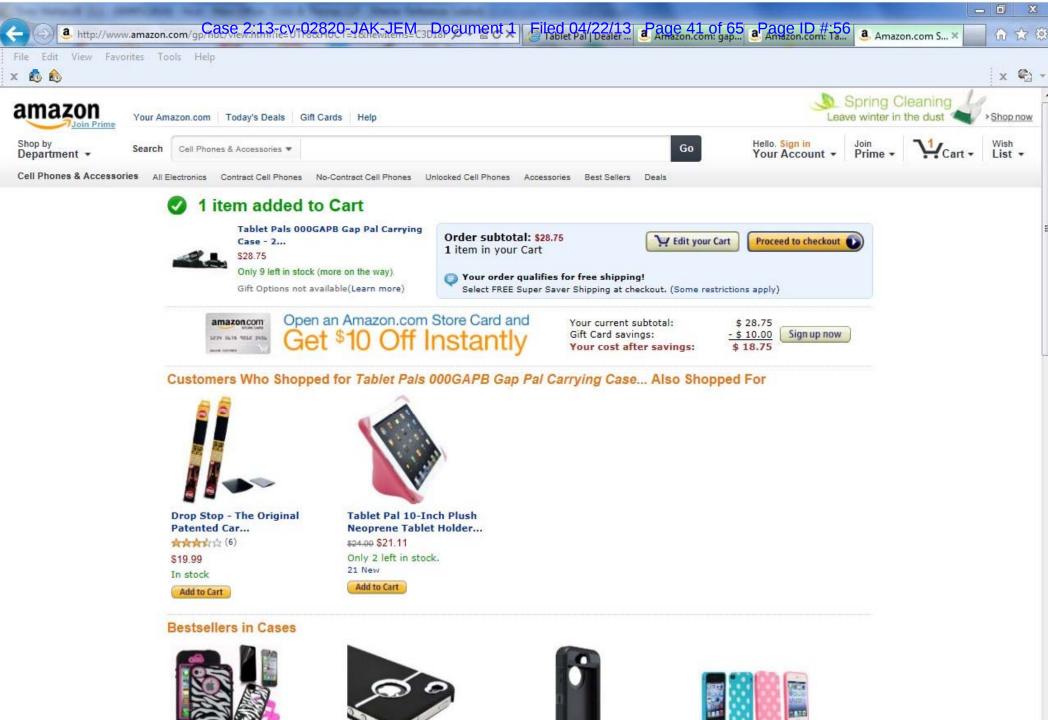
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## **EXHIBIT** E









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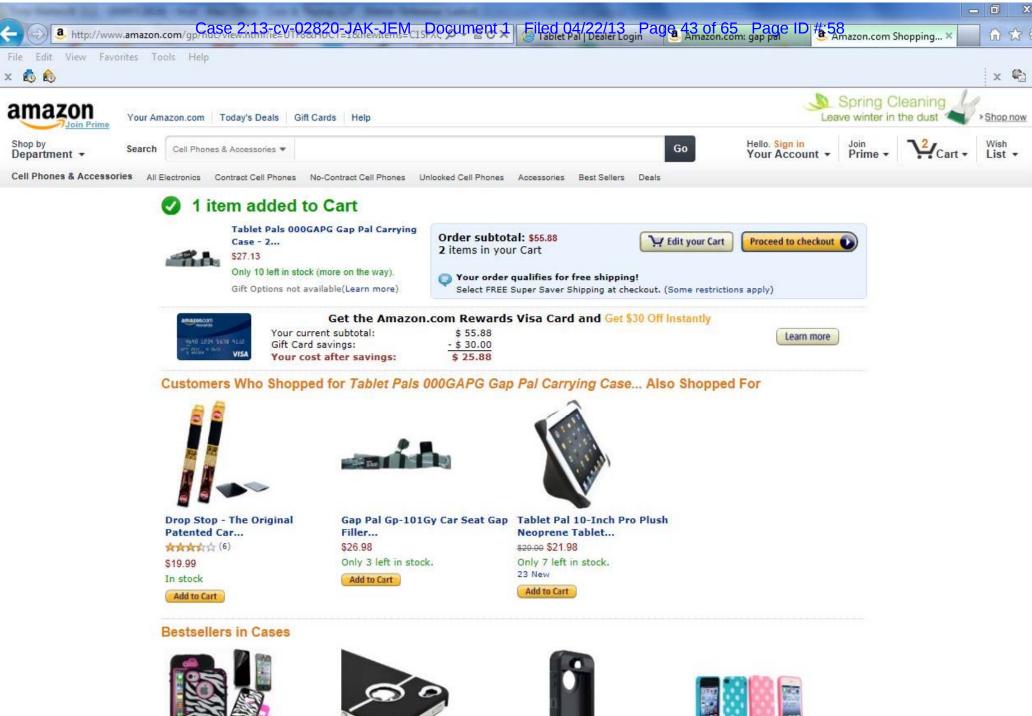
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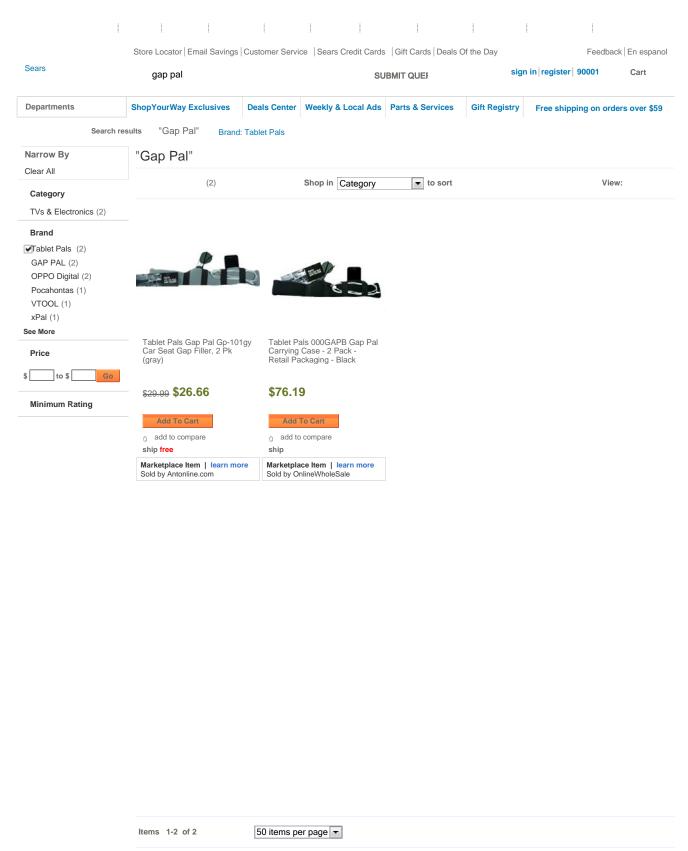
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### **EXHIBIT F**

Case 2:13-cv-02820-JAK-JEM Document 1 Filed 04/22/13 Page 45 of 65 Page ID #:60



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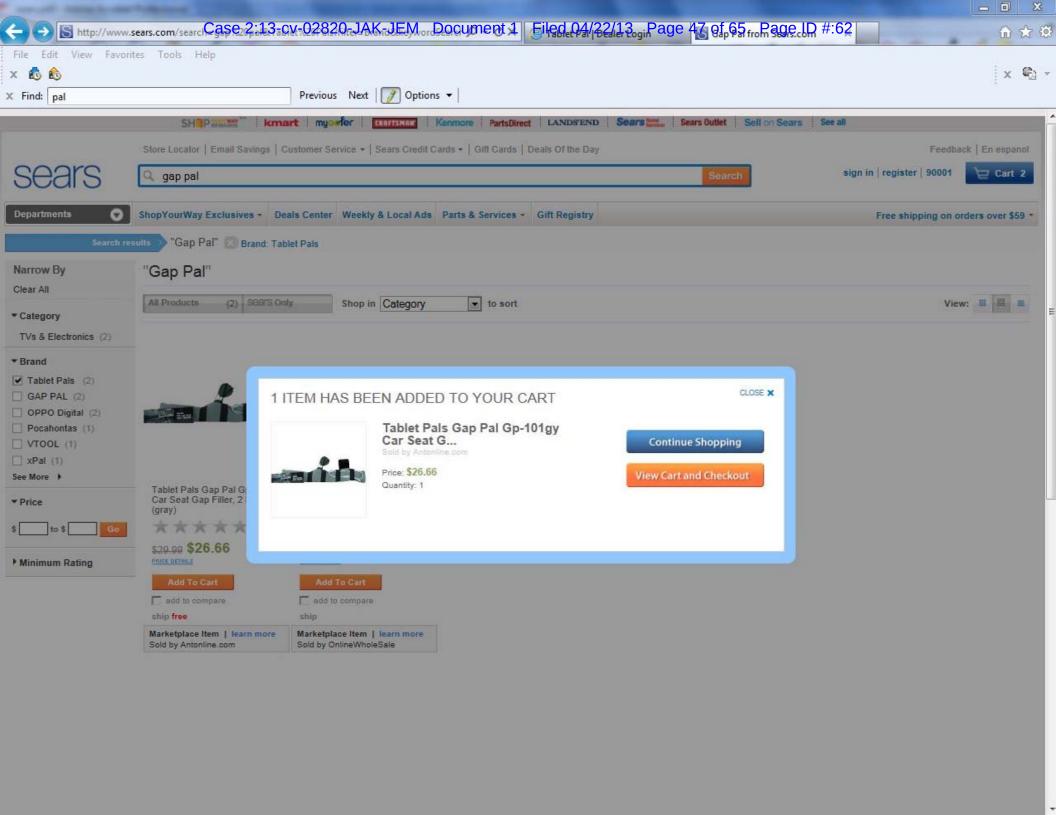
Case 2:13-cv-02820-JAK-JEM Document 1 Filed 04/22/13 Page 46 of 65 Page ID #:61



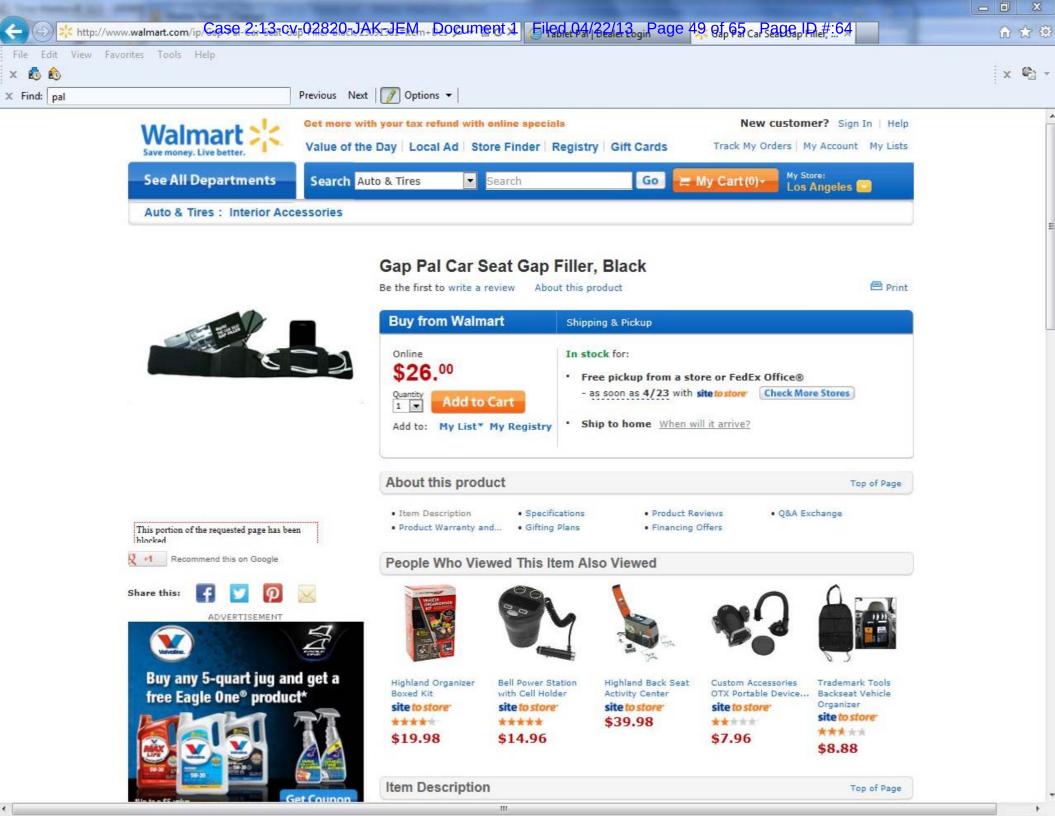
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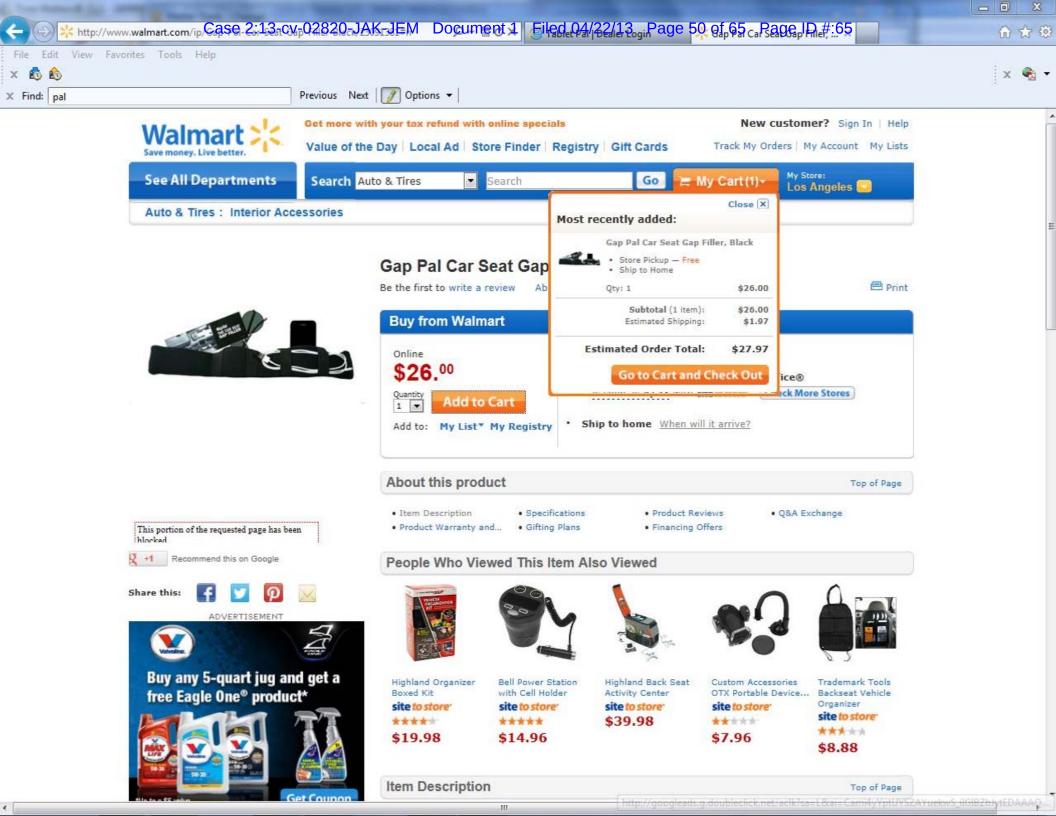
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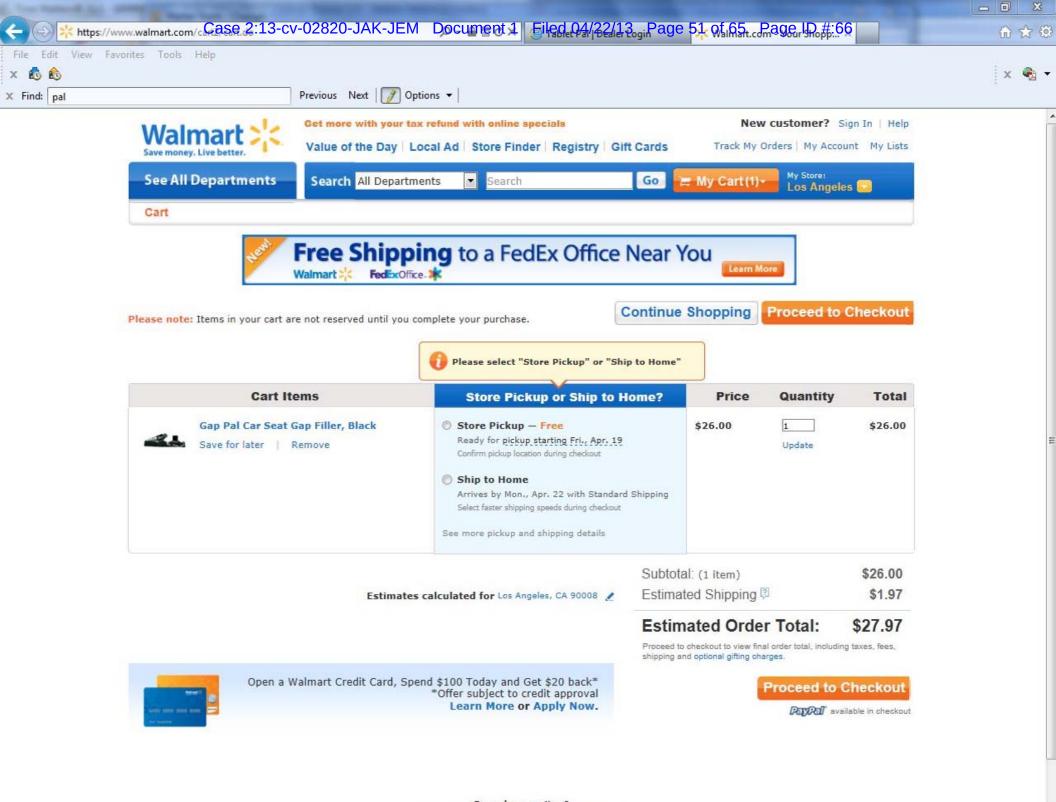
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# EXHIBIT G







# EXHIBIT H

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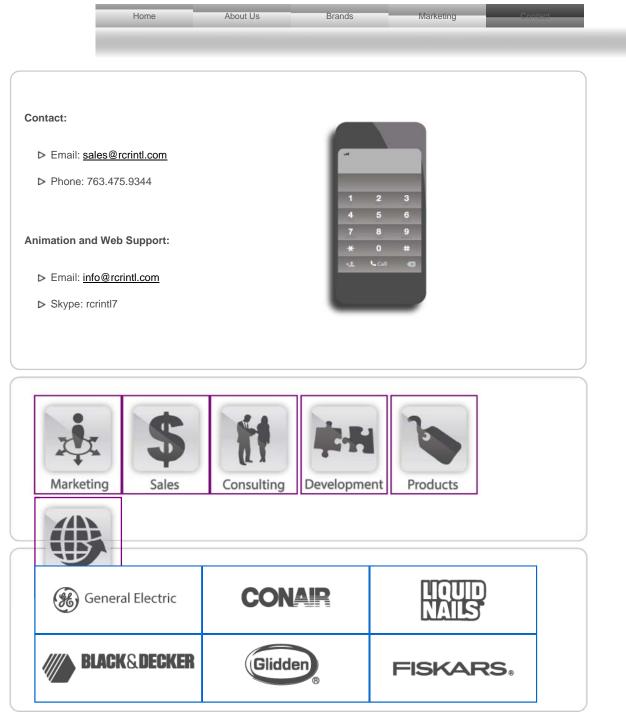
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### EXHIBIT I



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# EXHIBIT J

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Registrant: RCR International

17300 19th Avenue North Plymouth, Minnesota 55447 United States

Last Updated on: 28-Jan-13

Administrative Contact: Hultgren, Philip philiphultgren7@gmail.com RCR International 17300 19th Avenue North Plymouth, Minnesota 55447 United States (612) 810-0364

Technical Contact: Hultgren, Philip philiphultgren7@gmail.com RCR International 17300 19th Avenue North Plymouth, Minnesota 55447 United States (612) 810-0364

Domain servers in listed order: NS1.VOLUSION.COM NS2.VOLUSION.COM NS3.VOLUSION.COM NS4.VOLUSION.COM

Registry Status: clientDeleteProhibited Registry Status: clientRenewProhibited Registry Status: clientTransferProhibited Registry Status: clientUpdateProhibited

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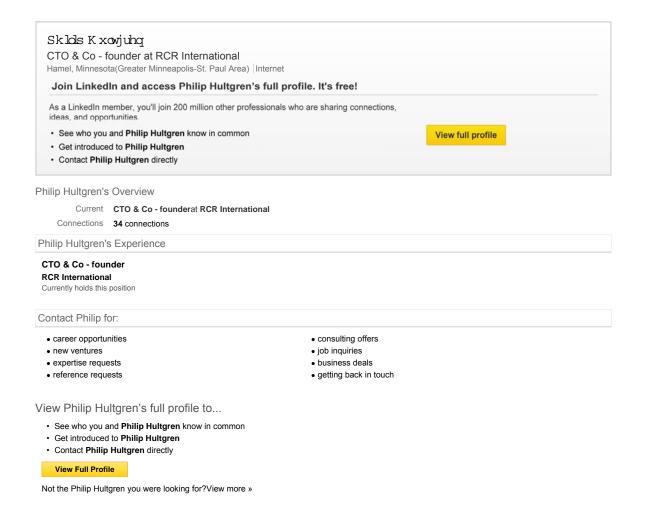
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### NOTICE OF ASSIGNMENT TO UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE FOR DISCOVERY

This case has been assigned to District Judge Percy Anderson and the assigned discovery Magistrate Judge is John E. McDermott.

The case number on all documents filed with the Court should read as follows:

CV13- 2820 PA (JEMx)

Pursuant to General Order 05-07 of the United States District Court for the Central District of California, the Magistrate Judge has been designated to hear discovery related motions.

All discovery related motions should be noticed on the calendar of the Magistrate Judge

| <br> | <br><b>-</b> | <br>:====== |  |
|------|--------------|-------------|--|
| <br> | <br>         |             |  |
|      |              |             |  |

#### NOTICE TO COUNSEL

A copy of this notice must be served with the summons and complaint on all defendants (if a removal action is filed, a copy of this notice must be served on all plaintiffs).

Subsequent documents must be filed at the following location:

| IJ | Western Division           | r 1 | S |
|----|----------------------------|-----|---|
|    | 312 N. Spring St., Rm. G-8 |     | 4 |
|    | Los Angeles, CA 90012      |     | S |

Southern Division
411 West Fourth St., Rm. 1-053
Santa Ana, CA 92701-4516

| Eastern Division              |
|-------------------------------|
| <br>3470 Twelfth St., Rm. 134 |
| Riverside, CA 92501           |

Failure to file at the proper location will result in your documents being returned to you.

Daniel M. Cislo, Esq.
C. Wook Pak, Esq.
Cislo & Thomas LLP
1333 2nd Street, Suite 500
Santa Monica, CA 90401-4110
Ph: 310-451-0647 Fx: 310-394-4477

### UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

| CENTRAL DISTRIC   | CT OF CALIFORNIA  |
|---|---|
| JEFFREY SIMON, an individual, and MARC<br>NEWBURGER, an individual,   | CASE NUMBER   |
| PLAINTIFF(S) v. RCR INTERNATIONAL, INC., a Minnesota  | V13-02820 PATRALE)  |
| corporation, and TABLET PAL, a Minnesota corporation, PHILIP HULTGREN, an individual d/b/a RCR International,  DEFENDANT(S).  | SUMMONS   |
| TO: DEFENDANT(S):   |   |
| must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached  □ counterclaim □ cross-claim or a motion under Rule 1 or motion must be served on the plaintiff's attorney, Cis 1333 2nd Street, Suite 500, Santa Monica, CA 90401-4 | 2 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer slo & Thomas LLP , whose address is 110 . If you fail to do so, |
| judgment by default will be entered against you for the ryour answer or motion with the court.  | relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file  |
| APR 2 2 2013  | Clerk, U.S. District Court  |
| Dated:  | By: Deputy Clerk  |
|   | (Seal of the Court)   |

[Use 60 days if the defendant is the United States or a United States agency, or is an officer or employee of the United States. Allowed 60 days by Rule 12(a)(3)].

CV-01A (12/07) SUMMONS

# Case 2:13-cv-02820-JAK-JEM Document 1 Filed 04/22/13 Page 64 of 65 Page ID #:79 UNITED STATES DISTRICTOR SHEET PROPERTY OF CALIFORNIA CIVIL COVER SHEET

|  | t if you are representing yourself □<br>dividual, and MARC NEWBURGE  |  |  | INC., a Minnesota corpora<br>d PHILIP HULTGREN, an   |   |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| yourself, provide same.)  Daniel M. Cislo (SBN 125,  | dress and Telephone Number. If your state of the state of | CISLO &  | Attorneys (If Known)   |  |   |
| II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION  | N (Place an X in one box only.)  | I  | SHIP OF PRINCIPAL PART X in one box for plaintiff and o  | _  | Only  |
| ☐ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff  | Citizen of This  |  | DEF  Incorporated or F  of Business in the   |  |   |
| ☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant  | t □ 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizer of Parties in Item III)  | nship Citizen of Ano   | ther State $\Box$ 2  | ☐ 2 Incorporated and of Business in A  | Principal Place □ 5 □ 5 nother State  |
|  |  | Citizen or Sub   | ject of a Foreign Country   3  | ☐ 3 Foreign Nation   | □6 □6   |
| IV. ORIGIN (Place an X in one 10 Original 2 Remove Proceeding State Co   | ed from 3 Remanded from E  | ☐ 4 Reinstated or ☐ Reopened   | 5 Transferred from another dis   | Distr  |   |
| V. REQUESTED IN COMPLA   | AINT: JURY DEMAND: 🗹 Y   | es 🗆 No (Check 'Ye   | es' only if demanded in complai  | nt.)   |   |
| CLASS ACTION under F.R.C.  | .P. 23; □ Yes 🗹 No   | ₽.   | MONEY DEMANDED IN C  | OMPLAINT: \$_According   | g to proof at trial   |
| •  | e the U.S. Civil Statute under which<br>d design patent infringement   | h you are filing and w   | rite a brief statement of cause.   | Do not cite jurisdictional st  | itutes unless diversity.)   |
| VII, NATURE OF SUIT (Place   | e an X in one box only.)   |  |  |  |   |
| □ 410 Antitrust □ 430 Banks and Banking □ 450 Commerce/ICC Rates/etc. □ 460 Deportation □ 470 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations □ 480 Consumer Credit □ 490 Cable/Sat TV □ 810 Selective Service □ 850 Securities/Commodities/ Exchange □ 875 Customer Challenge 12 USC 3410 □ 890 Other Statutory Actions □ 891 Agricultural Act □ 892 Economic Stabilization Act □ 893 Environmental Matters □ 894 Energy Allocation Act □ 895 Freedom of Info. Act | □ 130 Miller Act □ 140 Negotiable Instrument □ 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment □ 151 Medicare Act □ 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loan (Excl. Veterans) □ 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits □ 160 Stockholders' Suits □ 190 Other Contract □ 195 Contract Product Liability □ 196 Franchise ■ REAL PROPERTY □ 210 Land Condemnation □ 220 Foreclosure □ 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment □ 240 Torts to Land □ 245 Tort Product Liability  | PERSONAL INJUR    310 Airplane Productiability     320 Assault, Libel Slander     330 Fed. Employer Liability     340 Marine     345 Marine Product Liability     350 Motor Vehicle Product Liabil     360 Other Persona Injury     362 Personal Injury     363 Personal Injury     364 Asbestos Personal Injury     365 Personal Injury     366 Asbestos Personal Injury     367 Personal Injury     368 Asbestos Personal Injury     369 Asbestos Personal Injury     400 Aspect     401 Aspect     402 Aspect     403 Aspect     404 Aspect     405 Other Injury     406 Other Injury     407 Actions     408 Aspect     409 Aspect     400 Aspect     401 Aspect     402 Aspect     403 Aspect     403 Aspect     404 Aspect     405 Aspect     407 Aspect     408 Aspect     409 Aspect     400 Aspect     401 Aspect     402 Aspect     403 Aspect     404 Aspect     405 Aspect     406 Aspect     407 Aspect     408 Aspect     409 Aspect     409 Aspect     409 Aspect     409 Aspect     409 Aspect     409 Aspect     400 Aspect     400 Aspect     400 Aspect     400 Aspect     400 Aspect     401 Aspect     402 Aspect     403 Aspect     404 Aspect     405 Aspect     406 Aspect     407 Aspect     408 Aspect     409 Aspect     409 Aspect     400 Aspect     401 Aspect     402 Aspect     403 Aspect     404 Aspect     405 Aspect     406 Aspect     407 Aspect     408 Aspect     409 Aspect     400 Aspect     401 Aspect     400 Aspect     400 Aspect     400 Aspect     40 | PROPERTY    370 Other Fraud   371 Truth in Lending   380 Other Personal   Property Damage   Product Liability   BANKRUPTCY     422 Appeal 28 USC   158 | □ 530 General □ 535 Death Penalty □ 540 Mandamus/ Other □ 550 Civil Rights □ 555 Prison Condition ■ FORFEITURE/ □ FENALITY □ 610 Agriculture | LABOR  ☐ 710 Fair Labor Standards Act ☐ 720 Labor/Mgmt. Relations ☐ 730 Labor/Mgmt. Reporting & Disclosure Act ☐ 740 Railway Labor Act ☐ 790 Other Labor Litigation ☐ 791 Empl. Ret. Inc. Security Act ☐ PROPERTY RIGHTS ☐ 820 Copyrights ☐ 830 Patent ☐ 840 Trademark ☐ 861 HIA (1395ff) ☐ 862 Black Lung (923) ☐ 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) ☐ 864 SSID Title XVI ☐ 865 RSI (405(g)) ☐ PEDBRAL TAX SUITS ☐ 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant) ☐ 871 IRS-Third Party 26 USC 7609 |
|  |  | 3-06   | COCU   |  |   |
| FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:   | Case Number:   |  |  |  |   |

AFTER COMPLETING THE FRONT SIDE OF FORM CY-71, COMPLETE THE INFORMATION REQUESTED BELOW.

CIVIL COVER SHEET CV-71 (05/08)

Page 1 of 2

### 

### UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT, CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA CIVIL COVER SHEET

| VIII(a). IDENTICAL CASES: Has<br>If yes, list case number(s):             | this action been pr  | eviously filed in this court and dismissed, remanded or closed? 🗹 No 🖂 Yes   |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| VIII(b). RELATED CASES: Have If yes, list case number(s):                 | any cases been pre   | eviously filed in this court that are related to the present case? 🗹 No 🗆 Yes  |  |  |
| □ B. (  | Arise from the sam<br>Call for determinat<br>For other reasons w   | se and the present case:  c or closely related transactions, happenings, or events; or  on of the same or substantially related or similar questions of law and fact; or  ould entail substantial duplication of labor if heard by different judges; or  atent, trademark or copyright, and one of the factors identified above in a, b or c also is present.                      |  |  |
| IX. VENUE: (When completing the   | following informat   | ion, use an additional sheet if necessary.)  |  |  |
| (a) List the County in this District; (☐ Check here if the government, it | California County of agencies or emplo   | outside of this District; State if other than California; or Foreign Country, in which <b>EACH</b> named plaintiff resides.  Outside of this District; State if other than California; or Foreign Country, in which <b>EACH</b> named plaintiff resides.   |  |  |
| County in this District:*   |  | California County outside of this District; State, if other than California, or Foreign Country  |  |  |
| Los Angeles   | 1  |  |  |  |
|   |  | utside of this District; State if other than California; or Foreign Country, in which EACH named defendant resides. syees is a named defendant. If this box is checked, go to item (c).  |  |  |
| County in this District:*   |  | California County outside of this District; State, if other than California; or Foreign Country  |  |  |
|   |  | Minnesota  |  |  |
| Note: In land condemnation ca<br>County in this District:*                |  | utside of this District; State if other than California; or Foreign Country, in which EACH claim arose.  on of the tract of land involved.  California County outside of this District; State, if other than California; or Foreign Country  |  |  |
| Los Angeles   |  |  |  |  |
| * Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernar<br>Note: In land condemnation cases, us |  | entura, Santa Barbara, or San Luis Obispo Counties<br>tract of land involved   |  |  |
| X. SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY (  | OR PRO PER):   | 1- M Date April 22, 2013   |  |  |
| or other papers as required by law  | . This form, appro-  | ivil Cover Sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings yed by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required pursuant to Local Rule 3-1 is not filed of statistics, venue and initiating the civil docket sheet. (For more detailed instructions, see separate instructions sheet.) |  |  |
| Key to Statistical codes relating to So                                   | cial Security Cases  |  |  |  |
| Nature of Suit Code   | Abbreviation   | Substantive Statement of Cause of Action   |  |  |
| 861   | НІА  | All claims for health insurance benefits (Medicare) under Title 18, Part A, of the Social Security Act, as amended. Also, include claims by hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, etc., for certification as providers of services under the program. (42 U.S.C. 1935FF(b))   |  |  |
| 862   | BL   | All claims for "Black Lung" benefits under Title 4, Part B, of the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1 (30 U.S.C. 923)  |  |  |
| 863   | DIWC   | All claims filed by insured workers for disability insurance benefits under Title 2 of the Social Security Act, as amended; plus all claims filed for child's insurance benefits based on disability. (42 U.S.C. 405(g))   |  |  |
| 863   | DIWW   | All claims filed for widows or widowers insurance benefits based on disability under Title 2 of the Social Security Act, as amended. (42 U.S.C. 405(g))  |  |  |
| 864   | 864 SSID All claims for supplemental security income payments based upon disability filed under Title 16 of the Social Sec<br>Act, as amended. |  |  |  |

865

RSI

All claims for retirement (old age) and survivors benefits under Title 2 of the Social Security Act, as amended. (42 U.S.C.(g))