

Re: WTF patents

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.electronics.design/2006-01/msg02431.html>

- *From:* "Walter Harley" <walterh@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Thu, 12 Jan 2006 22:22:57 -0800
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"Ian Bell" <ruffrecords@xxxxxxxx> wrote in message
[news:dq6avr\\$3vk\\$3@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:dq6avr$3vk$3@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

> [...]

- > If you read it carefully you will see he is patenting the specific case
- > where with one connector plugged in you get the battery working the
- > electronics and producing and output signal and where with different
- > connector plugged in you get power routed to the battery to charge it.

How do you get that? Seems to me that he's trying to patent a whole variety of things, including the case you mention but also the case where the connector carries signal and power at the same time. But I'm not sure I know how to read patents; are the claims supposed to be ORed or ANDed? (That is, does each claim stand on its own, or does the patent only cover the case where all the claims apply at once? I've been assuming the former.)

- > That is a very specific and hence narrowly applicable patent made worse by
- > the fact it applies only to musical instruments.
- >
- > Quite a neat idea. Has possibly been done before but it definitely is NOT
- > the same as phantom power.

I agree; phantom power is smarter. I don't see where there's any ingenuity at all in the idea of feeding power through the same connector as signal, either at alternate times or at the same time. My bicycle light's rechargeable SLA battery does it, for instance. So does my iPod. If some lawyer wants to articulate to me the difference between an iPod and an electric guitar, I'll be amused.

One of the things that confuses me about patents is that it seems that even if an idea is obvious in general, it is possible to patent a specific instance of it. Like, the idea of using rechargeable energy sources to power things-in-general is not new; but he seems to be trying to patent the idea of using rechargeable energy sources to power musical instruments.

- *Follow-Ups:*

- ◆ *Re: WTF patents*

- ◇ *From:* Paul Hovnanian P.E.

- ◆ *Re: WTF patents*

- ◇ *From:* Ian Bell

- *References:*

- ◆ *WTF patents*

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