

Apple and Qualcomm Kiss and Make Up

Written by Frederick Douglas
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The legal battle over patent licensing going on between Apple and Qualcomm since January 2017 comes to a close, as the two companies drop all litigation in favour of a 6-year license agreement and a "multi-year" supply of wireless chips.



The two companies do not reveal what brought the sudden end to the bitter feud, especially since yet another round of court litigation had just started earlier this week. It is probable both Apple and Qualcomm simply tired of spending on corporate and legal maneuvering, as until now neither of the two budged on their position on iPhone patent royalties.

In case anyone needs a refresher on the hows and whys of the legal battle, Apple was accusing Qualcomm of double-dipping on patent royalties, charging both when Apple licenses the patent portfolio and again after selling the actual chips. In turn, Qualcomm insisted such an licensing approach is valid, and went so far so as to threaten the block of iPhone X sales. Qualcomm had even beaten Apple in a number of patent infringement cases in Germany and China.

While the two companies can now rest easy, the news is less good for Apple's previous cellular modem provider-- Intel. Bloomberg suggests Chipzilla was finding it difficult to fulfill a 2020 deadline for 5G modems, potentially leading to Apple either having to depend on an unfamiliar supplier (such as Huawei) or outright failing to launch an appropriately capable iPhone at the cusp of the 5G era. Thus, it might be too surprising to learn that Intel has announced an end to the production of smartphone modems in favour of concentrating 5G efforts on "network infrastructure and other data-centric opportunities."

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