

LARRY PAGE FEIGNS AMNESIA IN THE FACE OF RELENTLESS ORACLE INTERROGATION



Business software maker Oracle Corp had accused Google of building its Android software, by stealing parts of technology from Java, a programming platform, which is owned by Oracle. Oracle had filed a lawsuit, seeking damages to the tune of hundreds of millions and royalties for future use of Android. Android software is responsible for powering more than 300 million smart phones and tablet computers worldwide. In this high-stakes trial Google CEO Page took the witness stand again on Wednesday, after a brief round of questioning on Tuesday. However, he often looked perplexed and confused as, David Bois, a lawyer, renowned for his persistent doggedness and famous for his grilling of Microsoft CEO Bill Gates in an antitrust lawsuit filed by the US government in 1990s, assailed him with one uncomfortable question after another. During the questioning, he preferred not to look Bois in the face and claimed ignorance of seeing the internal Google documents, upon which Oracle largely depends for a favourable decision. Page's continued denials of seeing the documents was clearly well-planned, for it seemed to work in Google's favour and managed to frustrate the usually unflappable Bois. US District Judge William Alsup, denied Bois permission, to display exhibits containing inside information about Google, because Page said that he did not remember seeing them. Clearly Page's memory lapses were designed by his lawyers, who knew that it would prevent secret contents from being publicly exposed in the courtroom. Although, uncertainty prevailed about what Oracle wanted to expose, it is felt that the evidence included disclosures about how much money Google has made from the Android software since its inception, 4 years ago. Bois during his interrogation was trying to prove, that Google had realized way back in 2005, that the company would probably have to pay a licensing fee to use parts of Java and they devised a deal to buy Silicon Valley start-up, that gave birth to Android and then attempted to build Android in a partnership with Sun Microsystems, the company that then owned Java. Oracle, proved to be a spanner in their works, when they purchased Sun Microsystems for \$7.3 million. Page later told one of his company's lawyers, "We really wanted to use Sun's technology. It would have saved us a lot of time and trouble to use Sun's technology. When we weren't able to have our business partnership, we went down our own path." Oracle's case revolves around Oracle's case revolves around whether Android infringes on 37 copyrights for "application programming interfaces." Google however, contends that the Java APIs aren't covered under U.S. copyright law because they aren't a form of creative expression. Page left the courtroom with a smile on his face, but fear still haunting him that, since the case could last for 10 weeks or more, he may called again to testify – given today experience, a prospect he certainly does not look forward to.