

Qualcomm buys Palm patents from Hewlett-Packard (Update)

January 23 2014

Cell-phone chip maker Qualcomm Inc. said Thursday it has acquired patents once owned by smartphone maker Palm Inc. from Hewlett-Packard for an undisclosed amount.

Qualcomm says the purchase covers 1,400 U.S. patents and about 1,000 more foreign patents for the company's mobile computing technology.

Hewlett-Packard Co. paid \$1 billion for Palm in 2010 as part of its first foray into tablet computers and smartphones, which ran on Palm's operating system. The effort flopped and HP now sells tablets using Google Inc.'s Android and a recently introduced version of Microsoft Corp.'s Windows. Palo Alto, California-based HP hasn't re-entered the smartphone market.

The Palm acquisition was one of three major purchases that have haunted HP, along with technology consulting service EDS and business software maker Autonomy. In November of 2012, Hewlett took an \$8.8 billion writedown on the Autonomy acquisition, saying it was the victim of a multibillion-dollar fraud at the hands of the British company. Autonomy's former CEO said HP's allegations were false.

HP last year sold Palm's mobile operating system, webOS, to LG Electronics, which now implants the software in Internet-connected TVs.

Qualcomm didn't elaborate on its plans for the Palm patent portfolio. Big tech companies in recent years have been looking to expand their

patent portfolios to help introduce new technology and protect themselves from lawsuits.

The San Diego company last year introduced a smartwatch called Toq to showcase the potential wearable devices that can connect to the Internet.

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