

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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BEFORE THE PATENT TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

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OSRAM SYLVANIA INC.,  
Petitioner,

v.

JAM STRAIT, INC.,  
Patent Owner.

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Case IPR2014-00703  
Patent 6,786,625 B2

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Before BART A. GERSTENBLITH, MIRIAM L. QUINN, and  
JEFFREY W. ABRAHAM, *Administrative Patent Judges*.

QUINN, *Administrative Patent Judge*.

FINAL WRITTEN DECISION  
35 U.S.C. § 318(a) and 37 C.F.R. § 42.73

## I. INTRODUCTION

Osram Sylvania Incorporated<sup>1</sup> filed a Petition to institute an *inter partes* review of claims 30 and 31 of U.S. Patent No. 6,786,625 B2 (“the ’625 patent”) pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 311–19. Paper 5 (“Petition” or “Pet.”). We instituted trial (Paper 10, “Dec. on Inst.”) on the following grounds:

- a) Obviousness of claims 30 and 31 over Laforest;<sup>2</sup>
- b) Obviousness of claims 30 and 31 over Alvarez;<sup>3</sup> and
- c) Obviousness of claims 30 and 31 over Horowitz.<sup>4</sup>

Jam Strait, Inc.<sup>5</sup> filed a Patent Owner Response addressing the above-referenced grounds. Paper 13 (“PO Resp.”). Patent Owner relies on a Declaration of Mr. Bruce Wesson to support the rebuttal to Petitioner’s challenges of unpatentability. Ex. 2001 (“Bruce Decl.”).

Petitioner filed a Reply to Patent Owner’s Response. Paper 15 (“Pet. Reply”). An oral hearing was held on June 18, 2015, as scheduled, and a transcript of that hearing has been entered into the record. Paper 23 (“Tr.”).

The Board has jurisdiction under 35 U.S.C. § 6(c). Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 318(a), this decision is “a final written decision with respect to the patentability of any patent claim challenged by the petitioner.”

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<sup>1</sup> Hereinafter referred to as “Petitioner.”

<sup>2</sup> French Patent Application Pub. No. 2 576 719 to Laforest, et al. (Ex. 1017). A certified translation of this reference was provided as Exhibit 1018. Therefore, hereinafter, all references to “Laforest” are with respect to the translation, Exhibit 1018.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Patent No. 6,252,350 B1 (Ex. 1020) (“Alvarez”).

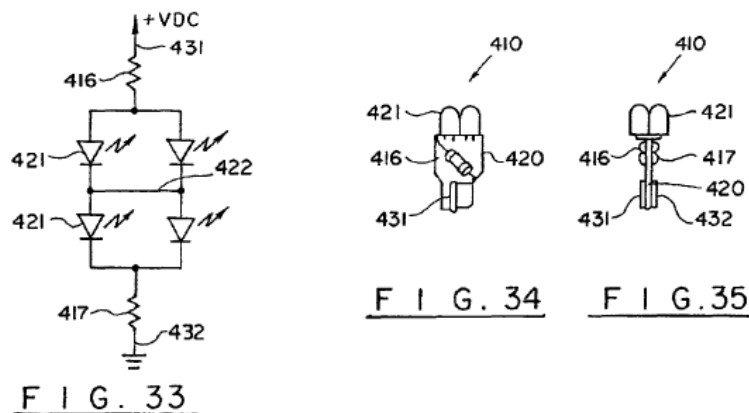
<sup>4</sup> U.S. Patent No. 6,357,902 B1 (Ex. 1021) (“Horowitz”).

<sup>5</sup> Hereinafter referred to as “Patent Owner.”

Petitioner has demonstrated by a preponderance of the evidence that claims 30 and 31 of the '625 patent are unpatentable.

A. THE '625 PATENT (EX. 1001)

The '625 patent, titled "LED LIGHT MODULE FOR VEHICLES," issued on September 7, 2004. LED is an acronym for Light Emitting Diode. *See* Ex. 1001, Abstract. The '625 patent describes an LED lamp module for use in a vehicle's tail, brake, or turn signal lamp fixtures. *Id.* at 1:28–33. "LED bulbs designed to replace vehicle incandescent bulbs require bases similar to the standard bayonet or the wedge bases." *Id.* at 1:54–56. A mini-wedge bulb is described with reference to Figures 33, 34, and 35, for example, reproduced below.



Figures 33, 34, and 35 of the '625 patent, reproduced above, illustrate bulb 410 including four LEDs 421 in a "2x2" array mounted on a printed circuit board (PCB). *Id.* at 14:6–9. "Resistors 416 and 417 limit current through and voltage drop across the LEDs to acceptable levels for the ratings of the LEDs 421." *Id.* at 14:12–14. The '625 patent further describes that the mini-wedge LED bulb can replace any 3-digit automotive bulb. *Id.* at 14:28–30. One example provided of a mini-wedge LED bulb that can replace standard 3-digit incandescent light bulbs is the LED bulb identified

by the part number “194-XX.” *Id.* at 24:37–41, 49–67 (Table). As for shape, the ’625 patent states that the outline of PCB 420 (shown in Figures 34–35 above), is “preferably approximately the same as the smaller 3[-]digit incandescent bulbs such as 194.” *Id.* at 14:36–37.

Claim 30 is an independent claim, and claim 31 depends from claim 30. Illustrative claim 30 is reproduced below:

30. An LED light bulb adapted for use in standard automotive mini wedge type bulb sockets comprising:
- a bulb body comprising a printed circuit board having a front side, a rear side, and an upper side; at least one light emitting diode mounted on the upper side of the printed circuit board and electrically coupled with the printed circuit board; and
  - electrical control means mounted on the printed circuit board electrically connected between the printed circuit board and at least one pair of electrical conductors.

## II. ANALYSIS

This case presents at least two issues. The first issue is whether the LED lamps disclosed in the asserted references teach or suggest “[a]n LED light bulb *adapted for use in standard automotive mini wedge type bulb sockets.*” (Emphasis added.) A second issue involves whether the prior art teaches or suggests a resistor that is “mounted on” a printed circuit board as required by claim 30.

### A. CLAIM INTERPRETATION

The Board interprets claims using the “broadest reasonable construction in light of the specification of the patent in which [they] appear[.]” 37 C.F.R. § 42.100(b). We presume that claim terms have their ordinary and customary meaning. *See In re Translogic Tech., Inc.*, 504 F.3d

1249, 1257 (Fed. Cir. 2007) (“The ordinary and customary meaning is the meaning that the term would have to a person of ordinary skill in the art in question.”) (internal citation and quotation marks omitted). An inventor, however, also may act as his or her own lexicographer and give a claim term a special meaning. Even where, as here, no such lexicographic definition is presented, it is appropriate, nevertheless, to rely on the written description for guidance in determining claim meaning. *See id.* Indeed, the construction that stays true to the claim language and most naturally aligns with the inventor’s description is likely to be the correct construction. *Renishaw PLC v. Marposs Societa’ per Azioni*, 158 F.3d 1243, 1250 (Fed. Cir. 1998).

The claims have been given their ordinary meaning as would be understood by a person of ordinary skill in the art in light of the ’625 patent. We address that meaning for three terms: the preamble of claim 30, “electrical control means,” and “mounted on the printed circuit board.”

*1. Preamble of Claim 30: “An LED light bulb adapted for use in standard automotive mini wedge type bulb sockets”*

In our Decision on Institution, the Board determined that the preamble of claim 30 is a claim limitation. “A claim’s preamble may limit the claim when the claim drafter uses the preamble to define the subject matter of the claim.” *August Tech. Corp. v. Camtek, Ltd.*, 655 F.3d 1278, 1284 (Fed. Cir. 2011). The preamble is generally construed to be limiting if it “recites essential structure or steps, or if it is necessary to give life, meaning, and vitality to the claim.” *NTP, Inc. v. Research In Motion, Ltd.*, 418 F.3d 1282, 1305 (Fed. Cir. 2005) (quoting *Catalina Mktg. Int’l, Inc. v. Coolsavings.com, Inc.*, 289 F.3d 801, 808 (Fed. Cir. 2002)). For example, where the specification underscores structure recited in the preamble as

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