

By: April 2008 Botezatu, Hardware Editor

## [Seagate Starts Calling SSD Manufacturers To Court](#)

### *SSD manufacturers refuse to license Seagate technology*

Storage expert Seagate is reportedly gearing up for a huge court battle with almost any solid-state drive manufacturer on the market. As previously reported, Seagate's CEO, Bill Watkins, said that he was not impressed with the performance boost achieved by using SSDs inside notebooks, and [would ultimately sue its competitors](#) if their sales start to grow. Seagate is finally decided to move the SSD dispute to court, as it has filled its first lawsuit against STEC's solid-state drive line of products. According to the lawsuit, Seagate claims that STEC has been abusing four of its protected patents, that cover technologies related to error correction, memory-backup systems, and storage interfaces with computers. Seagate claims that the company tried to solve the issue by offering STEC a licensing deal, but the company refused it. "They have blatantly decided they don't have to," said STEC's vice-president of marketing and business development Patrick Wilkison. "Now is the time to start enforcing our patents." On the other side, STEC claims that there have been no talks related to licensing, and Seagate just took the case to the court. According to Wilkison, Seagate might be threatened by the currently available SSD products, "It's not a big financial issue yet because the market is just taking off," Watkins told the New York Times. "But that's why we want to set things straight now," he continued. STEC is just the starting point for a series of lawsuits Seagate is expected to fill against the other SSD manufacturers. The SSD industry is in a continuous development, and market analysis firm iSuppli estimates that the solid-state storage market has scored just \$19M during 2007, but it is expected to grow to \$8.7 billion by 2012. "This is not about stifling innovation or threats to our business," Seagate's Watkins continued. "We have an obligation to our company and our shareholders to protect what belongs to them," he concluded.