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Canon accused of copier monopoly

By Nancy Dunne in Washington

AUNYX Corporation, a small privately owned Massachusetts company, has gone to a US federal court and the International Trade Commission to battle the giant Canon Japan and Canon USA for a share in the \$1bn copier-toner business.

In cases announced on Tuesday, Aunyx spokesmen said Canon now had a monopoly of sales of those compatible with its copier machines, and it had, through a variety of unfair trade practices, sought to prevent Aunyx from selling its own toner for Canon copiers.

Canon Japan manufactures various copier machines which it distributes along with toner through its subsidiary Canon USA. In the US, only Canon and Aunyx market a toner which can be used in Canon copiers.

Mr Bart Fisher, a Washington D.C. attorney representing Aunyx, said the US has over the last decade been witnessing the Japanese domination of the US copier and toner market.

He charged Canon with "a persistent and complicated pattern of exclusionary acts" claiming that it had advised its dealers not to buy Aunyx-manufactured toner, blocked Aunyx's supply of raw materials and parts, and interfered with Aunyx's relations with its customers.

Canon, he said, has become a "loose cannon in the world of copiers."

The company has asked the ITC to issue an exclusion order to prevent Canon from importing toners to the US and a cease and desist order to prevent the unfair practices.