

EC Lays Charges CD, DVD Drive "Cartel"

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The European Commission (EC) antitrust watchdog serves charges to 13 optical disc drive makers in the European Economic Area (EEA) for allegedly forming a global price-fixing cartel, breaching of EU laws.



The charges accuse the unnamed companies of illegally co-ordinating bids on CD and DVD drives with at least 2 major PC OEMs for the past 5 years, price rigging the EC describes as as "one of the most serious breaches of EU antitrust rules."

Should it find the accused companies guilty the Commission has the power to impose fines worth up to 10% of turnover.

Philip has immunity in the EU investigation, being the first company offering evidence of potential wrongdoing.

This probe into optical disc drive sales is not the first-- US authorities charged a Hitachi-LG joint venture for alleged price fixing.

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