

Taiwan's AUO to appeal over US price-fixing fine

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Taiwan's AU Optronics said Friday it would appeal against a US court decision to fine it \$500 million for taking part in what prosecutors called the "most serious price-fixing" case in US history.

A US district court judge imposed the fine—which matches the largest imposed for violating US [antitrust laws](#)—and sentenced two former executives, including a one-time president, to three years jail.

"The company regrets the ruling and intends to file an appeal," Taiwan's largest [LCD maker](#) said in a statement, responding to the fine, imposed for rigging prices of displays for smartphones, computers and other gadgets.

"We hope that the court handling the appeal can clarify some crucial unresolved legal issues in this case and that it can provide a basis for other international corporations accused of violating US anti-trust laws."

AUO added that it will book a \$223 million additional provision for the price-fixing case in the third quarter of 2012 in accordance with relevant accounting rules even though the verdict is not final.

A trial in San Francisco ended in March with a jury convicting the company and executives Hsuan Ben Chen and Hui Hsiung of taking part in a scheme to rig prices of [thin film transistor](#) liquid crystal display panels from late 2001 to December in 2006. The men were also each fined \$200,000.

Prosecutors told the court it was the "most serious price-fixing" case in US history and urged [District Court Judge](#) Susan Illston Thursday to hit the firm with an unprecedented billion-dollar fine and jail both men for a decade.

"We believe a \$500 million fine is unable to deter the kind of conduct we see here," Department of Justice antitrust division trial attorney Heather Tewksbury argued during the sentencing hearing.

Officials said the \$500 million fine matches the largest fine imposed against a company for violating the US antitrust laws.

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