

Electrolux settles 'theft' claim

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Electrolux has paid out \$30m (£16.85m) to a man who claimed the company had stolen his design for a vacuum cleaner. John North, filed a lawsuit against the manufacturer in a Texas court in 2002. He had sought \$100m as well as punitive damages from the Swedish firm based on sales of three million of the upright, bagless cleaner. The company settled out of court to avoid "the uncertainty of a jury decision" but said it believed Mr North's claim had no merit.

Mr North's lawsuit reportedly claimed he had held a series of meetings with Electrolux where he presented his idea. The Stockholm-based manufacturer later released a cleaner that used a similar concept without his knowledge, he alleged. The case went to trial in Texas in April, and was still underway when Electrolux decided to make the multi-million dollar settlement.

In return for the money, Mr North has agreed to drop all claims, including future claims against the Stockholm manufacturer in the matter.