

# GUI DESIGN: AN ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE



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## Our forthcoming WIPO research

- identifies GUI designs in all U.S. filings since 2000s via keyword searches and computer vision tools,
- gathers insights on GUI design use by conducting interviews with industry practitioners, and
- explores how firms generate economic value from protecting GUI and how legal certainty matters.

# 01

# A unique blend of design protection

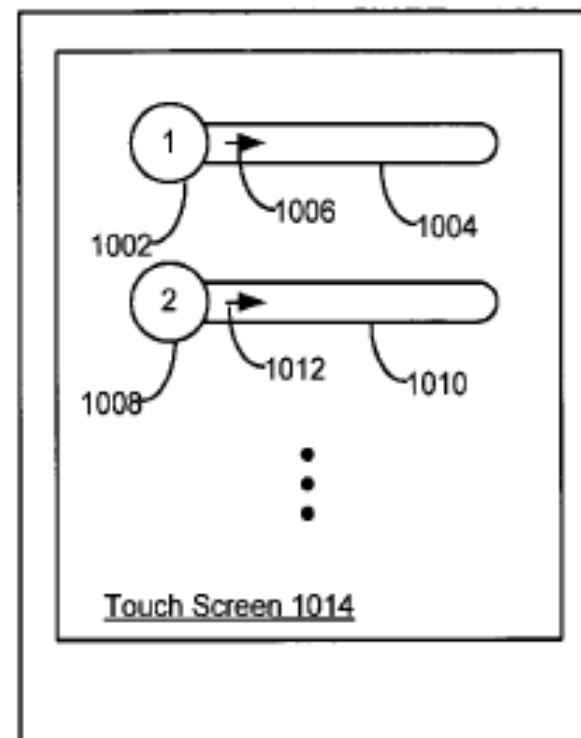
01



**Copyright**

Expressive Nature of GUI

02



**Patents**

Functional Nature of GUI

03



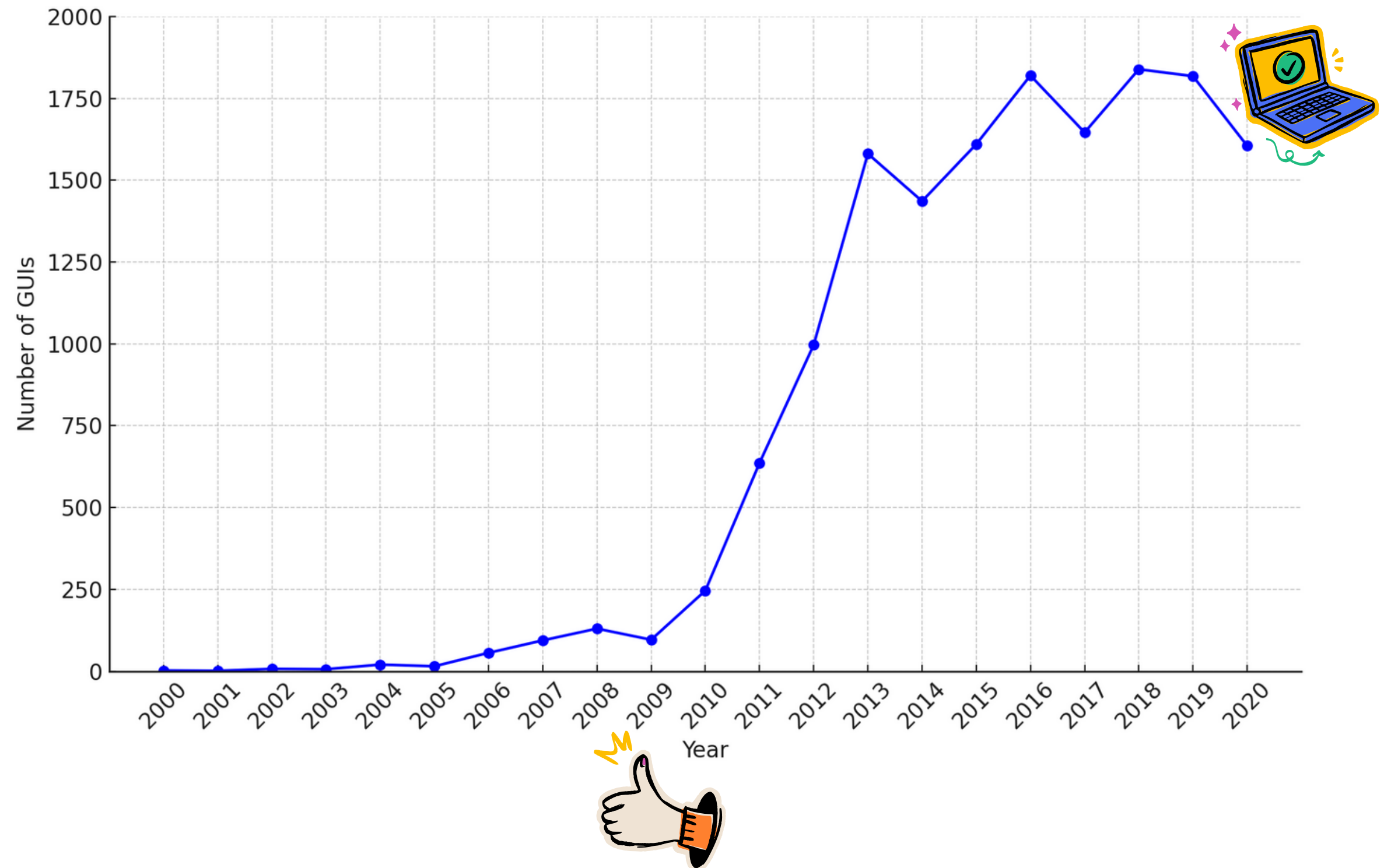
FIG. 1

**Trademark**

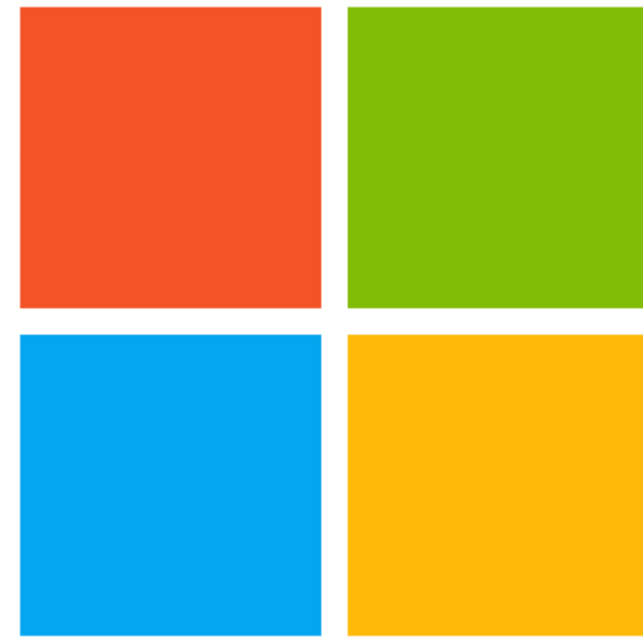
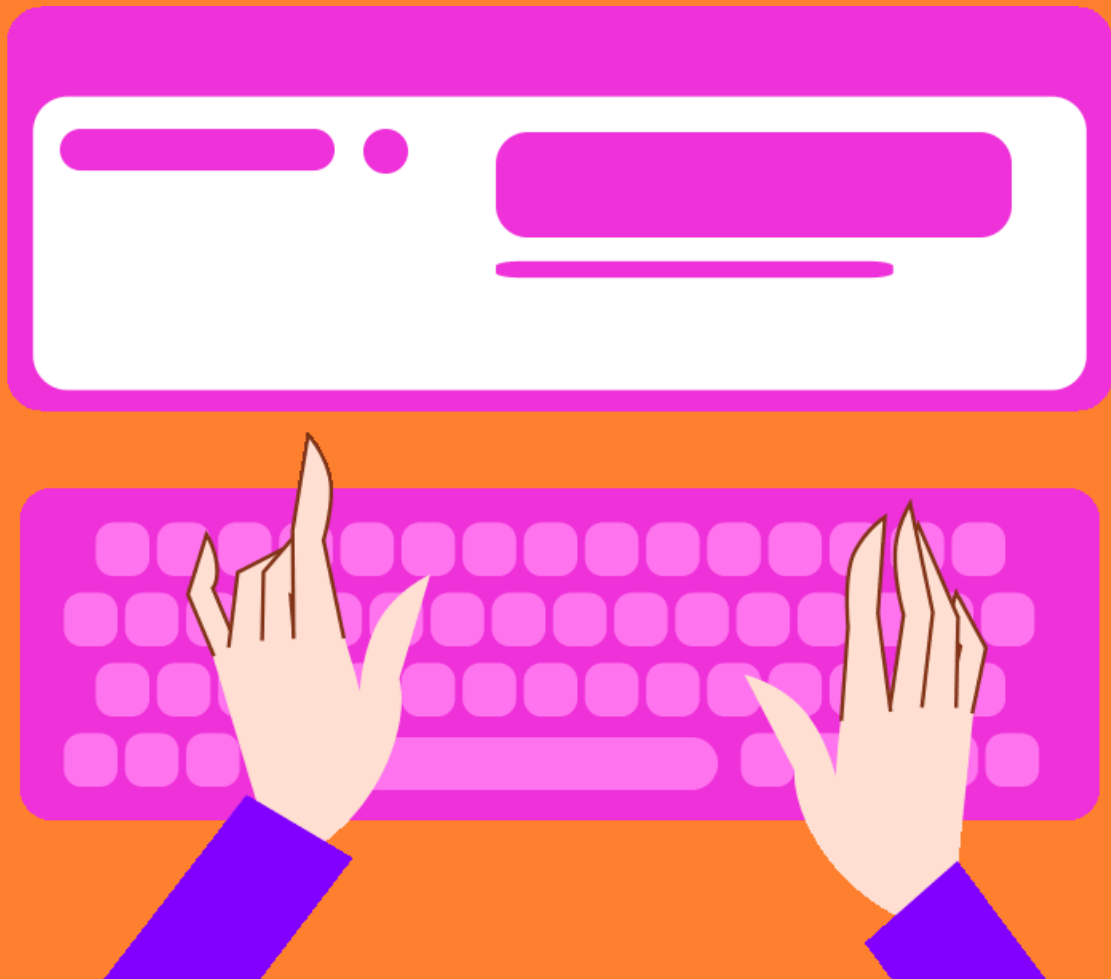
Branding Nature of GUI

GUI  
is  
becoming  
the  
face  
of  
the  
product

## STEEP INCREASE IN GUI DESIGN RIGHTS FILED IN THE U.S. FROM 2009



# Top GUI Design Right Holders in US



# Firms seek GUI protection globally

## APPLICANT RESIDENCE FOR GUI DESIGN RIGHTS FILED IN THE U.S.



## Characteristics of GUI Designs vis-à-vis Physical Designs

- **Adaptability:** Ability to be transferred and re-deployed across diverse products or ecosystems.
- **Scalability:** Potential to reach large user bases without substantial incremental cost.
- **Modifiability:** Capacity for partial or incremental design updates without discarding entire designs.

02



JOHN DEERE



pepsi



More and  
more  
**industries**  
are  
protecting  
their GUIs





## Key Takeaways from the WIPO Analysis

- Legal certainty matters for appropriating returns and increases demand for GUI design protection.
- Unlike physical designs and other types of rights, GUI designs are rarely licensed or litigated.
- Instead, GUI designs generate economic value from IP assignments, securitization, and release.

03