

Trio jailed for giving bribes to win business for their firm

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Court Correspondent

Three businessmen schemed to give more than US\$380,000 (\$515,400) to a manager with Apple to advance the business interests of their company, which went on to make around US\$12 million worth of sales to the American technology giant.

Tan Thiam Chye, 58, Tan Kah Huat, 47, and Chuow Chun Lim, 46, directors and shareholders of Fastening Technology, also gave bribes totalling \$180,000 to a Singaporean sales director of a company for his help to win business from Apple.

The trio were each jailed for 27 weeks yesterday. Each admitted to three of nine corruption charges.

They abetted in a conspiracy to give bribes totalling US\$383,295 to Apple's then global supply manager Paul Shim Devine. Devine has since been convicted and sentenced to 12 months in jail and fined US\$4.5 million in the United States for various offences.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Kelvin Kow said Andrew Ang Kok Kiat, sales director of Jin Li Mould, another Apple supplier, approached Fastening in late 2008 and offered to help the company get business from Apple in return for a 3 per cent commission on the negotiated contract price. The trio agreed to the proposal.

Fastening was later awarded Apple projects.

Subsequently, Ang told the trio that they needed to pay a "commission" to Devine in return for the projects awarded. They agreed.

In January 2010, Devine set up a shell company called CPK Engineering in California, which was used to receive corrupt payments from Fastening over 10 months.

The trio paid a total of US\$383,295 to Devine, of which US\$376,295 was calculated as 3 per cent of sales that Fastening made to Apple.

Urging the court to impose a nine-month jail sentence on each of the men, DPP Kow said the amount of bribes was "enormous".

Defence counsel Anand Nalachandran said his clients did not initiate the corruption.

He said the trio had invested years of energy and effort to establish the group which was previously recognised as a Top 50 Enterprise.

Ang, 41, has since completed his 12-month sentence for receiving bribes totalling about \$282,000.

The maximum penalty for corruption is a \$100,000 fine and five years in jail.

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