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### **BP U.S. FILLING STATION OWNERS SUE OVER SALES SOFTWARE**

Bloomberg News reported on May 4, 2011, that more than 100 BP filling station operators have sued the company for more than \$200 million in damages caused by the company's sales and inventory software that they were forced to use. The franchise owners said the software was "an unmitigated disaster." The suit was filed in Los Angeles Superior Court and alleges that the software program overcharged some customers, doesn't charge others, and periodically crashes.

In addition, they allege can buy only from suppliers that pay BP a fee, and BP's refusal to approve alternative vendors suggested by the franchisees has cost them tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars in damages.

"This is because the BP 'approved' vendors charge higher prices than the 'alternative' vendors proffered by the BP franchisees," the station operators said in the complaint. "This is not surprising since the BP vendors have to recoup the monies that they pay to BP for the privilege of being on BP's selected list."