

Ex-employee settles trade secrets row

Company director to pay former boss \$600,000 after he used confidential information to benefit his own firm

By **ALETHEA LIM**

A COMPANY director will pay his former employer \$600,000 in damages and legal costs after using its trade secrets for his own benefit.

Chevalier Singapore Holdings, the exclusive distributor of Toshiba and Semag brands of elevators and escalators here, had filed a \$2-million suit against Mr Tan Boo Kong, 41, and his own company, Grupe E & L.

But after eight days of slugging it out in court, the parties agreed to settle the dispute amicably.

During the hearing, Chevalier's lawyer, Mr Tan Beng Swee, said that Mr Tan, who was the com-

pany to his own company.

He had also misused its information, such as its customer contact lists and contract details, so that his own company could compete for business, the lawyer added.

Mr Tan was not allowed to disclose or discuss such confidential information with others.

But after becoming director and shareholder of his new company in 1997, and for over a year before leaving Chevalier, he used this data to benefit his own company.

Under the settlement terms, Mr Tan and his company are restrained for seven years, until Feb 28, 2008, from conducting any

to his company, or any other party, Chevalier's trade secrets during this period.

Grupe E & L is also bound by this agreement.

In addition, Mr Tan and his company must hand over to Chevalier all the documents, technical drawings and maintenance contracts which he took from it.

Grupe E & L must also terminate all its existing contracts for the maintenance of Toshiba and Semag elevators and escalators by June 30.