



Trademark Monitoring: An Effective Brand Protection Strategy

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Why and how to monitor trademarks?

Trademarks are assets of any company and thus it is important for owners to take care of their assets. Monitoring trademarks continuously and throughout the year is one of the means to take care of these invaluable assets and thus with this article we came up with some facts that will underline why it is important to monitor trademarks and what are the various ways through which we can monitor trademarks.

Why monitor trademarks?

The domain of IP is like a battlefield wherein every now and then you can find an infringement suit being filed by a party against the other. There are many instances when trademarks are being abused and other parties are eating on major profits. Thus, it is very important for trademark owners to safeguard their invaluable assets by monitoring trademarks for any kind of abuse.

How to monitor trademarks?

There are many methods through which we can monitor trademarks but here we are listing some of the important methods that can help us implement an effective **trademark watch** process in place.

Google Alerts- [Google alert](#) is one of the most effective armor in the toolbox of trademark professionals. This service is offered by search giant Google Inc. and we can set alerts right on our Google mail account without investing much of our precious time. Google alerts grab items from all over the web – including news, blogs, and websites – and email your results containing a match for your trademark. We can set Google alerts daily, weekly, or “as it happens.”

Industry search- Online Industry search is another important way to monitor trademarks. With this, we make a long list of news sites, publications, and blogs and do a thorough search to find relevant information in the relevant industry.

Federal trademark search databases- Federal trademark search databases are the goldmine of information and if we know how to do a search it can be immensely helpful. For instance, if you are intending to search trademark-related data of the United States then [Trademark Electronic Search System \(TESS\)](#) is the best database to search various trademark-related information.

Username search- Sometimes username search also reveals some data that are very important and can't be searched otherwise. No matter whether it is [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#) we can search for usernames and assess if someone else is using our trade name or trademark. As a trademark owner, it's important for companies to do trademark monitoring of their marks throughout the year and round the clock. Many times clients say that they are witnessing a sharp decline in their overall sales and they start restructuring and reorganizing their sales channel. However, as an informed business owner, we must agree that reshuffling the sales strategy is not the only solution always because sometimes trademark infringement or trademark theft could be the reason for a decline in sales.

There were many cases where competitors infringed upon others already established trademarks and stole revenue. Unauthorized use of a trademark, also called as trademark infringement, not only diminishes the distinctiveness of a trademark but also dilutes your brand value.

There comes the importance of a comprehensive, effective and continuous trademark monitoring plan wherein we keep a vigilant eye on your competitors and the overall market to ensure your trademark is not used unlawfully by a third party.

Executing a comprehensive trademark monitoring plan in place:

Now comes the execution part, where we put a comprehensive **trademark watch** or **trademark monitoring** mechanism in place to ensure that no third party is using your brand unlawfully. The best part of this article will outline some of those steps that we can do to achieve this.

Trademark monitoring with USPTO database

Assuming that your location of the business is in the United States, the [Trademark Electronic Search System \(TESS\)](#) is the database that we can use to do our trademark monitoring

effectively. This database comes up with plenty of features and functionalities for trademark search professionals to perform a comprehensive detailed and full trademark watch activity.

With this database, we can search the USPTO's records of pending and registered trademarks to find similar, closely similar, or exact similar marks that may have an impact on your brand reputation.

The Trademark Electronic Search System, also known as TESS can be accessed through the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) website and is considered as a goldmine for those intending to do a comprehensive, thorough and detailed trademark search for a mark.

The USPTO's database contains records of registered trademarks and prior pending applications that are relevant to you.

In case you are not much familiar with this database and want to know how to perform a trademark search, read our article titled "[Understanding Various Features of USPTO Trademark Search Database](#)".

Monitoring Trademarks with search engines

Despite the fact that TESS is the most authentic and reliable trademark search database it may not pull all relevant data that may have an impact on your business. The simple reason for this is that there are cases when entities and/or individuals don't register their trademarks with the U.S. PTO and these data can only be retrieved through various search engines.

In this process, we can create a set of keywords, put it in a search box of search engines and then check manually, if someone is abusing our trademarks. With this search, we are simply expanding our search scope and looking in at the cyberspace.

Though there are many search engines these days that we can use, still some of the most important search engines are [Google](#), [Yahoo](#), [Bing](#), Altavista, and [DuckDuckGo](#). Simply put, monitoring trademarks for brands should include regular checks of the major search engines to ensure third parties, and in particular, your competition, have not adopted or are using trademarks similar to yours.

Trademark watch with Sponsored Ads

The pay-per-click advertising program provided by Google and other search engines is the most preferred way to increase sales, however, only a handful of people know that it can also be used to abuse other's trademark.

Here, competitors bid on your trademark as a keyword and consequently when a user clicks on the sponsored ad intending to buy your product, they land on a site that is not yours.

To avoid such frauds, trademark owners should also ensure that a search of their trademark should not bring up competitor's sponsored ads. If it is happening, it means that your competitors

are bidding on your trademark as a keyword and you have every right to block such sponsored ads.

Trademark monitoring with HTML codes

High organic ranking in search engines is something every business loves these days because it can increase your sales manifold. However, there are cases when businesses embed someone else's mark as HTML code on their website and tend to appear higher in search results when consumers are seeking you out online.

Thus, it's important for a business to check HTML codes of those competitor websites that are appearing high in search engines when you search for your trademark.

Using 'Google Alerts' to monitor your trademark

Google alert is one of the most important tools these days that we can use to keep a vigilant eye on every web page, blog post, and/or news being published online with a specific keyword.

Google Alerts allows internet users to set alerts for any keyword or combination of keywords and are delivered right to our email inbox. Since it's very handy and is available readily, we can use it to monitor our marks on the cyberspace.

Subscribing to RSS feeds of relevant blogs

Subscribing to RSS feeds of websites and blogs is one of the most common ways of consuming information these days. People subscribe to RSS feeds of relevant websites and consequently, blog posts are readily delivered to their inbox. If used consciously, it can be another effective way to monitor the use of your trademarks online.

Doing trademark monitoring with State trademark and corporate databases

Monitoring state trademark and corporate databases for filings of new business names or trademarks is another effective way that we can implement in our overall trademark monitoring plan. In the United States, every state has its own trademark portal that a searcher can use to find relevant information pertaining to a mark. A trademark owner needs to search each of these portals manually to ensure a comprehensive trademark monitoring mechanism for their marks.

Apart from State trademark databases, we can also use various corporate databases that maintain relevant information about various businesses.

Searching yellow pages and newspapers for trademark watch

Business yellow pages and top newspapers also maintain relevant information about businesses and these are widely used by trademark search professionals to monitor trademarks.

All we can say that trademark monitoring or trademark watch is a comprehensive, continuous and ongoing process that every trademark owner should do to avoid their marks being used unlawfully. Though it's a tedious and time-consuming process it pays off when it comes to protecting your brand value.

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