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Director's Forum Blog



USPTO Fights Fraudulent Trademark Solicitations

Guest blog by Commissioner for Trademarks Mary Boney Denison

The USPTO has worked hard to fight solicitations from companies fraudulently promising to protect trademarks, and we have taken a number of steps to help raise awareness of these schemes in an attempt to limit the number of victims defrauded. Our agency works closely with federal agencies, including the Department of Justice, the Federal Trade Commission, and the United States Postal Inspection Service to combat the problem.

The [Department of Justice announced](#) last week that two California men pled guilty in a mass-mailing scam that targeted owners of U.S. trademark applications. The men, Artashes Darbinyan and Orbel Hakobyan, admitted to stealing approximately \$1.66 million from registrants and applicants of U.S. trademarks through companies called Trademark Compliance Center (TCC) and Trademark Compliance Office (TCO). The USPTO is proud to have cooperated with law enforcement agencies in the California case.

Trademark solicitations have been a global problem for decades, including for USPTO customers, and we have implemented several measures to protect our customers against them.

First, the USPTO includes a warning and a link to our [Non-USPTO Solicitations page](#) in each office action, urging our customers to carefully review all correspondence regarding their application to ensure that they are responding to an official document from the USPTO rather than a private company solicitation.

Second, a similar warning, on bright orange paper, is sent to every registrant when the USPTO mails the paper registration certificate to the registrant.

Third, the USPTO has several online resources alerting the public to these non-USPTO solicitations on our [Non-USPTO Solicitations page](#), including a frequently updated list of

fraudulent entities we've already identified. If you receive an invoice from a company not appearing on this list, we encourage you to email us copies of the notice and the envelope it came in at TMFeedback@uspto.gov so that we may assess whether to add it to the list.

A registered trademark is a valuable asset, and where there's money, unfortunately, there are bound to be criminal elements lurking. The USPTO continues to provide its ongoing full support to U.S. law enforcement officials working on this issue.

Read more from the [Director's Forum Blog](#)



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