

## Trade Mark Portfolio Management

Whether your business has one trade mark registration or hundreds, it or they need to be properly maintained. This can be as basic as making sure the name and address details of your registrations are correctly recorded on the Trade Marks Register, ensuring changes of ownership are recorded and ensuring renewals are processed on time.

If you are in the process of applying to register trade marks, many more deadlines will apply, including deadlines to respond to examination reports, deadlines to pay registration fees and in some instances, deadlines to pay extension fees, to keep a case pending.

It is so easy for such matters to become lost in all the other things your business is doing, and in addition, the correspondence from the Trade Marks Office is often complex and difficult to understand and deadlines are not always clearly stated.

In addition, once your trade mark has proceeded to registration, it is often forgotten. The box is ticked and a sense of security is put in place, and rightly so. However, if you are not checking to see if others are using the same or similar trade mark or if others are seeking to register the same or similar trade mark on a regular basis, the original investment in your trade mark is not being returned. Accordingly, it is necessary to do searches on Google, the Trade Marks Register and the various name registers - company, business and domain names – to ensure that your trade mark is not being infringed or your rights not being curtailed.

Once your trade mark has been registered for five or more years it may become vulnerable to removal from the register for non-use. See our section on Non-use Actions. Accordingly, if you have not already done so, you should start collecting evidence of your use of your trade mark to ensure that you could defend a non-use action should one be commenced against your trade mark. If your business is arranged as a group of companies, as many are, this would also include looking putting the necessary licences and controls in place to ensure that use of your trade mark by others could be used to defend any such non-use actions.

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### **IP**roTECT

We have developed a range of products to manage your portfolio of trade marks that seek to address these trade mark management issues at an affordable price.

**Contact us to MANAGE your trade mark portfolio today.**

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