

Attention Trademark Owners!

Websites, such as Facebook® and Twitter®, are growing in importance in the commercial world. Unfortunately, this also creates opportunities for internet predators to seize up valuable user IDs and vanity URLs. By being proactive, you can protect your trademark rights, while enhancing the value of your intellectual property portfolio.

Facebook®

As you may already know, Facebook® is allowing persons to enter vanity URLs on its site effective midnight June 13. If the sites are not used for commercial purposes, then there is probably no infringement or cybersquatting violation. Therefore, we recommend that our clients register their trademarks (preferably by June 28), before a competitor or other predator registers a vanity URL that may infringe. Facebook® is allowing owners to put their registered marks on a "do not use" list, by completing the form here: http://www.facebook.com/help/contact.php?show_form=username_rights. You are only allowed one mark per form, so multiple forms may be required. You can prepare these directly or, if you would like our assistance, please contact us.

Twitter®

Similarly, User IDs have been registered with Twitter that impersonate or incorporate trademark owners, linking to eBay® auction sites, personal web pages, or even commentary/criticism websites. While Twitter® has a complaint procedure, it can often be difficult to obtain removal of the infringing User ID. As such, we also recommend that our clients be proactive in registering any User IDs that contain valuable trademarks that they may want to keep out of the hands of others.

If you have any questions or concerns about existing User IDs that may infringe, please contact us at (913) 647-9050 or visit www.hoveywilliams.com. Also, feel free to contact us to discuss prioritizing and selecting User IDs.