

Brand Protection Policy (India)

Internal policy for protecting Company trademarks, brand identity, and goodwill

HOW TO USE THIS TEMPLATE

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| 1. | This is a working document for trademark documents — fill in all bracketed fields before use. |
| 2. | Review annually or whenever relevant laws, regulations, or business circumstances change. |
| 3. | Keep a signed copy on file and ensure the IP Manager has the current version. |
| 4. | Template only — not legal advice. Consult a qualified IP advocate for your specific situation. |

1. PURPOSE AND CORE BRAND ASSETS

1.1 Purpose. This Brand Protection Policy establishes the Company's systematic approach to protecting, maintaining, and enforcing its brand identity, trademarks, trade dress, and associated goodwill. Consistent brand protection safeguards the Company's reputation, prevents consumer confusion, and preserves the commercial value of the brand.

1.2 Core Brand Assets. The following elements constitute the Company's core brand that must be protected at all times:

2. BRAND USAGE GUIDELINES

2.1 Authorised Use. The Company's trademarks and brand elements may only be used: (a) by the Company in connection with its own products and services; (b) by authorised licensees in strict accordance with the terms of a signed trademark licence agreement that includes quality control provisions; and (c) by press and media in factual reporting, subject to applicable fair use principles.

2.2 Prohibited Uses. No person may: (a) use the Company's mark on any product or service without authorisation; (b) register a domain name, social media handle, or username incorporating the Company's mark without written approval; (c) use the mark in a manner likely to cause confusion or to suggest an affiliation with the Company that does not exist; (d) alter, modify, or create derivative versions of the logo or wordmark without approval; or (e) use the mark in any context that is disparaging, defamatory, or brings the Company into disrepute.

2.3 Brand Style Guide Compliance. All use of Company trademarks must comply with the current Brand Style Guide maintained by the Marketing team. The Style Guide specifies approved colour palettes, minimum size requirements, clear space requirements, approved and prohibited logo variations, typography guidelines, and brand voice guidelines. The Style Guide must be reviewed and updated annually.

3. REGISTRATION STRATEGY

3.1 The Company shall file and maintain trademark registrations for: (a) the primary wordmark in all classes relevant to current and planned products/services; (b) the primary logo/device mark in all relevant classes; (c) key product names and sub-brands; and (d) defensive registrations in classes where the Company does not currently operate but where brand dilution is a risk. Priority for registration: India first, then key export markets (USA, UK, EU, UAE, Singapore) based on business plans.

3.2 Domain Strategy. The Company shall register and maintain: the primary .com and .in domain; key country-code TLDs for markets where the Company operates; common misspellings and typosquatting variations of the primary domain; and domains corresponding to key product names. Domain registrations shall be renewed automatically and monitored for expiry risk.

4. MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT

4.1 The Company maintains a formal trademark watch programme as described in the Trademark Watch and Monitoring Policy. On detecting any potentially infringing use, the IP Manager shall assess the threat level and initiate the appropriate response, from a cease and desist letter through to litigation, based on the severity of the infringement and the Company's commercial interests.

4.2 Employee Responsibilities. All employees must report any suspected trademark infringement they become aware of — online, in commerce, or in any other context — to the IP Manager immediately. This includes finding competitor products or services that appear to be trading on the Company's brand, discovering infringing social media accounts, or being approached by customers who were confused by a similar mark.

BRAND COMPLIANCE FOR EMPLOYEES AND ENFORCEMENT ESCALATION

5.1 Brand Usage Approval Process. Any use of the Company's trademarks or brand elements that is not covered by the Brand Style Guide requires prior approval from the Marketing Head or IP Manager. This includes: co-branding arrangements with partners; use in press releases and media appearances; use in academic papers or conference presentations; use in sponsored content; and use on merchandise or promotional materials. Requests should be submitted with a description of the intended use and the context.

5.2 Social Media Brand Policy. Employees who manage the Company's social media accounts must: (a) use only approved brand assets from the current Brand Asset Library; (b) never make brand, product, or commercial claims without approval from the Marketing team; (c) immediately escalate any negative brand incident or brand impersonation detected on any platform; and (d) not create unofficial Company social media accounts or profiles without prior approval. Personal accounts that mention the Company must include a disclaimer that views are personal and not the Company's.

5.3 Counterfeit and Infringement Response Protocol. When counterfeit goods or brand infringement is detected: (a) document and preserve evidence immediately — screenshots, photographs, purchase receipts; (b) report to the IP Manager within 24 hours; (c) IP Manager assesses severity and initiates appropriate response within 48 hours; (d) response options include: platform takedown request, cease and desist letter, police complaint, customs recordal, and civil litigation, in escalating order of severity. All enforcement actions are documented in the brand protection log.

5.4 Brand Protection Budget. The Company allocates a dedicated annual budget for brand protection activities, reviewed by the IP Manager and CFO during the annual budgeting process. The budget covers: trademark watch service subscription; trademark renewal fees; domain name portfolio maintenance; enforcement legal costs (budgeted as a contingency reserve); anti-counterfeit investigations and market raids; and online brand monitoring tools. A strong brand is a major commercial asset — sustained investment in its protection generates significant long-term returns.

BRAND VALUATION AND IP REPORTING

6.1 Accounting for Brand Value. Indian accounting standards (Ind AS 38 — Intangible Assets) require brands to be recognised on the balance sheet only when acquired externally (through purchase of a business or brand). Internally generated brands (built by the Company itself) are not recognised on the balance sheet under Ind AS. However, the commercial value of the brand may be significant and should be tracked for management purposes even if not balance-sheet reportable. Brand valuation reports (using royalty relief, excess earnings, or cost approaches) are valuable for: investor communications, IP-backed financing discussions, licensing negotiations, and M&A; transactions.

6.2 Monitoring Brand Equity Metrics. Track brand equity through: (a) Brand awareness surveys — annual surveys of target market to measure prompted and unprompted brand awareness; (b) Net Promoter Score (NPS) — measures customer likelihood to recommend, correlated with brand strength; (c) Share of Voice — the Company's share of brand mentions versus competitors in media, social media, and search; (d) Search volume trends for the brand name (Google Search Console); and (e) Premium pricing ability — the extent to which the brand enables pricing above commodity alternatives. These metrics, tracked over time, demonstrate brand strength and justify investment in brand protection.

6.3 Employee Brand Ambassador Programme. Employees are your most powerful brand ambassadors. A formal employee brand ambassador programme includes: brand training at onboarding; clear guidelines for employee social media use; a process for employees to easily share approved Company content; recognition for employees who positively represent the brand externally; and clear policies on what employees may and may not say publicly about the Company, competitors, and industry topics. Employee brand ambassador programmes increase reach, build authenticity, and help detect brand issues early — when an employee spots a counterfeit or a competitor misusing your brand, they need to know where to report it.

DIGITAL ENFORCEMENT AND PLATFORM-SPECIFIC PROTOCOLS

7.1 Search Engine Brand Protection. The Company's brand must be protected in search engine advertising: (a) register with Google's Trademark Complaint form to prevent competitors from bidding on the Company's exact trademark as a keyword in Google Ads; (b) monitor for competitor ads that use the Company's trademark in ad text (this is generally prohibited by Google Ads policies); and (c) protect the Company's branded search queries by running brand awareness campaigns that maintain top-of-mind recall. Note: bidding on generic terms related to a competitor's products is generally permitted; using a competitor's registered trademark in ad copy is not.

7.2 App Store Brand Protection. Mobile app stores are a major enforcement front for branded technology companies: (a) Apple App Store — submit a trademark report through the Apple Intellectual Property team for apps using your trademark without authorisation; (b) Google Play Store — file an Intellectual Property complaint through the Google Play IP Center; (c) monitor for app names, descriptions, and screenshots that incorporate the Company's trademark or confusingly similar variants; and (d) monitor for copycat apps that mimic the Company's UI/UX in ways that could confuse users. App store enforcement typically resolves within 7–14 business days for registered trademark owners.

7.3 Managing Brand in User-Generated Content. User-generated content (UGC) platforms pose specific brand challenges: users may create content using the Company's trademark in ways that are positive (organic brand advocacy), neutral, or harmful (fake reviews, impersonation, unauthorised reselling). Brand management on UGC platforms: (a) monitor major review platforms (Google Reviews, Trustpilot, JustDial) for fake negative reviews and respond to real ones; (b) report impersonation accounts on social media promptly using each platform's report tools; (c) establish a clear 'fan content policy' that defines what user-generated use of the Company's marks is acceptable; and (d) do not overenforce against genuine fans and advocates — this damages brand loyalty and can trigger social media backlash.

7.4 Brand Protection During Crisis. A brand protection crisis — a viral negative event, a product recall, a controversy, or a data breach — requires rapid response to protect the brand. The IP Manager and Marketing Head should jointly maintain a Brand Crisis Response Plan that includes: pre-approved messaging templates for common crisis scenarios; a decision tree for rapid escalation; a list of external brand reputation and legal advisors to engage; and a post-crisis review process. Proactive brand protection is always more effective than reactive crisis management — but having a plan ready is essential.