

CASE STUDY

Valentino: Fighting Back Against Counterfeiters



Industry: Fashion and Luxury Goods

Company:

VALENTINO

Headquarters:

Milan, Italy

Products:

MarkMonitor Brand Protection

OVERVIEW

Valentino SpA, a world leader in luxury goods and fashion, faced the growing threat of unauthorized sales in online marketplaces and general brand infringement. This case study details how they successfully deployed *MarkMonitor Brand Protection* to protect their brands online, in the fight against the sale of counterfeit products.

PRIORITIES

- Elevate IP and brand protection to address counterfeits at the scale of the digital world
- Enforce against Websites and Marketplaces siphoning revenue from the sale of fake goods
- Identify High Value Targets responsible for the bulk of counterfeit sales
- End trademark abuse via unauthorized logo use on social media

SOLUTION

- MarkMonitor Brand Protection

RESULTS

- Over 83,000 marketplace listings taken down
- Over 500 abusive websites were deactivated
- Over a thousand pages on social media have been closed down

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Valentino SpA was founded in 1960 and is a leader in international fashion. Valentino plays a major role in luxury goods and its fashion is displayed through the Haute Couture and Pret-à-Porter lines for women and for men. The brand also has the Valentino Garavani accessories lines that includes shoes, bags, small leather goods, eyewear, scarves, ties and fragrances. Valentino is present in over 90 countries through 160 Valentino directly operated boutiques and over 1,300 points of sale.

Luxury brands are an increasingly attractive target for counterfeiters. In 2016 there was a staggering 15 percent increase in the sale of counterfeit goods online. The shoes and apparel counterfeit trade alone is an estimated 23 billion Euro industry. While watches and jewelry top the charts of the most counterfeited goods in both the Europe and U.S. markets, handbags and sunglasses closely follow.¹

CHALLENGE

"It was important to us that we worked with a partner who understood overall industry trends in order to stay out in front of illicit traders." – Valentino Spokesperson

For many years a legal team at Valentino had been working hard to identify and counteract the sale of fake products and general IP abuse within the constraints that traditional methods allow. As their business moved online it became obvious the problem was too large for the in-house legal team to fight alone.

Early in 2016, MarkMonitor completed an audit of online sales for the brand and automated scanning technology revealed costly challenges in critical areas. It became clear that the situation had to be addressed with a multifunctional approach, involving not only the Valentino legal department but also functions such as the top management, digital, e-commerce and marketing teams.

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Automated, scalable technology proved key in quantifying the size and depth of the problem. Valentino immediately embraced the concept that a modern brand protection strategy could support their digital business, by methodically and aggressively enforcing their existing IP rights. The challenge was not just to protect the Valentino brands and customers. The more they could remove opportunities that redirected prospective customers to a fake site, the more likely these transactions would remain within their legitimate channel benefitting both the consumer and the business.

Valentino had to handle unauthorized sales in websites, on marketplaces, with paid search listings, as well as misrepresentation on social media. The challenge was to monitor and protect the brand in each one of these environments.

Websites

Before the program began, there were thousands of sites offering counterfeit Valentino shoes and accessories in many countries worldwide.

Marketplaces

Preliminary scans of popular marketplaces revealed rampant rogue activity. One seller had 52 Valentino listings on a single day on a notorious Asian marketplace and a total estimated quantity of 36,000 Units.

Social Media

Multiple social media pages existed on popular platforms that linked to fake goods, created by individuals impersonating Valentino and employing unauthorized trademarks.

SOLUTION

The *MarkMonitor Brand Protection Solution* was implemented at Valentino. It included an initial focus on high value targets—those groups of individuals responsible for large volumes of counterfeits,



83,000

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operating vast networks of interconnected online shop fronts. These were the small groups of counterfeiters and auction sellers responsible for the largest volume of fake goods. Elaborate and smart counterfeit networks were responsible for clusters of sites. A workgroup was created that included representatives of senior management, digital marketing, ecommerce, and MarkMonitor experts under the leadership of the Valentino legal team.

Within the brand protection strategy and the monitoring of counterfeiter's activities, the focus on high value targets also resulted in the monitoring of top counterfeiters. Through the data provided by an investigation team from MarkMonitor, the Valentino legal team were able to use this information to take effective action in the offline world.

The legal team at Valentino maintained direct control of the management and enforcement activities of rogue websites.

RESULTS

"MarkMonitor has helped support the Valentino online brand protection strategy by effectively monitoring the web for trademark infringement and policing online marketplaces to protect the integrity of our brand." – Valentino Spokesperson

MarkMonitor Brand Protection proved effective at scale.

After only 18 months, the enforcements delivered impressive results. Online platforms, search engines, marketplaces, and other Internet entities quickly complied with requests that fake listings should be removed. Among the results:

- Over 83,000 marketplace listings, across a variety of B2B and consumer focused platforms in multiple countries had been taken down
- Over 500 abusive websites were deactivated

- Over a thousand pages on social media have been closed down

This comprehensive brand enforcement strategy sent an unequivocal message to the market that Valentino is fighting back against counterfeits with the ultimate goal to reduce the potential for consumers to be deceived by fake goods.

About MarkMonitor

MarkMonitor, the leading enterprise brand protection solution and a Clarivate Analytics flagship brand, provides advanced technology and expertise that protects the revenues and reputations of the world's leading brands. In the digital world, brands face new risks due to the Web's anonymity, global reach and shifting consumption patterns for digital content, goods and services. Customers choose MarkMonitor for its unique combination of advanced technology, comprehensive protection and extensive industry relationships to address their brand infringement risks and preserve their marketing investments, revenues and customer trust. For more information, visit **markmonitor.com** or call us at **1-800-745-9229**.

About Clarivate Analytics

Clarivate Analytics accelerates the pace of innovation by providing trusted insights and analytics to customers around the world, enabling them to discover, protect and commercialize new ideas faster. We own and operate a collection of leading subscription-based services focused on scientific and academic research, patent analytics and regulatory standards, pharmaceutical and biotech intelligence, trademark protection, domain brand protection and intellectual property management. Clarivate Analytics is now an independent company with over 4,000 employees, operating in more than 100 countries and owns well-known brands that include *Web of Science*, *Cortellis*, *Derwent*, *CompuMark*, *MarkMonitor* and *Techstreet*, among others. For more information, visit **clarivate.com**.

More than half the Fortune 100 trust MarkMonitor to protect their brands online.

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Protecting brands in the digital world

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¹ "The Business of Counterfeit Fashion," Fashionbi. <https://fashionbi.com/insights/marketing-research/the-business-of-counterfeit-fashion>