

Protecting Your Pharmaceutical Brand

Unauthorized online drug distribution is widespread and growing rapidly. The rising threat of consumer harm, loss of revenue and potential liability have compelled pharmaceutical companies to understand the latest online threats to secure valuable intellectual property (IP) and protect patient health. Here are the key strategies to help guide your efforts:



1. Monitor multiple online distribution channels

At a minimum, understand the scope of unauthorized distribution of your top revenue-generating drug brands across suspicious online pharmacies, e-commerce markets, email and social media. Be aware of drug diversion activity in social media posts or tweets that redirect traffic to fraudulent websites that provide a forum for bogus brand buzz and event reporting.



2. Identify areas of geographical concern

Asia should be at the top of your list, as China and India are the leading suppliers of the 80% of unauthorized drugs¹ produced overseas. Leverage your local resources and established relationships to navigate the nuances of these regions, and monitor potential grey market activity in regions that garner early approval.



3. Utilize an end-to-end attack strategy

In addition to online takedowns, a comprehensive program also requires targeted physical investigations to disrupt the illegitimate supply chain. Examine external resources to connect online and on-the-ground enforcement. Prioritize high-value targets and equip outside counsel and law enforcement with the evidence to simplify case uptake and prosecution.



4. Mine data for actionable intelligence

Analyze all available data sources related to illegitimate drug distribution to uncover the networks behind suspicious online pharmacies, including external payment anchor sites. This focuses your resources where risk is greatest, gains faster traction on investigations and maximizes the ROI of your brand protection program.



5. Shield new drugs before launch

As a product nears release, prioritize areas of concern and identify red flags, such as popular off-label uses or premature online availability of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs). You'll avoid pitfalls that may impact patient safety, revenue, R&D outlay or brand reputation – and shut down brand abuse as it arises to prevent brands from becoming 'easy targets.'

For more information on developing a comprehensive online brand protection strategy, please call us at +44 (0) 207 433 4000 or visit markmonitor.com

1. World Courier, "Securing the Global Pharmaceutical Supply Chain against the Threat of Counterfeit Drugs," June 1, 2014. <http://www.worldcourier.com/insights-events/market-insights/detail/securing-global-pharmaceutical-supply-chain>