

Purvi Patel Albers in Bloomberg Law: Virus Leaves Brands to Protect Themselves as Opportunists Pounce

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PRACTICES Intellectual Property

Haynes Boone Partner [Purvi Patel Albers](#) talked with *Bloomberg Law* about the increased need for brand owners to protect their intellectual property from counterfeiters amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Companies may have to narrow much of their focus to areas they can control, like online policing and educating consumers and customs officials, attorneys say.

Attorneys advised that brand owners test-buy products they find online to find unauthorized sellers, ask platforms like Amazon.com and EBay to remove counterfeit listings, and press hosts to remove domains and websites mimicking their brand.

Attorneys say there's also value in protecting the brand by educating consumers and customs officials on how to tell genuine products from fakes. That can include information about the products themselves as well as where they are—and are not—sold.

3M's lawsuits over distribution of its legitimate branded products, while an unorthodox use of trademark law, send strong messages to consumers that the company won't condone profiteering in a pandemic, attorneys said. The company has also provided a link on its website to help customers authenticate if a product is real, trademark attorney Purvi Patel Albers of Haynes Boone added.

"I think 3M is doing a great job," Albers said. "It all comes down to brand trust, and there can be a lot of damage in times of crisis."

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