

Albers and Ketterer in *The Trademark Lawyer*: Taylor Swift's Branding Acumen Rubs Off on NFL Boyfriend Travis Kelce

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PRACTICES Trademark and Advertising, Sports Law

Haynes Boone Partner [Purvi Patel Albers](#) and Associate Emily Ketterer authored an article in *The Trademark Lawyer* on Taylor Swift's boyfriend and Kansas City Chiefs tight end, Travis Kelce, taking a play out of the musician's playbook to launch a brand protection plan focused on himself.

Read an excerpt below:

Last week, Taylor Swift's boyfriend and Kansas City Chiefs tight end, Travis Kelce, appears to have taken a play out of the musician's playbook and launched a brand protection plan focused on something more than just product lines: himself. The fellow 1989er filed four new trademarks under TMK Enterprises LLC, two of which included his name (TRAVIS KELCE) and social media handle (KILLATRAV). Both cover merchandise and entertainment services. The two others – FLIGHT 87 (based on his jersey number) and ALRIGHT NAH (a catchphrase) – cover merchandise, including lapel pins, posters, hats, sweatshirts, and bobblehead dolls.

There's a history of athletes claiming rights in their names and catchphrases. And, although Swift and Kelce have only been publicly linked for a little over three months, her frequent attendance at the football player's games has skyrocketed his national reputation well beyond the field and, in tandem, his social media followership and marketability. In September, ESPN reported that his jersey sales shot up 400%. He's also been featured in advertisements for DirectTV, Pfizer, and Bud Light.

What is notable about Kelce's timing for these personality-focused filings is that he didn't take steps to protect his name back when he was first drafted in 2013. He also didn't make filings after other high-profile sports branding issues made headlines, such as the rebranding of racially controversial team and mascot names or the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) lifting its rules prohibiting college athletes from commercially capitalizing on their name, image, and likeness in 2021. Rather, the two-time Super Bowl winner only filled the blank space of protecting his name after connecting with Taylor Swift, an artist known for her brand and marketing power moves.

Swift has been filing trademark applications since 2007, starting when she was only 18 years old. Swift and her company, TAS Rights Management, collectively own over 600 live trademark filings worldwide. In addition to her 200+ US trademarks, she has sought trademark protection in Canada, Mexico, the European Union, the United Kingdom, Norway, Switzerland, Iceland, Turkey, Argentina, Colombia, South Africa, India, China, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Indonesia, New Zealand, and Australia. Her registrations are wide-ranging, encompassing her name, album names, song titles and lyrics, tour names, and, of course, her cats' names. The musician's comprehensive trademark strategy reflects the control that Swift exercises over all of her business interests. For example, in 2019, she decided to re-record her albums in an effort to fully own her music after her record label sold her first six albums to a private equity firm.

To read the full article in *The Trademark Lawyer*, click [here](#).