

Why Should I Register My Trademark?

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You have a brand—a trademark—for your business. Perhaps it is a word, phrase, symbol, design, or a combination of these that identifies and distinguishes the source of goods or services. At its heart, trademark law is designed to protect the link between your brand and consumers' expectations. The moment you start using your brand, you unlock some level of that protection simply from your use. That base level of protection can go a long way, but federal trademark law can help you maximize the protection around your brand with a trademark registration. Here are five of the key benefits of registering your trademark at the federal level:

1. Nationwide Coverage

In the United States, registering your trademark with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) provides nationwide protection. This is particularly important if you plan to expand your business beyond your local area. Without registration, your trademark rights may be limited to the geographic area where you operate.

2. Deter Infringement

A registered trademark serves as a public notice of your ownership, deterring potential infringers from using a similar mark. It is listed in the USPTO's database, making it easier for others to identify and avoid infringing on your trademark. Registering your mark leaves little question for others that you take your brand's protection seriously.

3. International Protection

If you plan to expand your business internationally, a registered trademark can be the basis for obtaining trademark protection in other countries through the U.S.'s treaties and multilateral conventions. Having your U.S. registration in place can help save time and expense when you begin expanding to foreign markets.

4. Enhanced Enforcement

With a registered trademark, you have stronger enforcement capabilities. You can prevent the importation of infringing goods into the U.S. by recording your trademark with U.S. Customs and Border Protection. This helps protect your brand from counterfeit products.

5. Defensive Protections

A registration can also help protect you from later claims of infringement by others. Once a trademark is registered and maintained for a number of years, it can become increasingly difficult to challenge your ownership of the mark and the validity of the mark. In time, the registration reinforces your ownership rights and reduces the likelihood of successful challenges by third parties.

Registering your trademark is a strategic investment in your business's future. It provides legal protection, enhances brand recognition, and offers numerous other benefits that can help your business thrive in a competitive market. If you are considering trademark registration, consulting with a legal professional can provide valuable guidance tailored to your specific needs.

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