Epson Deploys Integrated MarkMonitor Solution for Global Brand Protection

EPSON

Case Study:
Epson

Headquarters:
Nagano, Japan

URL:
www.epson.com

Industry:
Digital Imaging Products and Technology

Products:
MarkMonitor Domain Management™
MarkMonitor Brand Protection™

Executive Summary

In the digital imaging industry, the Epson brand is synonymous with high-quality. Prior to MarkMonitor®, Epson used a combination of VeriSign DBMS and GenuOne from OpSec Security as well as an assortment of spreadsheets and manual processes for both their global domain portfolio management and brand protection efforts. With a patchwork of solutions, disparate processes across the enterprise and multiple vendors, Epson needed a holistic, integrated system for global brand protection — which it found — in MarkMonitor. Epson has since deployed MarkMonitor for online brand protection and global domain name portfolio management including both MarkMonitor Domain Management and MarkMonitor Brand Protection solutions. MarkMonitor is now securing thousands of global domain names for Epson while protecting the company's brand equity from online counterfeiters. "The Epson brand is one of our greatest assets, and partnering with MarkMonitor allows us to protect our brand, our company, and our loyal customers," says Vernon Fragnito from Epson's intellectual property division, based in Japan.

MarkMonitor®
PART OF THOMSON REUTERS

" A global company must have a centralized way to monitor and protect its brand equity. The Epson brand is one of our greatest assets, and partnering with MarkMonitor allows us to protect our brand, our company, and our loyal customers."

— Vernon Fragnito, intellectual property division, Epson

Challenge

- Unable to automatically track and shut down illicit consumer marketplaces and business-to-business (B2B) marketplaces

- Lack of visibility into counterfeit activities on a global basis

- Difficult to coordinate trademark enforcement actions and ensure consistency with globally dispersed employees

- Existing domain management system was costly to manage and could not accommodate global portfolio

Solution

- Epson partners with MarkMonitor for its integrated brand protection platform, superior technology and customer service

Results

- Realized major reductions in counterfeit activities on consumer marketplaces and B2B marketplaces

- Gained global visibility with quick access to complete case management information

- Saved time with automated global enforcement capabilities while consistent processes improve global coordination

- Reduced domain management costs significantly

- All-inclusive 24/7 support enables fast resolution of issues

- Comprehensive solution protects brand, and loyal customers

Challenge

Prior to MarkMonitor, Epson used a combination of VeriSign DBMS, GenuOne from Opsec Security and an assortment of spreadsheets and manual processes for domain portfolio management and brand protection. With a patchwork of solutions, disparate processes across the global enterprise and multiple vendors, Epson needed a holistic and integrated system for global brand protection. "It takes a tremendous amount of resources to build a printer from scratch," says Fragnito. "We don't want someone else making money off our product and eroding customer trust."

For online channel protection, Epson's prior vendor, GenuOne, offered basic capabilities to monitor e-commerce and online marketplaces but lacked important features and global capabilities. A major problem with GenuOne was that it provided no direct contact with the marketplace. "We started taking action on trade boards over a year ago and found a high number of counterfeit sellers on these sites. On just one trade board, sellers blatantly violated our brand by selling thousands of ink cartridges misrepresented as Epson products," says Fragnito. "GenuOne could not integrate with the bulletin boards so we had to manually track each instance of infringement and take action with cease-and-desist letters. It was very time intensive."

"Before MarkMonitor, we lacked consistency. I didn't know which cases were being worked on in the U.S. or Europe or what progress was being made on those cases," continues Fragnito. "We had no global visibility because there was no common, integrated platform and access point for managing online infringement."

The Epson domain name portfolio experienced a similar lack of global visibility. "It was virtually impossible to track and manage the overall effectiveness of our global domain assets and strategy," says Ian Cameron, global Web manager for Epson. VeriSign DBMS was costly to manage and didn't have sufficient capabilities to effectively handle all of Epson's domain names — especially since Epson's operations span several continents. Regional sales offices worldwide often took matters into their own hands by registering domain names through local agents, making it virtually impossible for the corporation to track and manage the overall effectiveness of its domain assets and strategy. Many Epson domain names throughout the company were tracked on multiple spreadsheets, which only added to the confusion.
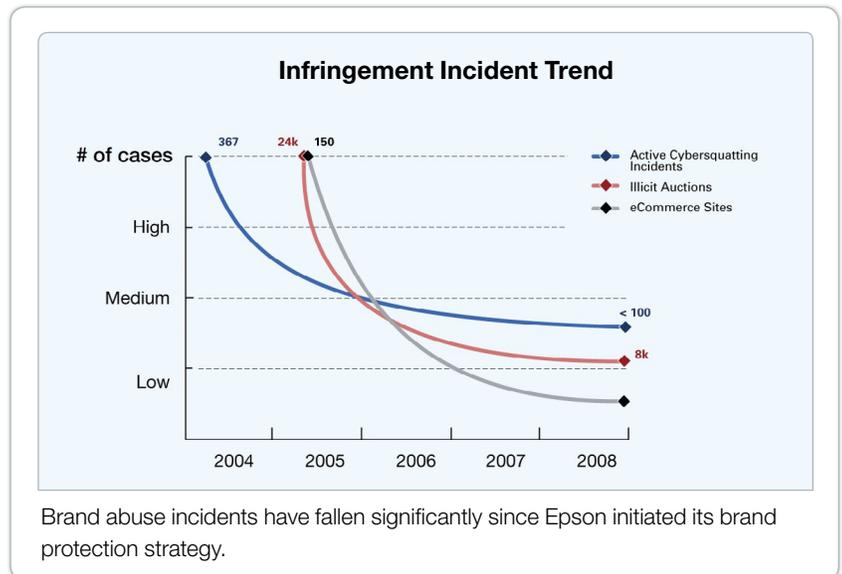
Solution

With a patchwork of solutions that were costly to maintain and lacked important features, the company needed one integrated solution that could be accessed and managed globally through a common portal. After evaluating alternatives, Epson selected MarkMonitor for comprehensive brand protection and global domain portfolio management. In MarkMonitor, Epson found a company that was squarely

" MarkMonitor is the clear leader in online brand protection and their commitment to service puts them over the top. We're not looking for suppliers. We're looking for partners. We've found a trustworthy partner in MarkMonitor."

— Ian Cameron, global Web manager, Epson

focused on protecting global brands, possessing a rare combination of powerful technology and over-the-top customer service. Epson has since deployed MarkMonitor Domain Management and MarkMonitor Brand Protection.

"MarkMonitor gives Epson unprecedented visibility into the company's online activities and ensures that our domains and instances of online infringement are constantly being addressed," continues Cameron. "For the first time we have one solution; one system to manage on a global level — from Japan to the United States. MarkMonitor is a cost-effective solution that optimizes our business operations and allows us to reap the greatest possible benefit from our online properties."

Infringement Incident Trend

# of cases

Legend:
- Active Cybersquatting Incidents
- Illicit Auctions
- eCommerce Sites

367   24k   150

High
Medium
Low

< 100
8k

2004 2005 2006 2007 2008

Brand abuse incidents have fallen significantly since Epson initiated its brand protection strategy.

Results

MarkMonitor is securing Epson's brand equity from a wide variety of online abuses, including counterfeiters. "A global company must have a centralized way to monitor and protect its brand equity," says Fragnito. "The Epson brand is one of our greatest assets, and partnering with MarkMonitor allows us to protect our brand, our company, and our loyal customers."

"Since deploying MarkMonitor we've noticed a sharp decline in the amount of fraudulent activity," reports Fragnito. "MarkMonitor is not only aggressively enforcing brand infringement, but it's also deterring abuse." With an improved brand protection strategy powered by MarkMonitor, Epson has seen a three-fold reduction in counterfeit activities on consumer marketplaces and B2B marketplaces. For one online marketplace alone, Epson has watched the number of annual worldwide cases plummet over the past three years. "A strong brand protection strategy pays off in terms of reduced abuse, which reduces overall company risk," concludes Fragnito.

With one portal and powerful, automated enforcement capabilities, Epson has gained global visibility and improved productivity with MarkMonitor. "As part of our global Web trademark enforcement group, I oversee brand protection activities for Epson operations in the U.S., Canada, Latin America, China, Southeast Asia, Japan and Australia," says Fragnito. "Many global companies like ours are short-staffed in the area of brand protection, so MarkMonitor makes tremendous sense from a business perspective. A small staff can still be very productive."

MarkMonitor Domain Management provides Epson with a centralized global domain portfolio management system for proactively managing thousands of domain names — allowing it to eliminate seven registrars worldwide, reduce domain management costs significantly and enable a better, more consistent online experience for its customers. "Consolidating to one global domain management system with one global view is a key component of our marketing strategy, and ultimately gives Epson a competitive advantage in the marketplace," says Cameron.

With automated enforcement mechanisms such as cease-and-desist letters, payment processing deactivation and marketplace de-listings, MarkMonitor Brand Protection gives Epson powerful control over online distribution channels while saving precious time and money. "With MarkMonitor, one person can cover an awful lot of ground," says Fragnito. He is still putting in the same amount of hours, but is now able to focus his time strategically on cases that are the most detrimental to the business. "With an all-in-one integrated system, I can move through the system faster," he says.

"With MarkMonitor, now I can see what is happening on a global basis," adds Fragnito. "Calling or sending an email to a colleague in France to get some information doesn't do the trick. I need to be able to see what's happening everywhere. Now, from our headquarters in Japan, I can log in to the portal and find out exactly what's being done in France. All the detailed information for a particular case is just a click away, including product pictures, which have been very helpful to us. MarkMonitor has made us much more efficient and effective as a company and made my job easier."

MarkMonitor comprehensive 24/7 global support has been a boon to Epson. "MarkMonitor is the clear leader in online brand protection and their commitment to service puts them over the top," says Cameron. "The level of service provided by MarkMonitor — from front-end account management to back-end technical support — has been phenomenal. We're not looking for suppliers. We're looking for partners. We've found a trustworthy partner in MarkMonitor."

About MarkMonitor

As the global leader in online brand protection, MarkMonitor, a Thomson Reuters Intellectual Property & Science business, 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 industry-leading expertise, advanced technology and extensive industry relationships to preserve their marketing investments, revenues and customer trust.

More than half the Fortune 100 trust MarkMonitor to protect their brands online. **See what we can do for you.**

MarkMonitor, Inc.
U.S.   (800) 745.9229
Europe   +44 (0) 207.433.4000
www.markmonitor.com

Boise | San Francisco | Washington D.C. | London