

## Trademark 101 Part 6: Protecting Your Trademarks (Brands)

Your business's identity is one of its most valuable assets. You invest a lot in developing the brands that represent your company and your products to the world, whether it be product names, logos, taglines, or other identifiers – otherwise known as your trademarks. Don't risk losing that investment – protect your trademarks!

The first step to protecting your trademarks is [to register them](#). But even after you've secured a registration, you could weaken or lose your rights if someone else uses your mark, whether you know about it or not. To fully protect your brands, you must take proactive steps, even after registration.

### How do I protect my brands?

The purpose of a trademark is to distinguish between your product and similar products offered by others. If others use your mark or a similar mark, on similar products, your trademark may lose the ability to distinguish your product from theirs. At that point, your rights become vulnerable to challenges launched by a third party.

### How do I avoid losing my rights?

To fully protect your rights, it is crucial to identify any uses by third parties that might infringe your rights or that use your trademark as a generic word. This requires monitoring multiple resources for potential infringements, analyzing the legal risk to your rights, and taking action against any infringements or improper uses. This is referred to as “monitoring,” or “policing,” the use of your trademarks.

### How do I monitor for third-party uses?

We can help! Policing your trademarks can require a significant amount of time, access to multiple resources, and legal analysis. We work with one of the top firms in the country in monitoring trademark usages. They send us a monthly report, which we analyze for any threats to your rights. We then report back to you. If we find any problems, we will work with you to determine the best strategy for addressing the threat in the context of your business goals. Talk to us about our flat fees for monitoring services.

### What does monitoring cover?

You can select from several levels of monitoring, from watching only for new applications filed with the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office to a comprehensive report that includes federal and state applications, federal publications, and common law (unregistered) uses.

[Contact us](#) to discuss which of your trademarks you should consider monitoring and which level of monitoring service best fits your needs, goals, and budget.