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Facebook Usernames – Protect Your Company's Trademarks

Facebook has announced that its users will be able to select usernames as part of their URLs beginning at 12:01 a.m. (EDT) on Saturday, June 13, 2009. These usernames, awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis, will be searchable through Facebook as well as popular search engines, such as Google. As a result, trademarks are open to piracy in the registration of these usernames. In addition, businesses should be concerned that their marks could be infringed and used by third parties to disparage their companies or to create a false sense of endorsement or affiliation with the trademark owners.

Through an online process Facebook is making efforts to assist trademark owners in preventing the trademarks they own from being registered as usernames. We highly recommend that trademark owners use Facebook's [online process](#) to reserve their registered marks in advance of June 13, 2009. In the unfortunate event that a company's trademark has been registered as a username without authorization, a company may also complete Facebook's IP Infringement form.

If you have any additional questions or require assistance with respect to the protection of your company's mark from registration as a Facebook username, please contact one of the Squire Sanders intellectual property lawyers listed in this Alert.

The contents of this update are not intended to serve as legal advice related to individual situations or as legal opinions concerning such situations. Counsel should be consulted for legal planning and advice.

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