

IGF 2016 Lightening Session: Trademarks Enable Sustainable Growth

Session Title:

An Entrepreneur's Tale: How Trademark Systems Enable Sustainable and Inclusive Growth on the Internet

Date: Friday, December 9, 2016

Time: 1:25 pm – 1:45 pm

Session Organizer: International Trademark Association

Moderator: Lori Schulman, Senior Director, Internet Policy, International Trademark Association

Rapporteur: Lori Schulman, lschulman@inta.org

List of Speakers and their Institutional Affiliations:

Ana Belem, Studio Chroma, anabelem@studiochroma.com.mx

Bernardo Herrerias, Esq., Hogan Lovells (Mexico City), bernardo.herrerias@hoganlovells.com

Description of Session:

Ana Belem, a young Mexican entrepreneur and style blogger discussed how trademarks helped her grow, sustain and protect her various business endeavors which include an online magazine and media consulting firm. Ana was joined by an experienced Mexican intellectual property lawyer, Bernardo Herrerias to discuss the importance of trademarks and domain names to building sustainable and inclusive businesses. Anyone who desires to grow a business can qualify for trademark protection as long as they meet certain legal requirements. Ensuring adequate trademark and domain protections at the start of the business is important because a popular product or service will invite copycats and infringers. By the time the business has reached success, it may be too late to for the owner to protect her trademark if she hasn't done so right from the start. Having good trademarks with proper registrations allows entrepreneurs to license their goods and services, protects them from counterfeiting and cybersquatting and builds their reputation as respected businesses. Ms. Belem experienced the benefits of good trademark protection when former partners tried to steal the name of her company. She was able to stop them because she wisely registered her trademark.

Mr. Herrerias explained how domain names are a critical component of brand protection and how important it is to secure the proper name so customers know where to find you. The ability to know where to find the same good quality, trusted products and services time and time again protects consumers by enabling them to make confident purchases and helps the entrepreneur grow and sustain a viable enterprise. The session was presented in Spanish and English.

Related SDGs: 5 - gender equality, 8 – decent work and economic growth, 9 – industry, innovation and infrastructure, 16 – peace, justice and strong institutions