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How will 3D-printing challenge IP rights?

3D-printing changes the way we develop products: an idea can be transformed into a tangible product faster than ever and it is not even expensive anymore!

But what is 3D-printing? Simply put, it is a machine that builds an object out of base materials by successively stacking thin layers of the material in accordance with a Computer-Aided Design (CAD). The major advantage over conventional moulding processes is its adaptability: one 3D-printer can print any template and does not require prefabricated moulds. The template can be created by using a CAD program or by using special 3D-scanners if the object already exists.

The first patent application in connection with 3D-printing had been filed in the 1980s, but it took decades for 3D-printing to become as viable as it is today. Today, 3D-printing offers various printing methods and can print almost anything from medicine, weapons, to organs and even food (so called Bioprinting). This versatility allows 3D printing to revolutionize almost every industry sector.

Since the prices have fallen, 3D-printers are no longer just a product for the industry but for everyone. On the Internet, templates can be exchanged on online forums (both legally and illegally).

Why do businesses need to take note?

Entrepreneurs should acknowledge the potential of this technology and should not be lagging behind developments in this area.

However, despite its benefits, 3D-printing also poses risks with regard to IP rights:

For example, the question of liability of the print shops, creating the product in accordance with the originals provided by third parties and of online file-sharing networks for 3D-print templates, has to be raised.

Also, you, as the user of 3D-printing, have to make sure that no IP rights, e.g. patents, designs and trademarks, will be infringed upon.

If you commission another company to create templates for your own 3D-printers, or if you delegate the entire print job to them, it should be ensured that you will have full legal access to the result.

Finally, if 3D-printed products impaired your IP rights, you should be well prepared to request the destruction of the products and assert claims for injunctive relief and damages against the infringer. Also, the circulation of the CAD in online forums should be stopped by requesting the operators to remove the template and to prevent a re-upload.

Find out how you can safely take advantage of 3D-printing technology by contacting:



Yvonne Draheim
Partner IPMT, Hamburg
T +49 40 419 93 218
yvonne.draheim@hoganlovells.com



Sabrina Dücker
Associate IPMT, Hamburg
T +49 40 419 93 0
sabrina.duecker@hoganlovells.com

www.hoganlovells.com

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To find out more:

limegreenipnews.com/2016/08/germany-3d-printing-how-are-trademarks-affected/