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# Influencers and counterfeit goods – Are influencers inciting their followers to buy counterfeit products?



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**By VASHTI NAGEL****Topics** Intellectual Property Law

15 Oct 2021

Influencers have become one of the best ways to get products sold online, and many brands invest millions into “top-tier” influencers to promote their products. Unfortunately, this has created a situation where some influencers, knowingly or unknowingly, promote counterfeit goods.

Recent studies have shown that a lot of influencers do not actually evaluate the product they endorse, and they accept payment to promote such products without being aware of the ramifications of promoting and/or selling counterfeit goods. Many of them don't bother, as long as the product “looks good”.

Many people view influencers as friends or acquaintances as opposed to advertisers and as a result, they automatically trust and admire them. This makes them more likely to buy the products that influencers are promoting without hesitation and without questioning the authenticity of the products. More than 45% of the world's population are active social media users, which poses a great risk for the promotion and sale of counterfeit goods to gain traction online.

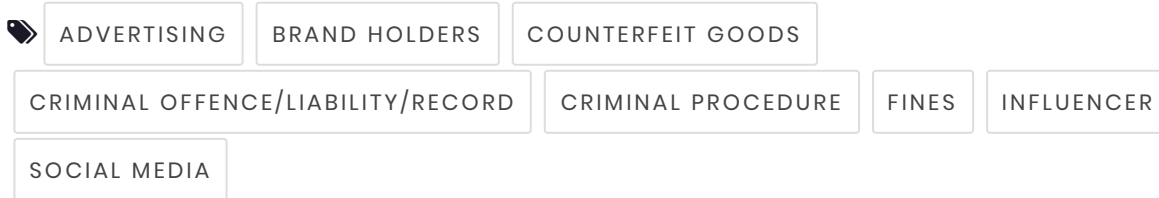
The following can be done to combat these infringers on social media platforms:

- Brands need to look at building strong relationships with social media platforms, join anti-counterfeiting associations and work together with law enforcement agencies to intercept and bring down large criminal networks that trade globally in counterfeit goods.
- Infringers need to be made more aware of the potential consequences of dealing in counterfeit goods, i.e., the financial sanctions and/or possible imprisonment stemming from civil and/or criminal litigation proceedings which can be taken against them.
- Consumers need to be made aware of the dangers of purchasing counterfeit goods and how to identify them online. With the influencer community as well as the social media platforms continuously growing, illegal traders are relentlessly adapting and developing new ways to sell counterfeit goods.
- Consumers always need to be weary and keep an eye out to ensure that they do not fall prey to these infringers.

See also:

- [Courts hand down harsher sentences for counterfeiting crimes](#)
- [What brand owners should know about preventing counterfeit goods in South Africa](#)
- [Protecting your brand in South Africa with the help of Customs](#)
- [Online selling of counterfeit goods: Countering the courier](#)

(This article is provided for informational purposes only and not for the purpose of providing legal advice. For more information on the topic, please contact the author/s or the relevant provider.)



### [Vashti Nagel](#)

Vashti Nagel is a Candidate attorney at Kisch IP law firm's Trade Mark department.

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**[Vashti Nagel](#)**

Vashti Nagel is a Candidate attorney at Kisch IP law firm's Trade Mark department.

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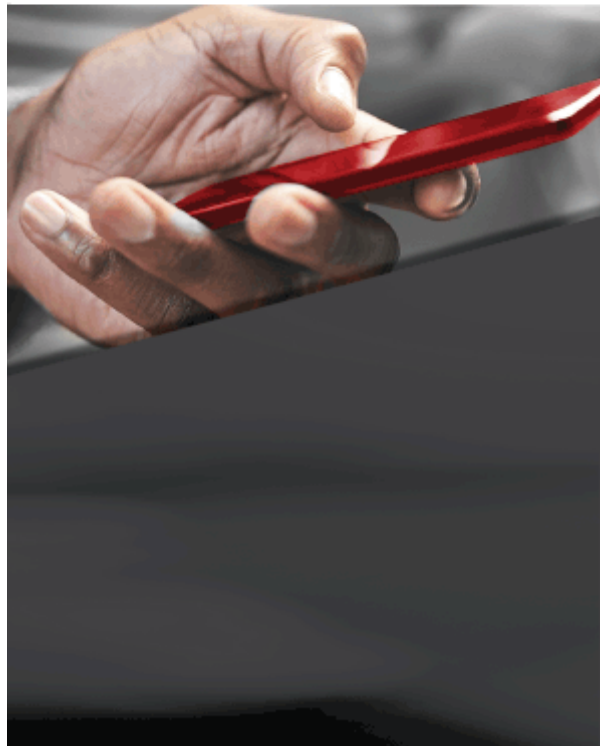
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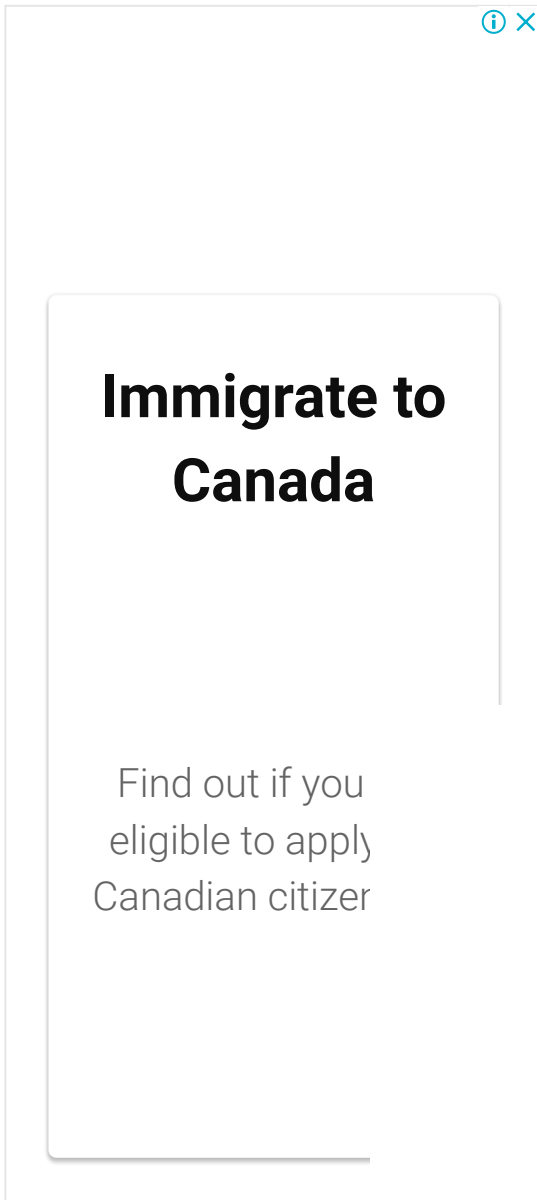
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