

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office Denies 9 Trademark Applications for "Boston Strong"

by Mike Martensen | Apr 24, 2014 | Trademarks and Service Marks

Following a national or local crisis, companies and organizations in Colorado and elsewhere often pitch in to help those in need and to create awareness for their cause. However, when companies and organizations try to obtain trademark protection for these campaigns, they are sometimes denied. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office may refuse to grant trademark protection to slogans that are tied to a recent event.

After the tragic bombing at last year's Boston Marathon, organizations across the country rallied to support those who were harmed. Shortly after the marathon, some people used the words "Boston Strong" to describe the resilience of the people who had some connection to the bombings.

One pair of college students used this term for its fundraising campaign, which raised \$900,000 with the sale of "Boston Strong" T-shirts. After that, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office received a total of nine trademark applications for the words "Boston Strong" and denied all of them. It is not clear whether the two college students applied for trademark protection along with large companies such as beer company Sam Adams.

Although the majority of organizations that have used the phrase have provided aid to the victims of the Boston bombing, because it is not protected by any single organization, it can eventually be used to earn a profit.

Even though the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office denies some applications for trademark protection, it is often worthwhile for companies to seek protection for their original slogans, names and innovations. People who need help in this area may want to meet with an experienced attorney who specializes in intellectual property.

Source: NESN, "['Boston Strong' Can't Be Owned, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office Says](#)," Sam Galanis, April 15, 2014

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