

To: Youth Educational Services, Inc. (ipdocketing@kk-llp.com)
Subject: U.S. TRADEMARK APPLICATION NO. 77881112 - THRIFT FAMILY THRIFT CENTER - 1097.0005
Sent: 5/19/2016 1:19:42 PM
Sent As: ECOM110@USPTO.GOV
Attachments:

**UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE (USPTO)
OFFICE ACTION (OFFICIAL LETTER) ABOUT APPLICANT'S TRADEMARK APPLICATION**

U.S. APPLICATION SERIAL NO. 77881112

MARK: THRIFT FAMILY THRIFT CENTER

77881112

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APPLICANT: Youth Educational Services, Inc.

CORRESPONDENT'S REFERENCE/DOCKET NO :

1097.0005

CORRESPONDENT E-MAIL ADDRESS:

ipdocketing@kk-llp.com

OFFICE ACTION

STRICT DEADLINE TO RESPOND TO THIS LETTER

TO AVOID ABANDONMENT OF APPLICANT'S TRADEMARK APPLICATION, THE USPTO MUST RECEIVE APPLICANT'S COMPLETE RESPONSE TO THIS LETTER **WITHIN 6 MONTHS** OF THE ISSUE/MAILING DATE BELOW.

ISSUE/MAILING DATE: 5/19/2016

The application was last suspended on October 21, 2015 pending resolution of the civil proceeding Concurrent Use No. 94002571. On November 9, 2015 the proceeding was dissolved with prejudice.

Pending the proceedings, the applicant was previously advised of the following:

- (1) The Final Refusal dated November 1, 2010 under Trademark Act Section 2(d) as to U.S. Reg. No. 2505778 is continued and maintained;
- (2) The Final Refusal dated November 1, 2010 as the disclaimer requirement is continued and maintained;
- (3) The denial of applicant's Section 2(f) is continued and maintained.

Registration Refused - Section 2(d) Likelihood of Confusion – Final Refusal

Registration was refused under Trademark Act Section 2(d), 15 U.S.C. Section 1052(d), because the mark for which registration is sought so resembles the marks shown in U.S. Registration No. 2505778 as to be likely, when used with the identified goods, to cause confusion, or to cause mistake, or to deceive. *See previously attached registration.*

The applicant's mark is THRIFT FAMILY THRIFT CENTER for "Retail stores featuring new and used clothing and new and used general consumer merchandise." The registered mark is FAMILY THRIFT CENTER and a design for "Retail grocery and general merchandise store services."

Similarity of the Marks

The marks are compared for similarities in sound, appearance, meaning or connotation. *In re E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Co.*, 476 F.2d 1357, 177 USPQ 563 (C.C.P.A. 1973). Similarity in any one of these elements may be sufficient to find a likelihood of confusion. *In re White Swan Ltd.*, 8 USPQ2d 1534, 1536 (TTAB 1988); *In re Lamson Oil Co.*, 6 USPQ2d 1041, 1043 (TTAB 1987); *In re Mack*, 197 USPQ 755 (TTAB 1977); TMEP §1207.01(b).

In the present case, the applicant has simply added the word "THRIFT" to the registrant's mark "THRIFT FAMILY CENTER." Adding a term to a registered mark generally does not obviate the similarity between the compared marks, as in the present case, nor does it overcome a likelihood of confusion under Section 2(d). *See Coca-Cola Bottling Co. v. Jos. E. Seagram & Sons, Inc.*, 526 F.2d 556, 557, 188 USPQ 105, 106 (C.C.P.A. 1975) (finding BENGAL and BENGAL LANCER and design confusingly similar); *In re Toshiba Med. Sys. Corp.*, 91 USPQ2d 1266, 1269 (TTAB 2009) (finding TITAN and VANTAGE TITAN confusingly similar); *In re El Torito Rests., Inc.*, 9 USPQ2d 2002, 2004 (TTAB 1988) (finding MACHO and MACHO COMBOS confusingly similar); TMEP §1207.01(b)(iii). In the present case, the marks are identical in part.

For a composite mark containing both words and a design, the word portion may be more likely to be impressed upon a purchaser's memory and to be used when requesting the goods and/or services. *Joel Gott Wines, LLC v. Rehoboth Von Gott, Inc.*, 107 USPQ2d 1424, 1431 (TTAB 2013) (citing *In re Dakin's Miniatures, Inc.*, 59 USPQ2d 1593, 1596 (TTAB 1999)); TMEP §1207.01(c)(ii); *see In re Viterra Inc.*, 671 F.3d 1358, 1362, 101 USPQ2d 1905, 1908, 1911 (Fed. Cir. 2012) (citing *CBS Inc. v. Morrow*, 708 F.2d 1579, 1581-82, 218 USPQ 198, 200 (Fed. Cir. 1983)). Thus, although such marks must be compared in their entireties, the word portion is often considered the dominant feature and is accorded greater weight in determining whether marks are confusingly similar, even where the word portion has been disclaimed. *In re Viterra Inc.*, 671 F.3d at 1366, 101 USPQ2d at 1911 (Fed. Cir. 2012) (citing *Giant Food, Inc. v. Nation's Foodservice, Inc.*, 710 F.2d 1565, 1570-71, 218 USPQ2d 390, 395 (Fed. Cir. 1983)). In this case, the word portions of the marks are identical in part.

Where the marks of the respective parties are identical or highly similar, then the commercial relationship between the goods or services of the respective parties must be analyzed carefully to determine whether there is a likelihood of confusion. *In re Opus One Inc.*, 60 USPQ2d 1812, 1815 (TTAB 2001); *In re Concordia Int'l Forwarding Corp.*, 222 USPQ 355 (TTAB 1983); TMEP §1207.01(a).

Relatedness of the Services

The services of the parties need not be identical or directly competitive to find a likelihood of confusion. Instead, they need only be related in some manner, or the conditions surrounding their marketing be such that they could be encountered by the same purchasers under circumstances that could give rise to the mistaken belief that the services come from a common source. *On-line Careline Inc. v. America Online Inc.*, 229 F.3d 1080, 56 USPQ2d 1471 (Fed. Cir. 2000); *In re Martin's Famous Pastry Shoppe, Inc.*, 748 F.2d 1565, 223 USPQ 1289 (Fed. Cir. 1984); *In re Melville Corp.*, 18 USPQ2d 1386, 1388 (TTAB 1991).

Here, both the applicant and the registrant provide retail store services featuring general merchandise. The examining attorney maintains that in addition to the nature of the marks, the parties' services are highly related, as both the applicant and the registrant provide retail store services featuring general merchandise.

The applicant argues that there is no evidence of actual confusion between the applicant and the registrant. The test under Trademark Act Section 2(d) is whether there is a likelihood of confusion. It is not necessary to show actual confusion to establish a likelihood of confusion. *Herbko Int'l, Inc. v. Kappa Books, Inc.*, 308 F.3d 1156, 1165, 64 USPQ2d 1375, 1380 (Fed. Cir. 2002) (citing *Giant Food, Inc. v. Nation's Foodservice, Inc.*, 710 F.2d 1565, 1571, 218 USPQ 390, 396 (Fed. Cir. 1983)); TMEP §1207.01(d)(ii). The Trademark Trial and Appeal Board stated as follows:

[A]pplicant's assertion that it is unaware of any actual confusion occurring as a result of the contemporaneous use of the marks of applicant and registrant is of little probative value in an ex parte proceeding such as this where we have no evidence pertaining to the nature and extent of the use by applicant and registrant (and thus cannot ascertain whether there has been ample opportunity for confusion to arise, if it were going to); and the registrant has no chance to be heard from (at least in the absence of a consent agreement, which applicant has not submitted in this case).

In re Kangaroos U.S.A., 223 USPQ 1025, 1026-27 (TTAB 1984).

Overall, the similarities among the marks and the services of the parties are so great as to create a likelihood of confusion. Accordingly, the refusal to register the mark under Section 2(d) is continued and made FINAL.

Disclaimer of Descriptive Wording Required – Requirement Made Final

In the Office action dated March 7, 2010 the examining attorney required a disclaimer of "THRIFT" and "FAMILY THRIFT CENTER." In its response the applicant provided a disclaimer of "THRIFT."

The applicant must insert a disclaimer of "FAMILY THRIFT CENTER" in the application because the wording "FAMILY THRIFT CENTER" is descriptive of applicant's affordable retail centers for family shopping. The term "thrift" is defined as "the quality of using money and other resources carefully and not wastefully." The word "family" refers to "a group of people who live together and are related to one another, usually consisting of parents and children." The term "center" refers to "a building, group of buildings, or area where a particular activity is performed." *See previously attached definitions.*

If applicant does not provide the required disclaimer, the USPTO may refuse to register the entire mark. *See In re Stereotaxis Inc.*, 429 F.3d 1039, 1040-41, 77 USPQ2d 1087, 1088-89 (Fed. Cir. 2005); TMEP §1213.01(b).

Applicant should submit a disclaimer in the following standardized format:

No claim is made to the exclusive right to use "FAMILY THRIFT CENTER" apart from the mark as shown.

For an overview of disclaimers and instructions on how to satisfy this disclaimer requirement online using the Trademark Electronic Application System (TEAS) form, please go to <http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/law/disclaimer.jsp>.

The requirement for a disclaimer is continued and made Final.

Section 2(f) Dates of Use Do Not Support Five Years Use Claim – Final Refusal

Applicant's claim of acquired distinctiveness of its mark under Trademark Act Section 2(f) is not accepted because applicant's dates of use of the mark indicate that applicant has not actually used the mark in commerce for the requisite time period. For such claim to be accepted, applicant's substantially exclusive and continuous use of the mark in commerce that the U.S. Congress may lawfully regulate must have been for at least five years before the date on which the claim is made. 15 U.S.C. §1052(f); *see* 37 C.F.R. §2.41(a)(2); TMEP §1212.05. And such use must have been in a type of commerce that may be regulated by the United States Congress. 15 U.S.C. §§1052(f), 1127.

In the present case, applicant asserted a claim of acquired distinctiveness on May 2, 2011. Five years prior to this date would be approximately May 2, 2006. However, the date of first use in commerce specified in the application is October 19, 2009, which is less than five years prior to the date the distinctiveness claim was made.

Accordingly, the refusal is continued and made Final.

Response to Final Office Action

Applicant must respond within six months of the date of issuance of this final Office action or the application will be abandoned. 15 U.S.C. §1062(b); 37 C.F.R. §2.65(a). Applicant may respond by providing one or both of the following:

- (1) A response that fully satisfies all outstanding requirements and/or resolves all outstanding refusals.
- (2) An appeal to the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board, with the appeal fee of \$100 per class.

37 C.F.R. §2.63(b)(1)-(2); TMEP §714.04; *see* 37 C.F.R. §2.6(a)(18); TBMP ch. 1200.

In certain rare circumstances, an applicant may respond by filing a petition to the Director pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §2.63(b)(2) to review procedural issues. TMEP §714.04; *see* 37 C.F.R. §2.146(b); TBMP §1201.05; TMEP §1704 (explaining petitionable matters). The petition fee is \$100. 37 C.F.R. §2.6(a)(15).

TEAS PLUS OR TEAS REDUCED FEE (TEAS RF) APPLICANTS – TO MAINTAIN LOWER FEE, ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS MUST BE MET, INCLUDING SUBMITTING DOCUMENTS ONLINE: Applicants who filed their application online using the lower-fee TEAS Plus or TEAS RF application form must (1) file certain documents online using TEAS, including responses to Office actions (see TMEP §§819.02(b), 820.02(b) for a complete list of these documents); (2) maintain a valid e-mail correspondence address; and (3) agree to receive correspondence from the USPTO by e-mail throughout the prosecution of the application. *See* 37 C.F.R. §§2.22(b), 2.23(b); TMEP §§819, 820. TEAS Plus or TEAS RF applicants who do not meet these requirements must submit an additional processing fee of \$50 per international class of goods and/or services. 37 C.F.R. §§2.6(a)(1)(v), 2.22(c), 2.23(c); TMEP §§819.04, 820.04. However, in certain situations, TEAS Plus or TEAS RF applicants may respond to an Office action by authorizing an examiner’s amendment by telephone without incurring this additional fee.

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TO RESPOND TO THIS LETTER: Go to http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/teas/response_forms.jsp. Please wait 48-72 hours from the issue/ mailing date before using the Trademark Electronic Application System (TEAS), to allow for necessary system updates of the application. For *technical* assistance with online forms, e-mail TEAS@uspto.gov. For questions about the Office action itself, please contact the assigned trademark examining attorney. **E-mail communications will not be accepted as responses to Office actions; therefore, do not respond to this Office action by e-mail.**

All informal e-mail communications relevant to this application will be placed in the official application record.

WHO MUST SIGN THE RESPONSE: It must be personally signed by an individual applicant or someone with legal authority to bind an applicant (i.e., a corporate officer, a general partner, all joint applicants). If an applicant is represented by an attorney, the attorney must sign the response.

PERIODICALLY CHECK THE STATUS OF THE APPLICATION: To ensure that applicant does not miss crucial deadlines or official notices, check the status of the application every three to four months using the Trademark Status and Document Retrieval (TSDR) system at <http://tsdr.uspto.gov/>. Please keep a copy of the TSDR status screen. If the status shows no change for more than six months, contact the Trademark Assistance Center by e-mail at TrademarkAssistanceCenter@uspto.gov or call 1-800-786-9199. For more information on checking status, see <http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/process/status/>.

TO UPDATE CORRESPONDENCE/E-MAIL ADDRESS: Use the TEAS form at <http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/teas/correspondence.jsp>.

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Attachments:

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE (USPTO)

**IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING YOUR
U.S. TRADEMARK APPLICATION**

USPTO OFFICE ACTION (OFFICIAL LETTER) HAS ISSUED
ON **5/19/2016** FOR U.S. APPLICATION SERIAL NO. 77881112

Please follow the instructions below:

(1) TO READ THE LETTER: Click on this [link](#) or go to <http://tsdr.uspto.gov>, enter the U.S. application serial number, and click on "Documents."

The Office action may not be immediately viewable, to allow for necessary system updates of the application, but will be available within 24 hours of this e-mail notification.

(2) TIMELY RESPONSE IS REQUIRED: Please carefully review the Office action to determine (1) how to respond, and (2) the applicable response time period. Your response deadline will be calculated from **5/19/2016** (or sooner if specified in the Office action). For information regarding response time periods, see <http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/process/status/responsetime.jsp>.

Do NOT hit "Reply" to this e-mail notification, or otherwise e-mail your response because the USPTO does NOT accept e-mails as responses to Office actions. Instead, the USPTO recommends that you respond online using the Trademark Electronic Application System (TEAS) response form located at http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/teas/response_forms.jsp.

(3) QUESTIONS: For questions about the contents of the Office action itself, please contact the assigned trademark examining attorney. For *technical* assistance in accessing or viewing the Office action in the Trademark Status and Document Retrieval (TSDR) system, please e-mail TSDR@uspto.gov.

WARNING

Failure to file the required response by the applicable response deadline will result in the ABANDONMENT of your application. For more information regarding abandonment, see <http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/basics/abandon.jsp>.

PRIVATE COMPANY SOLICITATIONS REGARDING YOUR APPLICATION: Private companies **not** associated with the USPTO are using information provided in trademark applications to mail or e-mail trademark-related solicitations. These companies often use names that closely resemble the USPTO and their solicitations may look like an official government document. Many solicitations require that you pay

“fees.”

Please carefully review all correspondence you receive regarding this application to make sure that you are responding to an official document from the USPTO rather than a private company solicitation. All official USPTO correspondence will be mailed only from the “United States Patent and Trademark Office” in Alexandria, VA; or sent by e-mail from the domain “@uspto.gov.” For more information on how to handle private company solicitations, see http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/solicitation_warnings.jsp.