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Sent: 12/3/2015 10:01:43 PM

To: TTAB E filing

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Subject: U.S. TRADEMARK APPLICATION NO. 86425269 - TRUE VELOCITY - N/A - Request for
Reconsideration Denied - Return to TTAB

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

U.S. APPLICATION SERIAL NO. 86425269

MARK: TRUE VELOCITY



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GENERAL TRADEMARK INFORMATION:

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APPLICANT: Prosser, Inc.

CORRESPONDENT'S REFERENCE/DOCKET NO:

N/A

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REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION DENIED

ISSUE/MAILING DATE: 12/3/2015

As a preliminary matter the amendment to the identification of goods is accepted and made of record.

The trademark examining attorney has carefully reviewed applicant's request for reconsideration and is denying the request for the reasons stated below. See 37 C.F.R. §2.63(b)(3); TMEP §§715.03(a)(ii)(B), 715.04(a). The likelihood of confusion refusal based on Section 2(d) of the Trademark Act made final in the Office action dated 4/28/15 is maintained and continues to be final. See TMEP §§715.03(a)(ii)(B), 715.04(a).

Refusal - Likelihood of Confusion - Section 2(d) of the Trademark Act:

Registration of the applied-for mark is refused because of a likelihood of confusion with the mark in U.S. Registration No. 2386219. Trademark Act Section 2(d), 15 U.S.C. §1052(d); see TMEP §§1207.01 et seq. Registration was previously provided.

Trademark Act Section 2(d) bars registration of an applied-for mark that so resembles a registered mark that it is likely a potential consumer would be confused, mistaken, or deceived as to the source of the goods and/or services of the applicant and registrant. See 15 U.S.C. §1052(d). A determination of likelihood of confusion under Section 2(d) is made on a case-by case basis and the factors set forth in *In re E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co.*, 476 F.2d 1357, 1361, 177 USPQ 563, 567 (C.C.P.A. 1973) aid in this determination. *Citigroup Inc. v. Capital City Bank Grp., Inc.*, 637 F.3d 1344, 1349, 98 USPQ2d 1253, 1256 (Fed. Cir. 2011) (citing *On-Line Careline, Inc. v. Am. Online, Inc.*, 229 F.3d 1080, 1085, 56 USPQ2d 1471, 1474 (Fed. Cir. 2000)). Not all the du Pont factors, however, are necessarily relevant or of equal weight, and any one of the factors may control in a given case, depending upon the evidence of record. *Citigroup Inc. v. Capital City Bank Grp., Inc.*, 637 F.3d at 1355, 98 USPQ2d at 1260; *In re Majestic Distilling Co.*, 315 F.3d 1311, 1315, 65 USPQ2d 1201, 1204 (Fed. Cir. 2003); see *In re E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co.*, 476 F.2d at 1361-62, 177 USPQ at 567.

In any likelihood of confusion determination, two key considerations are similarity of the marks and similarity or relatedness of the goods and/or services. *In re Aquamar, Inc.*, 115 USPQ2d 1122, 1126 (TTAB 2015) (citing *Federated Foods, Inc. v. Fort Howard Paper Co.*, 544 F.2d 1098, 1103, 192 USPQ 24, 29 (C.C.P.A. 1976)); *In re Iolo Techs., LLC*, 95 USPQ2d 1498, 1499 (TTAB 2010); see TMEP §1207.01. That is, the marks are compared in their entireties for similarities in appearance, sound, connotation, and commercial impression. *In re Viterra Inc.*, 671 F.3d 1358, 1362, 101 USPQ2d 1905, 1908 (Fed. Cir. 2012) (quoting *In re E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co.*, 476 F.2d 1357, 1361, 177 USPQ 563, 567 (C.C.P.A. 1973)); TMEP §1207.01(b)-(b)(v). Additionally, the goods and/or services are compared to determine whether they are similar or commercially related or travel in the same trade channels. See *Coach Servs., Inc. v. Triumph Learning LLC*, 668 F.3d 1356, 1369-71, 101 USPQ2d 1713, 1722-23 (Fed. Cir. 2012); *Herbko Int'l*,

Inc. v. Kappa Books, Inc., 308 F.3d 1156, 1165, 64 USPQ2d 1375, 1381 (Fed. Cir. 2002); TMEP §1207.01, (a)(vi).

The overriding concern is not only to prevent buyer confusion as to the source of the goods and/or services, but to protect the registrant from adverse commercial impact due to use of a similar mark by a newcomer. See *In re Shell Oil Co.*, 992 F.2d 1204, 1208, 26 USPQ2d 1687, 1690 (Fed. Cir. 1993). Therefore, any doubt regarding a likelihood of confusion determination is resolved in favor of the registrant. TMEP §1207.01(d)(i); see *Hewlett-Packard Co. v. Packard Press, Inc.*, 281 F.3d 1261, 1265, 62 USPQ2d 1001, 1003 (Fed. Cir. 2002); *In re Hyper Shoppes (Ohio), Inc.*, 837 F.2d 463, 464-65, 6 USPQ2d 1025, 1026 (Fed. Cir. 1988).

In this case, the following factors are the most relevant: similarity of the marks, similarity and nature of the goods and/or services, and similarity of the trade channels of the goods and/or services. See *In re Viterra Inc.*, 671 F.3d 1358, 1361-62, 101 USPQ2d 1905, 1908 (Fed. Cir. 2012); *In re Dakin's Miniatures Inc.*, 59 USPQ2d 1593, 1595-96 (TTAB 1999); TMEP §§1207.01 et seq.

Comparison of the Marks:

Marks are compared in their entireties for similarities in appearance, sound, connotation, and commercial impression. *Stone Lion Capital Partners, LP v. Lion Capital LLP*, 746 F.3d 1317, 1321, 110 USPQ2d 1157, 1160 (Fed. Cir. 2014) (quoting *Palm Bay Imps., Inc. v. Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin Maison Fondee En 1772*, 396 F.3d 1369, 1371, 73 USPQ2d 1689, 1691 (Fed. Cir. 2005)); TMEP §1207.01(b)-(b)(v). "Similarity in any one of these elements may be sufficient to find the marks confusingly similar." *In re Davia*, 110 USPQ2d 1810, 1812 (TTAB 2014) (citing *In re 1st USA Realty Prof'ls, Inc.*, 84 USPQ2d 1581, 1586 (TTAB 2007)); *In re White Swan Ltd.*, 8 USPQ2d 1534, 1535 (TTAB 1988); TMEP §1207.01(b).

The applicant has applied to register TRUE VELOCITY in standard character form. The registered mark is VELOCITY in standard character form.

The applicant's proposed mark incorporates the entire literal portion of the registered mark. Incorporating the entirety of one mark within another 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 *Wella Corp. v. Cal. Concept Corp.*, 558 F.2d 1019, 1022, 194 USPQ 419, 422 (C.C.P.A.

1977) (finding CALIFORNIA CONCEPT and surfer design and CONCEPT confusingly similar); 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); Hunter Indus., Inc. v. Toro Co., 110 USPQ2d 1651, 1660-61 (TTAB 2014) (finding PRECISION and PRECISION DISTRIBUTION CONTROL confusingly similar); TMEP §1207.01(b)(iii).

Additionally, marks may be confusingly similar in appearance where similar terms or phrases or similar parts of terms or phrases appear in the compared marks and create a similar overall commercial impression. See Crocker Nat'l Bank v. Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, 228 USPQ 689, 690-91 (TTAB 1986), *aff'd sub nom.* Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce v. Wells Fargo Bank, Nat'l Ass'n, 811 F.2d 1490, 1495, 1 USPQ2d 1813, 1817 (Fed. Cir. 1987) (finding COMMCASH and COMMUNICASH confusingly similar); *In re* Corning Glass Works, 229 USPQ 65, 66 (TTAB 1985) (finding CONFIRM and CONFIRMCELLS confusingly similar); *In re* Pellerin Milnor Corp., 221 USPQ 558, 560 (TTAB 1983) (finding MILTRON and MILLTRONICS confusingly similar); TMEP §1207.01(b)(ii)-(iii).

Here the applicant has merely added the word element TRUE to the registered mark. 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. Furthermore, the word portions of the marks are nearly identical in appearance, sound, connotation, and commercial impression; therefore, the addition of a design element does not obviate the similarity of the marks in this case. See *In re* Shell Oil Co., 992 F.2d 1204, 1206, 26 USPQ2d 1687, 1688 (Fed. Cir. 1993); TMEP §1207.01(c)(ii).

Applicant argues that the examining attorney dissects its mark. He does not. Marks must be compared in their entireties and should not be dissected; however, a trademark examining attorney may weigh the individual components of a mark to determine its overall commercial impression. *Stone Lion Capital Partners, LP v. Lion Capital LLP*, 746 F.3d 1317, 1322, 110 USPQ2d 1157, 1161 (Fed. Cir. 2014) (“[Regarding the issue of confusion,] there is nothing improper in stating that . . . more or less weight has been given to a particular feature of a mark, provided the ultimate conclusion rests on consideration

of the marks in their entireties.”) (quoting *In re Nat’l Data Corp.*, 753 F.2d 1056, 1058, 224 USPQ 749, 751 (Fed. Cir. 1985))).

Although marks are compared in their entireties, one feature of a mark may be more significant or dominant in creating a commercial impression. See *In re Viterra Inc.*, 671 F.3d 1358, 1362, 101 USPQ2d 1905, 1908 (Fed. Cir. 2012); *In re Nat’l Data Corp.*, 753 F.2d 1056, 1058, 224 USPQ 749, 751 (Fed. Cir. 1985); TMEP §1207.01(b)(viii), (c)(ii). Greater weight is often given to this dominant feature when determining whether marks are confusingly similar. See *In re Nat’l Data Corp.*, 753 F.2d at 1058, 224 USPQ at 751.

Applicant states that consumers are generally more inclined to focus on the first word, prefix, or syllable in any trademark or service mark. See *Palm Bay Imps., Inc. v. Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin Maison Fondee En 1772*, 396 F.3d 1369, 1372, 73 USPQ2d 1689, 1692 (Fed. Cir. 2005); *Presto Prods., Inc. v. Nice-Pak Prods., Inc.*, 9 USPQ2d 1895, 1897 (TTAB 1988) (“it is often the first part of a mark which is most likely to be impressed upon the mind of a purchaser and remembered” when making purchasing decisions). While this statement is generally true the dominant word in the applicant’s proposed mark is VELOCITY. The word VELOCITY is dominant because the first word TRUE is used as an adjective and merely modifies the noun VELOCITY.

Here the proposed mark is very similar in appearance, sound, meaning and connotation as the registered mark. More importantly it conveys the same overall commercial impression as the mark of the registrant.

Dilution:

Applicant again argues that the proposed mark is weak and therefore entitled to little or no protection. Applicant now focuses on two of the ten previously listed third party registrations, both in class 13. The first registration is VELOCITOR for ammunition. This registration can be easily distinguished as it is a made-up, inherently distinctive word which has no meaning and merely shares part of the word VELOCITY and creates an entirely different commercial impression. The second is VELOCITY TACTICS for ballistic weapons. It shares the term VELOCITY with the registered mark but adds the non-descriptive word TACTICS and identifies goods that could potentially use the registrant’s ammunition if the caliber(s) of the weapons match the ammunition caliber. Only the second registration even uses the word VELOCITY for related goods, a list of one registered marks does not show that VELOCITY is

commonly used in connection with the ammunition goods at issue. Therefore the cited mark is in fact strong and as such is entitled to every protection for like or similar marks.

Further arguing dilution, the applicant states that the term “velocity” is often used in the ammunition field to describe a feature of the goods. Applicant concludes that because of this use the word is weak, diluted, or so widely used that it should not be afforded a broad scope of protection in a trademark context. Again, the weakness or dilution of a particular mark is generally determined in the context of the number and nature of similar trademarks in use in the marketplace in connection with similar goods and/or services. See *Nat’l Cable Television Ass’n, Inc. v. Am. Cinema Editors, Inc.*, 937 F.2d 1572, 1579-80, 19 USPQ2d 1424, 1430 (Fed. Cir. 1991); *In re E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co.*, 476 F.2d 1357, 1361, 177 USPQ 563, 567 (C.C.P.A. 1973). Applicant provides no VELOCITY trademarks to support this argument or to confirm their use in the marketplace. The fact that the word is used in the marketplace in another context has no bearing on the strength of the mark cited against applicant here.

Furthermore, the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit and the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board have recognized that marks deemed “weak” or merely descriptive are still entitled to protection against the registration by a subsequent user of a similar mark for closely related goods and/or services. In *re Colonial Stores, Inc.*, 216 USPQ 793, 795 (TTAB 1982); TMEP §1207.01(b)(ix); see *King Candy Co. v. Eunice King’s Kitchen, Inc.*, 496 F.2d 1400, 1401, 182 USPQ 108, 109 (C.C.P.A. 1974). This protection extends to marks registered on the Supplemental Register. TMEP §1207.01(b)(ix); see, e.g., *In re Clorox Co.*, 578 F.2d 305, 307-08, 198 USPQ 337, 340 (C.C.P.A. 1978); *In re Hunke & Jochheim*, 185 USPQ 188 (TTAB 1975).

Comparison of the Goods:

Generally, the greater degree of similarity between the applied-for mark and the registered mark, the lesser the degree of similarity between the goods and/or services of the respective parties that is required to support a finding of likelihood of confusion. In *re Davey Prods. Pty Ltd.*, 92 USPQ2d 1198, 1202 (TTAB 2009); *In re Thor Tech, Inc.*, 90 USPQ2d 1634, 1636 (TTAB 2009).

Additionally, where the goods and/or services of an applicant and registrant are identical or virtually identical, the degree of similarity between the marks required to support a finding of likelihood of confusion is not as great as in the case of diverse goods and/or services. See *United Global Media Grp., Inc. v. Tseng*, 112 USPQ2d 1039, 1049 (TTAB 2014) (quoting *Century 21 Real Estate Corp. v. Century Life of Am.*, 970 F.2d 874, 877, 23 USPQ2d 1698, 1701 (Fed. Cir. 1992)); TMEP §1207.01(b).

Here the applicant has again amended its identification to “Polymer-based center fire rifle cartridges meeting military specifications and provided solely in connection with Department of Defense, governmental and military use in automatic machine guns and semi-automatic machine guns, excluding all other ammunition, shotgun shells and shotgun shell shot”, in class 13. The registered mark has identified its goods as “Ammunition; shotgun shells; shotgun shell shot”, in class 13.

Once again applicant attempts to differentiate the goods by further defining its goods and excluding all other ammunition, shotgun shells and shotgun shell shot. The goods remain identical and highly related. With respect to applicant’s and registrant’s goods, the question of likelihood of confusion is determined based on the description of the goods stated in the application and registration at issue, not on extrinsic evidence of actual use. See *Stone Lion Capital Partners, LP v. Lion Capital LLP*, 746 F.3d 1317, 1323, 110 USPQ2d 1157, 1162 (Fed. Cir. 2014) (quoting *Octocom Sys. Inc. v. Hous. Computers Servs. Inc.*, 918 F.2d 937, 942, 16 USPQ2d 1783, 1787 (Fed. Cir. 1990)).

In this case, the identification set forth in the registration has no restrictions as to nature, type, channels of trade, or classes of purchasers. Therefore, it is presumed that these goods “travel in the same channels of trade to the same class of purchasers.” In *re Viterra Inc.*, 671 F.3d 1358, 1362, 101 USPQ2d 1905, 1908 (Fed. Cir. 2012) (quoting *Hewlett-Packard Co. v. Packard Press, Inc.*, 281 F.3d 1261, 1268, 62 USPQ2d 1001, 1005 (Fed. Cir. 2002)). Further, the registration uses the broad wording “AMMUNITION” to describe its goods and this wording is presumed to encompass all goods of the type described, including those in applicant’s now even more narrow identification. See *In re Jump Designs, LLC*, 80 USPQ2d 1370, 1374 (TTAB 2006) (citing *In re Elbaum*, 211 USPQ 639, 640 (TTAB 1981)).

Channels of Trade:

The presumption under Trademark Act Section 7(b), 15 U.S.C. §1057(b), is that the registrant is the owner of the mark and that use of the mark extends to all goods and/or services identified in the registration. The presumption also implies that the registrant operates in all normal channels of trade and reaches all classes of purchasers of the identified goods and/or services. In *re Melville Corp.*, 18 USPQ2d 1386, 1389 (TTAB 1991); *McDonald’s Corp. v. McKinley*, 13 USPQ2d 1895, 1899 (TTAB 1989); *RE/MAX of Am., Inc. v. Realty Mart, Inc.*, 207 USPQ 960, 964-65 (TTAB 1980); see TMEP §1207.01(a)(iii). This includes the applicant’s “Department of Defense, governmental and military” channels of trade and all classes of purchasers in connection with ammunition. The registrant may currently manufacture and/or may in the future manufacture or bid on Department of Defense, governmental and military contracts for polymer-based center fire rifle cartridges meeting military

specifications and provided solely in connection with Department of Defense, governmental and military use in automatic machine guns and semi-automatic machine guns.

Sophisticated Careful Purchasers:

Applicant again argues that its purchasers are sophisticated and careful. The fact that purchasers are sophisticated or knowledgeable in a particular field does not necessarily mean that they are sophisticated or knowledgeable in the field of trademarks or immune from source confusion. TMEP §1207.01(d)(vii); see, e.g., *Stone Lion Capital Partners, LP v. Lion Capital LLP*, 746 F.3d. 1317, 1325, 110 USPQ2d 1157, 1163-64 (Fed. Cir. 2014); *Top Tobacco LP v. N. Atl. Operating Co.*, 101 USPQ2d 1163, 1170 (TTAB 2011).

Conclusion:

The examining attorney has adhered to all standards of examination and the refusal is based on established statutory and case law and not a theoretical possibility of confusion but a likelihood of confusion as defined in Trademark Act. The proposed mark of the applicant incorporates the entire literal element of the registered mark and is highly similar with the same overall connotation and commercial impression. Additionally, the goods of the parties are identical and highly related. As such, there exists a likelihood of confusion as to the source of the goods.

In the present case, applicant's request has not resolved the outstanding issue, nor does it raise a new issue or provide any new or compelling evidence with regard to the outstanding issue in the final Office action. In addition, applicant's analysis and arguments are not persuasive nor do they shed new light on the issues. Accordingly, the request is denied.

If applicant has already filed a timely notice of appeal with the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board, the Board will be notified to resume the appeal. See TMEP §715.04(a).

/JSD/

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