

LOUIS VUITTON

BRAND PROTECTION

Respecting Heritage

The fight against counterfeiting is a long-term element of Louis Vuitton's worldwide sustainability strategy. Preserving the creativity and the rights of designers, artists and brands is vital to their long-term survival. One of the biggest threats to that survival today is counterfeiting, whose effects go far beyond buying a cheap bag on a street in a faraway city while in holiday.

Following its respect for creativity and protection of intellectual property, Louis Vuitton has a zero tolerance policy to counterfeiting. Counterfeiting is the violation of the talent, the skills of the craftsmen and the creativity of the artists to whom Louis Vuitton owes its success. The robbery of intellectual property rights undermines the investment and knowledge made to develop the company. Counterfeiting further damages communities with uncontrolled and dangerous working conditions and abuse of human rights such as under-aged and forced labor. A high price sits behind the purchase of a cheap fake bag.

Louis Vuitton has faced counterfeiting since the earliest days of its success. The highly distinctive Monogram canvas was created in 1896 by Georges Vuitton, in an effort to deter imitators who were attracted by the brand's success and its world-class status.

Preserving creativity

Louis Vuitton's Intellectual Property Department is managing over 18 000 intellectual property rights including trademarks, designs and copyrights with support of 250 agents around the world. Thanks to this fully-dedicated team of lawyers and former law enforcement professionals based in Paris with regional offices in Tokyo, Honk Kong, Shanghai, Beijing, Seoul, Milan, Istanbul, Athens, Dubai, New York and Mendoza, thousands of anti-counterfeiting raids are performed each year. In 2017, Louis Vuitton initiated more than 38 000 anti-counterfeiting procedures worldwide (including criminal, civil and customs procedures), resulting in the break-up of criminal networks, easing the plight of workers working for illegal organizations. The Internet division of the Intellectual Property Department registers domain names, fights cyber-squatting and tracks counterfeiting online by monitoring the Internet, in particular search engines and market places. As a result, more than 6000 litigious websites were shut down in 2017 and more than 120 000 auctions were terminated.

Fighting Illegality

The sale of counterfeiting goods is a serious offense whose revenue funds criminal organizations at the expense of consumers, companies and governments. It calls for the responsible behavior of all economic actors, Louis Vuitton fully support the need to share responsibilities along the value chain, according to the principle that everyone should conduct their business with due diligence to protect consumers from the harm of fake products.

In 2003, Louis Vuitton has pioneered the use of “contributory liability principle” to fight counterfeiting targeting “intermediaries” such as landlords, courier companies and payment facilities providing services to underground counterfeit networks. This program has been very effective in certain counterfeiting hotspots like New York’s Canal Street.

Louis Vuitton strongly believes that in both the online and offline world, opportunities and responsibilities should be shared, based on the principle that each actor should be under a duty of care to take all reasonable steps to protect consumers from misleading practices.

The fight against counterfeiting is a long-term battle. Louis Vuitton is more determined than ever to preserve creativity in protecting its brand in the interest of its customers, its employees and those who suffer at the hands of the counterfeiting industry.

The authenticity of Louis Vuitton products is guaranteed in Louis Vuitton’s exclusive distribution network. Louis Vuitton products are only sold in Louis Vuitton Stores, which are owned and staffed by Louis Vuitton, and through the Louis Vuitton’s exclusive official website: louisvuitton.com.

Press contact:

Jun Fujiwara
Corporate Press Director
Louis Vuitton Malletier
+33 1 5580 3380