

LEGAL AND PRIVACY

Cartier, Amazon file joint counterfeit lawsuits

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Cartier "Love" bracelet was one of the products cited in the lawsuits. Image credit: Cartier

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

French jeweler **Cartier** and ecommerce giant Amazon have jointly filed two lawsuits against a social media influencer and eight other businesses over counterfeiting allegations.

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Cartier and Amazon allege the defendants advertised, promoted and facilitated the sale of counterfeit luxury goods through Instagram and other sites, infringing on Cartier's trademarks and violating Amazon's policies. The lawsuits were filed in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington and claim the defendants conspired with one another to sell counterfeit products and publish false advertising.

"By using social media to promote counterfeit products, bad actors undermine trust and mislead customers," said Kebharu Smith, associate general counsel and director of the Amazon Counterfeit Crimes Unit (CCU), in a statement.

"Amazon will keep investing and innovating to stay ahead of counterfeiters, and working with brands and law enforcement to hold bad actors accountable," he said. "We do not just want to chase them away from Amazon we want to stop them for good."

Legal action

The lawsuits claim the defendants openly posted photos of counterfeit Cartier jewelry, with a description of the infringing product on Instagram; however, on Amazon and other websites, they created product detail pages for generic products with no indication of infringement.

They also allege the defendants provided customers on Instagram with links to the generic product on Amazon or other websites, telling customers if they purchased the generic item, they would receive a counterfeit Cartier product.

One product attempted to replicate Cartier's "Love" bracelet. On Amazon, it was disguised as a non-branded product with the description "Women's Fashion Classic Screw Love Titanium Steel Bracelet" with no mention of Cartier and an image that concealed the screw motif of Cartier's authentic "Love" collection.



Amazon has worked with a number of luxury brands to bring legal repercussions upon bad actors. Image credit: Amazon

On Instagram, Cartier and Amazon claim the product was advertised as a counterfeit with images bearing the Cartier name and screw motif. When the generic product was purchased from Amazon, the counterfeit Cartier "Love" bracelet bearing the Cartier trademarks was shipped to the customer.

Cartier and Amazon also accuse the defendants of repeatedly directing and instructing their social media followers on how to try to purchase infringing products on Amazon, by directing them to links or sending direct messages from Instagram, on how to purchase "high-quality copies" of luxury brands.

While Amazon offers a vast range of products and services for millions of consumers, many luxury brands have avoided partnering with the platform because of its inability to control the selling of pirated and counterfeit goods.

In a step towards anti-counterfeiting, Amazon released its first brand protection report last year detailing action it is taking to ensure customers shop from authentic products in its stores and platforms ([see story](#)).

Further, in April, the ecommerce giant worked with Italian fashion house Salvatore Ferragamo in reporting a counterfeiter to Chinese authorities, resulting in a successful warehouse raid.

The counterfeiter, which was producing illegitimate Ferragamo Gancini belts, was reported to the Market Supervision and Administration (MSA) authorities in Yiwu City, Zhejiang Province, China. After an investigation by the MSA and Amazon's Counterfeit Crimes Unit, Chinese authorities raided the warehouse and seized hundreds of counterfeit belts and buckle accessories that would ostensibly have otherwise been sold ([see story](#)).

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