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"Powerful" Rebranding at International Trademark Association?

Posted on January 7, 2011 by [Dan Kelly](#)

The International Trademark Association, known as INTA, unveiled [a new website](#) yesterday with some new branding and features. (Presser [here](#), INTA Bulletin announcement [here](#).) I like the overall design of the website itself. If you ignore the flipping blocks (which can be difficult), the site has a fairly clean and simple appearance. (The [FAQ](#) tells how to join the flipping blocks).

I am not, however, enthusiastic about the new slogan: Powerful Network Powerful Brands. If you have to tell people that these things are powerful, then, well, they're probably not. And do we really want *the* trademark association extolling the "power" of brands when [the U.S. Congress has recently mandated a USPTO study on trademark bullying](#)? (Incidentally, today is the deadline for submitting comments--see preceding link and Steve's prior posts [here](#).) I would have expected much better branding from an organization so closely associated with the branding world, alas.

Unfortunately, I must pour my full disdain on the name of INTA's new social networking platform, dubbed "My Powerful Network." [We've made some observations before](#) about "my" used in branding. On the whole, I'm not keen on "my" brands. "My" brands can too easily lead to a balkanized, subjective understanding of the brand--"my" brand inherently means something different to me than it does to you. The viewer is invited to be the first person in the brand, and it ends up being flimsy.

But set that aside. My Powerful Network? Compare with a brief list of other social networking brand names:

- FaceBook
- MySpace
- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- Ping
- Ning
- Buzz
- Orkut
- hi5



These are not all necessarily great, but each is a fair bit stronger than My Powerful Network. These brands are all well into suggestive territory--a couple appear to be coined. My Powerful Network is one *weak* (irony intended) laudatory term away from being "My *Social* Network," which, to state the obvious, is generic (and unprotectable from a trademark standpoint). I'm kind of embarrassed to be a part of My Powerful Network. It's like this social network needs Viagra in order to work.

I'm hoping that My Powerful Network is a placeholder for something stronger that's still on the drawing board or in the clearance process. Maybe INTA will be unveiling a contest at this year's annual meeting to name (or rename) the social network.

I'll report on developments, assuming I'm still invited to the annual meeting . . .

