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Overview

## IP Update

Trademark IP Update - Attention Trademark Owners - New Facebook Username Policy

June 11, 2009

Facebook just announced that it will begin allowing users to select personalized usernames. Presently, all Facebook profile pages utilize a URL containing a randomly assigned number such as:

[www.facebook.com/people/John\\_Smith/123456789](http://www.facebook.com/people/John_Smith/123456789).

With this change, Facebook users will now be able to create personalized URLs with the following format: <http://www.facebook.com/username>. Facebook is encouraging its users to create usernames that are as close as possible to their personal names or business names.

Facebook will begin accepting username requests on **Saturday, June 13, 2009 at 12:01 a.m. EDT**, on a first-come first-serve basis.

Importantly, to prevent name "squatting," Facebook will limit the ability to request a username on June 13th to those who already had a Facebook Page on or before May 31, 2009 with a minimum of 1,000 "fans" as of that date, or an individual user profile on or before 3 p.m. EDT on June 9, 2009. If you or your company meet these criteria, we recommend that you apply for a Facebook username as early as possible on June 13th.

Trademark owners should also consider taking advantage of Facebook's procedure for trademark owners to submit requests to block their marks from being registered as usernames. That submission form, called "**Preventing the Registration of a Username**," can be found [here](#).

The form requires the entry of the trademark being claimed, as well as a single registration number. Facebook has not yet indicated whether it will accept a trademark application number or a claim of common law rights in support of a request, or how the mark owner should submit the request in the absence of a registration number.

Regardless of whether you meet the criteria for or plan to submit a request for a Facebook username on June 13, 2009, we recommend that trademark owners submit requests to block the use of their trademarks as Facebook usernames **by no later than midnight Friday, June 12, 2009**.

Finally, even if trademark owners are unable to successfully block third parties from registering their marks as usernames or if they do not submit a blocking request before the deadline, Facebook has a procedure to request the removal of an infringing username. That form, called "**Notice of Intellectual Property Infringement (Non-Copyright Claim)**" can be found [here](#).