

A Winthrop & Weinstine blog dedicated to bridging the gap between legal & marketing types.

[New "Tinman" Triathlon to be Sponsored by Ironman?](#)

Posted on October 8, 2010 by [Dan Kelly](#)

I enjoyed Brent's ["I'm with the Brand"](#) post last week, in which he detailed being turned off by overzealous fandom of some popular, or perhaps trendy, brands. I can identify (although I have no qualms about being, or admitting that I am, an "Apple Core").



This week, I read about a situation that illustrates the [contrapositive](#) of what Brent discussed. The [Wall Street Journal is reporting](#) that some triathletes are disappointed with the [World Triathlon Corporation's decision](#) to expand its use of the IRONMAN ® brand to triathlons shorter than *the* 141-mile Ford Ironman Triathlon World Championship.

Brand extensions are, of course, fairly common things. The issue is really about overextending a brand (on which we have commented [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)). A good question is, "where does the goodwill start diminishing and the ill will begin increasing?" But the key business question will more often be, "to what extent is it most profitable to extend a brand?" Or, "when do you begin to reap diminishing returns on brand extensions?"

When a company has customers that [brand themselves](#) with the company's trademarks, I suspect that it may hit the point of diminishing returns on brand extensions, at least with existing clientele, rather quickly.

