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DRIVING IP ENFORCEMENT THROUGH NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND AI

*Contribution prepared by Ms. Liselotte Honig, Tech Lead, React HQ, Amsterdam, the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

ABSTRACT

This contribution presents Ocean, an anti-counterfeiting tool powered by artificial intelligence (AI) and developed by React, the Anti-Counterfeiting Network. The software-based tool supports online enforcement of intellectual property rights (IPRs) through technology and automation, assisting rights holders in the detection, analysis and management of potentially infringing listings across e-commerce websites and social media platforms. It supports image recognition, data parsing, classification and clustering, enabling the identification and prioritization of listings, sellers and websites that may warrant further review. Ocean is a decision-support tool; legal assessment and enforcement remain the responsibility of human experts. Ocean integrates trademark registration data through the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) application programming interface (API) and reflects the designation of React as a trusted flagger under the European Union Digital Services Act. The contribution concludes with an assessment of the limitations of AI-driven technologies for IP enforcement and the opportunities they present.

* The views expressed in this document are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Secretariat or of the Member States of WIPO.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. React is a not-for-profit organization that helps its members to combat counterfeiting and protect intellectual property (IP) worldwide. With over 35 years of experience, React works through a network of offices and partners in more than 130 countries, representing 360+ member companies. Its activities span customs and market enforcement, legal services, online enforcement, intelligence and data analysis. In 2025, React launched Ocean by React', a proprietary software platform designed to support scalable, data-driven enforcement of IP rights (IPRs).

II. ABOUT OCEAN BY REACT

2. Ocean is powered by advanced artificial intelligence (AI), technology and automation and designed to combat online counterfeiting and IP infringements worldwide. Ocean streamlines the detection and enforcement of infringing goods and content across social media and e-commerce websites and platforms, ensuring efficient and effective global brand protection and enforcement of IPRs.

3. Ocean is a decision-support and enforcement orchestration tool. It assists rights holders and enforcement professionals in flagging and prioritizing items and sites and submitting legally compliant notices, while legal assessment and final decision-making remain with human experts.

III. BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT

4. Ocean was developed in response to an increasingly complex online enforcement landscape. Rights holders are confronted with growing volumes of infringing listings, websites and increasingly organized seller networks that deliberately hide their activities, for example by frequently changing accounts, operating across multiple storefronts, or using misleading product information. Traditional manual enforcement processes are unable to keep pace with the scale and complexity of this activity.

5. Ocean was designed with the following considerations in mind:

- Enforcement must be scalable, yet legally compliant.
- Automation and AI should support expert judgment and increase efficiency.
- Detecting seller patterns across listings, websites and offline data is crucial.

6. The software was developed in close cooperation with React's members and operational teams, ensuring that its functionality reflects real-world enforcement requirements and regulatory constraints.

IV. HOW OCEAN USES AI

7. AI is applied across multiple stages of the processing pipeline, supporting detection, analysis, classification and prioritization of data throughout the enforcement workflow.

- **Image recognition**

AI-based image recognition is used to detect exact and partial matches and visually similar product listings. This supports the identification of infringing listings and websites on a global scale.

- **AI parsing**

Parsing functionality extracts and structures key item, seller and website data from listings and online sources. This allows Ocean to standardize data formats and prepare them for further analysis.

- **Site, seller and item analysis**

AI analyzes the collected data to identify signs of possible infringement, such as suspicious pricing, seller behavior or inconsistencies across listings. The focus is on identifying patterns or indications that something may be wrong.

- **AI classification**

Classification models are used to categorize and prioritize listings and sites based on predefined risk indicators. This allows enforcement teams to focus first on flagged cases that are most likely to require action.

- **AI clustering**

Clustering is a central capability of Ocean. AI identifies and prioritizes connections between entities, such as sellers operating across multiple accounts or recurring product patterns. This enables enforcement strategies to address organized or systemic infringement rather than isolated listings.

V. Compliant enforcement and EUIPO integration

8. For effective enforcement notices submitted to platforms must be legally compliant. That usually includes the correct identification of trademark rights, registrations and ownership details.

9. Ocean is therefore integrated with the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) application programming interface (API), allowing trademark registration data to be retrieved and associated automatically with enforcement actions.

10. This enables:

- Use of accurate and up-to-date trademark information
- Automated inclusion of correct registrations in notices
- Reduction of manual handling and risk of errors
- Higher consistency and acceptance rates for enforcement submissions

11. The integration reflects the principle that automation in enforcement must go hand in hand with legal accuracy and regulatory compliance.

VI. ROLE OF REACT

12. The role of React in administering the tool is broader than providing a technical platform. It includes:

- Providing operational and legal expertise: React combines Ocean's technical capabilities with longstanding experience in IP enforcement, ensuring that AI-supported insights translate into appropriate and compliant actions.

- Ensuring credibility through the trusted flagger status: the designation of React as a trusted flagger under the European Union Digital Services Act (DSA) supports structured cooperation with online platforms and intermediaries and reinforces the quality and credibility of notices submitted through Ocean.
- Focus on integration: while AI has powerful capabilities, particularly in clustering and pattern recognition, its effectiveness ultimately depends on access to data. In practice, such access is often constrained by platform architectures, anti-bot measures and intermediary controls. React therefore increasingly focuses on integration-based approaches, reaching out to platforms and intermediaries to enable sustainable, authorized data access via APIs or the whitelisting of our crawlers.

VII. CONCLUSION

13. Ocean demonstrates the significant opportunities that AI-driven technologies offer for IP enforcement, particularly in the classification, prioritization and clustering of infringement-related data. At the same time, it highlights an important limitation: without structured access to data, even the most advanced AI models cannot operate effectively.

14. React sees the future of enforcement in:

- Encouraging the adoption of integrated and automated approaches with online platforms and intermediaries, either via APIs or the whitelisting of our crawlers
- Continued alignment with regulatory frameworks such as the DSA
- Expansion of use cases where reliable data access and integration can be achieved, such as customs and supply chain data

15. Ocean can therefore support a broader enforcement ecosystem in which AI capability, legal compliance and data access can evolve together.

[End of contribution]