

# The *Managing IP* guide to trade mark blogs

*Managing IP* is pleased to present a short guide to some of the more popular blogs covering trade mark and other IP law around the world for the 130th INTA Annual Meeting. Blogs play an important role in reporting on and analyzing the fast-moving, and often contentious, issues in intellectual property and their rapid growth over the past five years testifies to their importance to IP owners. We asked all the blog authors to provide some details about the development, focus and tone of their blogs and these are included below, along with the URLs and a screenshot from each one. Information is correct as at May 1 2008. Links to more IP blogs and other related resources are available online at <http://www.managingip.com>.

## Canadian Trademark Blog <http://www.trademarkblog.ca>

Since its launch in August 2006, the Canadian Trademark Blog has provided insight and analysis on Canadian trade mark issues, and offered a uniquely Canadian

take on trade mark and domain name topics of international interest. Originally, the blog was designed to mix three perspectives – senior solicitor, litigator and trade-mark agent. However, it recently expanded its stable of writers, adding an international perspective from a solicitor called in both Ireland and Canada, as well as quasi-academic analysis from a solicitor recently awarded an LL M in technology and intellectual property law.

The blog gathers stories from the court reports, newswires, press releases, other blogs and the first-hand experiences of its writers. Recent posts have discussed amendments to the Canadian Trade-marks Act, practice changes at the Canadian Intellectual Property Office and the controversial trade mark legislation that Canada passed for the 2010 Winter Olympics. Given that Canada has not yet signed on to the Madrid Protocol and does not use the Nice classification system, Canadian trade mark practice is somewhat unique. (Canadians even spell trade mark (trade-mark) differently to most of the world!) The aim of the Canadian Trademark Blog is to keep readers abreast of key developments affecting Canadian trade marks and their owners. Comments are always welcome.

## Afro-IP <http://afro-ip.blogspot.com>

Born in the last week of December 2007, Afro-IP arose from the concern of team leader Darren Olivier that there was no decent source from which to

obtain reliable news concerning IP developments in Africa and nowhere to put it once you'd got hold of it. This is because, while most of Africa faces the same crippling problems of counterfeits, border controls, deficient technology transfer, detection and enforcement of infringers, the continent is split between nearly 60 jurisdictions and many different legal cultures. This makes conventional for-profit IP publishing in the form of law reports, practitioners' texts and scholarly writing a largely untenable proposition. The weblog, in contrast, is free, easy to update and increasingly accessible.

Afro-IP's team is largely Anglophone (Daren and Roshana Kelbrick, plus some help from the IPKat's Jeremy Phillips and guest bloggers Anca Condrea, David Njunguna and Paul Asiimwe), but this blog welcomes postings in other major African languages and is seeking to recruit further team members.

Despite its recent provenance, Afro-IP has already established a following. The blog, which posts between 10 and 15 items a week, receives more than 1,700 casual visits a month and services an email subscriber list of 68.

## CATCH US IF YOU CAN!!! <http://ice-ip.blogspot.com>

CATCH US IF YOU CAN!!! is the first Italian blog on IP and it was created in March 2006 for an IP Master Course in Florence promoted by the Italian

Trade Commission (ICE).

From the beginning the blog was placed in an international context and addressed the issues and the interests of national users of the IP system in order to try to catch the IP uncatchable rights. Information, comments, judgments, curiosities, novelties and simple news are reported in a gentle and informal style. The text, although sometimes strictly related to IP law, is rather short, just to give to the readers the essential information which can be, if necessary, more deeply explored at the original source to which the blog links.

The blog is also an open window into the OVERMOON World, the IP Research Group created to explore some interesting and new issues. Characteristic of CATCH US IF YOU CAN!!! is the intensive use of colour and the careful selection of accompanying images. The use of English, which is progressively expanding, is substantially increasing the dissemination of the blog. The contributors aspire to bring readers in the IP wonderland. They are Fabio Angelini (De Simone & Partners), Lorenzo Litta (blogmaster – De Simone & Partners) and Stefano Sandri (scientific coordinator – special counsel at OHIM).

**Class 46**

<http://class46.blogspot.com>



Since its birth in November 2007, Class 46 has set itself the target of providing a constant flow of lively, reliable and significant news and information concerning trade

marks in Europe, both pan-European and national. It is run by an international team of eight contributors – Birgit Clark, Frédéric Glaize, Julia Holden, Mikael Kolehmainen, Ignacio Marqués, Jeremy Phillips, Tomasz Rychlicki and Gino van Roeyen – three of whom are bloggers in their own right. Although the members of the team are supporters of MARQUES, the Association of European Trade Mark Owners, Class 46 is an unofficial site and MARQUES is responsible neither for its views nor for its content. The inspiration for Class 46 came after MARQUES decided in November 2007 to refocus its own news channel service more closely on its own activities and services, thus leaving scope for more general news to be reported.

Class 46 posts between 20 and 30 news items a week, covering legal cases, registry decisions, official statistics, domain names, branding and business transactions. Its coverage is not limited to the European Union, which means that candidate states, together with countries that have no intention of joining a united Europe, are not neglected. At present Class 46 welcomes on average more than 4,000 casual visitors a month; its email subscription list stands at 185.

**IPEG**

<http://www.ipeg.com>



The ipieg blog started as an “ipgeek” blog in 2005 focusing on European patents, intellectual property related to technology and R&D and innovation. The ipieg

blog started as a hobby of Severin de Wit, but has since become a part of the ipieg intellectual property strategy consultancy, located in The Hague, where 12 consultants deliver mainly IP finance and consultancy services. The blog can be found at [www.ipeg.com](http://www.ipeg.com) under the tab “blog”.

**IMPACT**

<http://impact.freethcartwright.com>



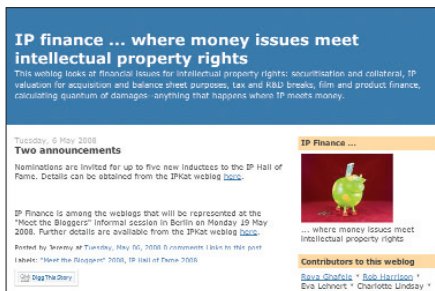
IMPACT is written by the intellectual property & technology team at UK law firm Freeth Cartwright LLP. The team acts for a wide range of commercial and

public sector bodies, and each member of the team has their own personality, specialisms and interests – the content of the blog reflects this. IMPACT always tries to inform, but is sometimes whimsical and irreverent. From software licensing, outsourcing, trade marks and copyright to data protection and freedom of information, IMPACT’s primary focus naturally falls on legal issues affecting the UK, but the IMPACT team is happy to stretch a point if something interesting is going on elsewhere.

Since its launch in August 2006, IMPACT has gradually grown its profile and readership. *Computers & Law* magazine said that reading the blog “you really do gain insight as a result of the wide reading of the team members and it is regularly updated”. Professor Richard Susskind in his *Times* law column called IMPACT “bold, jazzy, and punchy”.

**IP Finance**

<http://ipfinance.blogspot.com>



Established only at the end of January of this year, IP Finance – as its name suggests – looks at financial issues for intellectual property rights: securitization and

collateral, IP valuation for acquisition and balance sheet purposes, tax and R&D breaks, film and product finance, calculating quantum of damages – anything that happens where IP meets money. Its content is not limited by geography or by type of IP right. The impetus for launching this blog, and the community that it supports, was the realization that the IP community is ill-equipped to respond to the concerns of the financial sector – and vice versa – when changes in banking and accounting practice are mooted.

The IP Finance team – Roya Ghafele, Rob Harrison, Eva Lehnert, Charlotte Lindsay, Jeremy Phillips, Rupert Symons and Neil J Wilkof – continues to recruit activists in this field. This weblog puts out between five and 10 posts a week. Some 1,300 visitors a month read IP Finance, which has a sizeable email subscriber list for an ultra-specialist subject blog – 65 readers.

**IPKat**

<http://www.ipkat.com>



Originally launched as a serious-but-humorous teaching aid for post-graduate students in June 2003, the IPKat is Europe's first dedicated IP blog. The team of

four, led by Jeremy Phillips (an academic with QMIPRI who also consults for Olswang), now offers a mixture of case law, legislative and commercial developments, competitions, publication reviews and initiatives as seen from the point of view of two fictional cats – the sometimes naive IPKat and his more cynical sidekick Merpel.

Apart from posting between 20 and 30 items a week, this weblog is involved in building communities: in 2005 it devised the IP Publishers' and Editors' Lunch, enabling competitors to meet and share their experiences. In the same year it kick-started a now autonomous group of sole and small IP practitioners (see SOLO IP); late in 2007 it brought together a new group for people involved in all aspects of IP and finance (this group now runs the IP Finance blog, above).

The IPKat's content has a European flavour, but covers developments from the US and many other countries too.

At the time of writing, the blog receives around 50,000 casual visits a month and handles a Google Groups email subscriber list of 1,900. RSS feeds stand at 1,750. The IPKat looks forward to receiving his 1,000,000th visitor later this summer.

**Peter Groves**

<http://www.petergroves.co.uk>



[www.petergroves.co.uk](http://www.petergroves.co.uk) is the highly unoriginal address of Peter's self-named blog, where he holds forth from time to time about intellectual property law but

more often about the dubious joys of commuting (he is trying, in vain, to follow in the steps of Tiresias, but usually ends up spending his journey to work composing a rant about the state of the railways), the unalloyed joys of running and the indescribable joys of Stackridge. Peter also contributes to the Consilio Editorial blog, which he hopes gives him much greater street credibility than his solo efforts ... but only when he can remember the password.

**LVCENTINVS**

<http://lucentinus.blogspot.com>



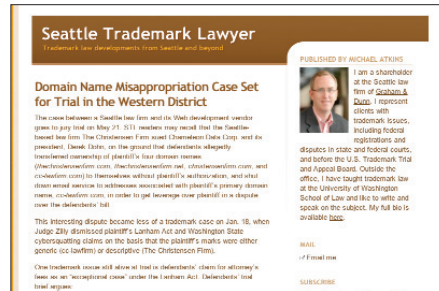
LVCENTINVS is a blog on intellectual property, information technologies and private international law. It is written in the language of Gabo and Vargas Llosa and it is

free of charge. It is administered by Aurelio Lopez-Tarruella Martinez, lecturer on private international law at the University of Alicante (Spain), for the Former Students' Association of Magister Lvcentinvs on intellectual property and information society. The main aim of the blog is to provide up-to-date information on these legal matters in Spanish and to promote the exchange of ideas among lawyers in Spain and especially in Latin America.

Posts are sent twice a week. They are rather short but include links to the sources of the information. Posts are written in an informal style and always include the popular section "Los expertos en PI no saben de cine". People collaborating and receiving the posts of LVCENTINVS include lawyers from Spain, Italy, Ecuador, Mexico, Perú, Panamá, Venezuela, Colombia, Brazil and Argentina, but the purpose is to expand LVCENTINVS to all the countries of the Latin community. Therefore, if you speak Spanish, you are more than welcome to subscribe and to collaborate in the provision of information that might interest us all.

**Seattle Trademark Lawyer**

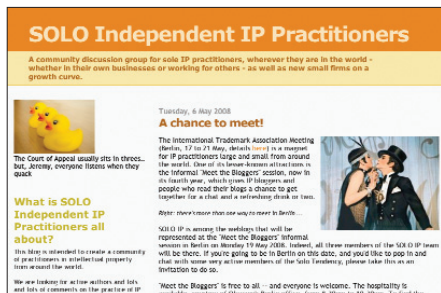
<http://www.SeattleTrademarkLawyer.com>



Seattle, Washington, is a great vantage point from which to cover trade mark law. It is home to Microsoft, Starbucks, Amazon.com,

countless startup companies, and is a leading trader with the Pacific Rim. It has a fine bench in the US District Court for the Western District of Washington and is part of the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, a leader in developing US intellectual property jurisprudence. Seattle Trademark Lawyer reports on trade mark law developments from Seattle and beyond, including issues involving trade mark infringement, unfair competition, counterfeiting, dilution and cybersquatting. It is published by Michael Atkins, a trade mark law partner at the Seattle law firm of Graham & Dunn PC. Michael has taught trade mark and unfair competition law at the University of Washington School of Law, and frequently writes and speaks on those subjects. If it involves trade mark law in Seattle, Seattle Trademark Lawyer has you covered.

**SOLO IP group**  
<http://soloip.blogspot.com/>



While the SOLO IP group has existed in a somewhat nebulous form since 2006, the blog is a young creation that started in February 2008 to try and build community

and discussion amongst the global membership. Jeremy Phillips was the original agent provocateur and although no one can call Olswang a small IP firm, his independent and individual mind definitely qualifies for membership. His IPKat blog is one of the major resources for any SOLO member. In her contributions, Barbara Cookson tries to represent the interests and concerns of the determined individualist who enjoys the freedom of action offered by independent practice.

After a career as a partner in two very large law firms, Barbara likes to demonstrate that she's not dead yet and, having garnered a certain amount of experience, delights in sharing it even with competitors. Shireen Smith represents the counterbalance for whom solo practice is a mere step on the competitive ladder to global domination. In due course, they hope to grow the number of contributors to the blog so that it also becomes a showcase of the possibilities of using the many independent IP specialists who can provide a personal service to their clients worldwide. They hope that this blog offers hope and encouragement to anyone who feels a little lonely in their intellectual property practice.

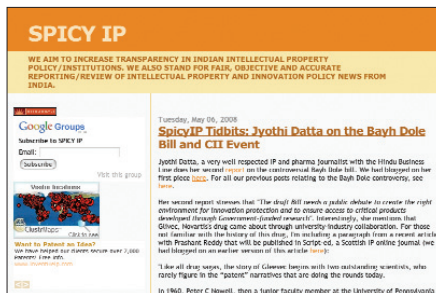
**The Trademark Blog**  
<http://www.schwimmerlegal.com>



Martin Schwimmer is the founder of the Law Offices of Martin Schwimmer, a New York-based micro-boutique specializing in trade mark, copy-

right and internet law. He is also of counsel to Moses & Singer, a 100-lawyer Manhattan-based firm. His clientele is a mixture of Fortune 50, mid-cap and start-up companies. He was previously a partner at Fross Zelnick. In May 2002 Martin founded the Trademark Blog, apparently one of the first practitioner-authored intellectual property law blogs. The Trademark Blog is on the ABA's "Blawg 100" List. Martin has been listed on *Managing Intellectual Property's* ranking of the leading trade mark lawyers in the United States.

**SPICYIP**  
<http://spicyipindia.blogspot.com>

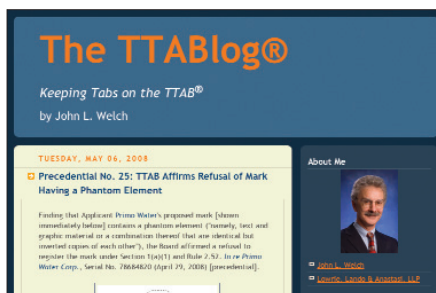


SpicyIP is India's leading IP blog and covers a wide range of intellectual property and innovation issues. It has a stellar team of nine writers well versed in different aspects

of Indian intellectual property law and policy. It was founded in 2005 by Shamnad Basheer, an IP academic and consultant, to further the cause of IP education in India by reporting IP cases, news and other items of interest in an accurate and objective manner. In many ways, the blog was an attempt to counter the increasing tendency of mainstream Indian media to conflate IP issues and pander to emotional rhetoric. SpicyIP claims some modest success here. Illustratively, it was featured as the leading IP policy blog from India in an article in the *BusinessWorld*, a newspaper from India.

More importantly, SpicyIP is committed to increasing transparency in Indian intellectual property policy/institutions. The most notable achievement in this regard was in petitioning the Prime Minister of India to have an online database of patents. The petition argued that such a database would aid in the more transparent functioning of the Indian Patent Office, and help make it more accountable. This petition garnered more than 300 signatures and was widely covered by media. The government of India recently responded by stating that a database would be ready by the year 2009.

**The TTABlog**  
<http://www.ttablog.com>



The TTABlog was launched in November 2004. It focuses primarily on the procedure and jurisprudence of the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board (TTAB), a

tribunal within the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). The TTAB hears *ex parte* appeals from USPTO refusals to register, and decides *inter partes* disputes, namely oppositions, cancellations and concurrent use proceedings. The Board plays a significant role for trade mark practitioners because it shapes the law that governs the trade mark registration process.

The TTABlog typically reports on one interesting and/or important TTAB decision each weekday, often with brief (and sometimes irreverent) commentary. The blog also provides links to other relevant blogs, to TTAB-related websites, and to articles of interest (including the author's own). It occasionally considers broader trade mark issues and (since author John Welch is also a patent attorney) may make a rare foray into the field of design patents. John likes to think that The TTABlog serves as a learning tool for newer trade mark practitioners, a means for keeping up with TTAB developments and a research tool for locating relevant case law to kick-start a research project.