

Brazilian Patent and Trademark Office “INPI” secures injunction to remove "fake services website" from the internet

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The Brazilian Patent and Trademark Office “INPI” obtained an injunction from the 6th Federal Court of Campinas – São Paulo State against a local company to remove the website <https://portalinpi.com.br>, which is very similar to the official INPI website, <https://inpi.gov.br>. The injunction also requires the company to cease using the INPI acronym and logo on its physical or virtual advertising platforms, including websites and social media.

According to the decision issued by Federal Judge Jamille Morais Silva Ferraretto, the local infringer was improperly using the INPI’s name and logo, including the colors of the Brazilian flag, to impersonate the INPI with the intent of attracting and misleading customers. The aim was to make clients believe they were paying for the services provided by the INPI, which is the only Authority in Brazil responsible for granting IP rights for trademarks, patents, industrial designs, geographical indications, software, and integrated circuits topographies, in addition to contracts related to technology transfer, licensing and franchising.

Recognizing common signs of a scam can help local and foreign companies avoid costly mistakes. Scammers can be very convincing because they exploit publicly available information. They often pretend to be from the Brazilian Patent and Trademark Office “INPI”, claiming there is some sort of problem with the application or registration, pressuring customers to act immediately, and instructing them to pay some sort of fee or provide personal information.

Customers may receive deceptive or misleading notices by mail, with scammers trying to persuade them to use their business’s services by threatening costly fines, loss of patent and trademark rights. Some of these companies will claim they are authorized to handle trademark and patent work or practice before the INPI, even though they are not law firms or attorneys, but operate under local practice regulations. Some may even say they are recommended by the INPI. However, the INPI does not recommend local firms or attorneys, so companies should avoid such scams.

These solicitations attempt to appear as legitimate as possible and may include terms like “Patent”, “Trademark”, “Office”, or “Agency” as part of their business names.

Entities, especially those from other countries unfamiliar with Brazilian local practices, should consider hiring reputable local IP law firms to handle their IP filings and prosecution.

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