

ZERO TOLERANCE FOR FORGERS



The inside of the toys, the Pleasure Air Technology, is targeted by forgers and imitators, and this is what epi24 is aiming to put a stop to

>> Copying brands and individual products, even as far as product forgery, is an issue that troubles many industry sectors immensely. This is also a constant problem that the manufacturers of the erotic industry are also faced with. This is especially the case for companies such as epi24 who have developed their own technologies like the Womanizer, and the fight to beat forgery is a highly important part of their business.

It is not only the manufacturers but also the distribution channels that need to join the cause, because for the consumer, unlicensed replicas and forgeries can be an annoyance and can even be dangerous. The epi24 GmbH, producers of the Womanizer toys, pay close attention to the markets and act decisively when it comes to combating forgeries and patent violations that affect their products. "Product piracy and imitations are harmful to the entire industry and destroy jobs in the long run", said Sales Director Hans Goßler, convinced of the importance for all members of the industry. Apart from this, imitations remove a lot of the dynamics of the industry: "There are not that many true innovations within our industry because investing in expensive product development is not economi-

cally proportionate due to promptly introduced replicas."

NOT ONLY ASIA

Replicas can be found on offer in every market. "From the home-party sector, through to the brick and mortar shops and of course in online marketing, you will find all kinds of imitations of diverse products", said Goßler, seeing the Womanizer as not the only product to be affected. They don't only originate from the Far East. Asia is always the first to take the blame when it comes to forgeries and imitations, but fake products are also produced in Europe. "We took successful

action against a very large online marketer and their product Satisfyer Pro. We also stopped the largest dildo party organiser from selling their Womanizer imitation by means of a provisional injunction", said Hans Goßler reporting on their first successes when protecting the patent rights and product features. "At the moment our solicitors are preparing a lawsuit against a Belgian provider, in order to stop the sales of their Womanizer replica, which has violated our trademark rights." He also added a unmistakable warning to this statement: "Our solicitors will take action with written warnings and compensation claims, against every forgery and especially against every trader and distributor."

ASPECTS OF PLAGIARISM

The Womanizer brand and products are internationally protected by patents, utility patents, design rights and brand registration. It is especially the innovative technology, with which the toys trigger orgasm storms in the user, which is the main target of the copies. "The stimulation of the Womanizer is based on pulsating pressure waves, which is the brand protected Pleasure Air Technology. The imitations try to emulate this pulsating pressure technology", said Goßler pointing out the negligence of the forgers, and in some cases the faults in product quality are severe. "They use materials where you can almost smell the contaminants. For example

Due to the comprehensive protection of the brand and Womanizer patents, the copying of individual aspects is not allowed

The Womanizer, the technology and its accessories are patent protected and epi24 takes strict action against violations



the motor is only fixed using hot-melt adhesive. They don't have certification and material tests, or they are faked, to name only a couple of problems. The guaranteed effectiveness characteristics and product quality are naturally much worse than the original Womanizer."

DETECTION

epi24 are not only combating the product forgers situation with solicitors their own network of contacts and establishments helps them to draw attention to such breaches. "We have eyes and ears very close to the market through our own subsidiaries in the USA and Asia, which makes it easier to locate forgers and traders", said Goßler, seeing high vigilance as an advantage. But it is a great deal more difficult to track down forgers in Asia and enforce ones rights. "In such cases, the importers, distributors or traders will have to recon with legal action", said the Sales Director, naming an enforcement alternative. "Our internationally successful law firm acts individually against the breaches, depending on the violation of the trademark rights. Written warnings, omissions, provisional injunctions, compensation claims – we have a number of legal options. As previously mentioned, we also take action against traders and distributors, for example those that trade in Asian copies, should the manufacturer prove difficult to locate. We can only warn the brick and mortar and online traders against selling such items", said Goßler, once more underlining the consequences for distributing Womanizer fakes. Other than with clear and hard measures, it is difficult to combat imitations within the industry, as there is no real

The success of the Womanizer has led to a multitude of imitations and forgeries



Replica

Original

joint collaboration amongst the market participants.

JOINT EFFORTS

"We all know that hope dies last but plagiarism seems to almost be normal within the erotic industry", but Goßler hasn't yet given up on a possible change rethink. "As far as we are concerned we would be desirable if other manufacturers would invest more in trademark rights and their implementation." Goßler has noticed that there is no joint platform to speak about this highly relevant topic within the industry. "If more manufacturers fought for the rights of innovative products and all of the distributors pulled

together, the producers and traders of such imitations would have a much harder time", and the Womanizer expert is sure that this kind of coordinated policy would help the protection of original products throughout the entire industry. This kind of cooperation would also benefit the consumer by creating better conditions. "This would be extra protection for the customer, because they would be guaranteed original and certified top quality."

POSITIVE PRODUCT ACCEPTANCE

But the erotic product markets also have positive headlines to offer for epi24 and the Womanizer, particularly considering the main objective of the company during recent months concerning the product release of the Womanizer W100 to the markets in the USA and Canada. "This was a complete success and we are currently bestsellers there", Hans Goßler reported when speaking about the continuous success. Next on the agenda of the German manufacturer is the release of the Womanizer Pro in North America and Australia. "The Womanizer Pro has been well received throughout the European market and the sales figures have surpassed those of the previous model", said Goßler happily looking forward to the next big steps of the Womanizer Pro.



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