

# The Black Friday Brand Protection Guide

How to stay ahead of risk and secure  
growth when demand surges



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# A Message From Our CEO

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## Speed is the new brand protection

*"At SnapDragon we are **committed to doing whatever it takes to safeguard our clients**, and so we are delighted to launch this Black Friday Guide.*

*It is an exclusive resource to help you **mitigate risks, secure revenue** as demand surges and **ensure your reputation stays strong**.*

*It includes expert insights on consumer behaviour trends, new and evolving threats, case studies, quotes from across the industry and specialist guidance. It is **the ultimate playbook to protect your brand** this Black Friday."*

### Marcus Kneen

CEO at SnapDragon





# The Race For Revenue

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Every year, Black Friday kicks off the festive shopping season. With Christmas shopping in Europe, Cyber Monday in the US and Lunar New Year across Asia, billions in sales and revenue are up for grabs.

**While brands race to meet demand, counterfeiters are racing faster.**

The digital retail boom has opened every possible door. Consumers shop at lightning speed across marketplaces and social platforms, while AI-powered tools can discover hot deals in seconds. Counterfeiters are right there too, hiding behind influencer ads, cloned listings and fake accounts that look every bit as real.



**2.3%** of all global trade are **counterfeit** and **pirated goods**.

Worth \$467 billion

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), counterfeit and pirated goods accounted for 2.3 % of all global trade in 2021, worth around \$467 billion. Within the EU, fakes represented 4.7 % of total imports – an estimated \$117 billion in lost legitimate value.

**259,000** fake toys in the UK alone

Worth £3.5 million

Research from the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) showed that, in the UK alone, 259,000 fake toys worth £3.5 million were seized in 2025 – many containing banned chemicals and choking hazards. And, as shoppers chase discounts in the lead-up to Christmas, the risk surrounding fake toys grows.

*Counterfeiters know exactly **how to exploit the impulse buy mindset.***

70% of consumers quote price as their top motivating factor in-purchase decisions, but only 27% consider and investigate safety. (Intellectual Property Office [IPO], 2025)

As peak season begins, protecting revenue means protecting the belief that your brand is genuine. That belief is what sustains sales long after the festive rush fades.

# Consumer mindset

## Temptation vs. Trust

Flash sales, limited drops, and one-click checkouts create the perfect storm for **impulse-driven buying**, and for **counterfeiters to blend in**.



### The rise of “dupe culture”

What began as a playful trend has become a global challenge for brand integrity. On TikTok, the hashtag #dupe has turned replicas into viral commodities – especially across beauty, fashion, and wellness.

As our own research into [TikTok’s Dupe Effect](#) shows, younger consumers now celebrate “affordable alternatives” rather than question their legitimacy.

Research shows that the desire for fake luxury items stems from moral disengagement, where consumers justify the purchase using phrases like “Everyone else does it” (Cesareo & Bellezza, 2025)

### Reports

[Mapping Global Trade in Fakes 2025](#)  
(oecd.org)

[TikToks #DupeEffect – A generational shift threatening brand protection](#)  
(snapdragon-ip.com)



# TikTok Shop Navigates the Dupe Dilemma

*At TikTok Shop, we are fully committed to protecting our brands, sellers, creators, and customers from IP infringement throughout the seasonal sales period.*

*This year, we are placing particular focus on the growing ‘dupe’ trend. Because there is no universal or legally recognised definition of a ‘dupe,’ we differentiate clearly between IP-infringing products, such as counterfeit or design-infringing items, which are illegal and for which we have a clear legal basis to take action, and generic, ‘lookalike,’ or ‘substitute’ products, which may not necessarily constitute IP infringement. Nevertheless, the issue of ‘dupes’ remains complex, and the legal grey area surrounding them presents an ongoing challenge. **We therefore encourage brand owners to share any signals or emerging concerns so we can monitor trends proactively and take appropriate action.***

## **Olivia Mazzucotelli,**

Head of Brand & Industry Relations, IPR, EMEA

TikTok Shop



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### Trust by **association**

Counterfeiters thrive on trust transfer. They mimic the look and feel of legitimate listings, hijack influencer credibility with deepfake endorsements, and run ads on platforms consumers already rely on. When a fake product sits under the same logo or algorithm as an authentic one, that trust is silently repurposed, and eventually eroded.

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### The **price-point trap**

Black Friday is built on discounts, and counterfeiters weaponise that expectation. Their listings mirror legitimate deals, using marginally lower prices to lure buyers who assume they've simply found a better offer.

In a market where most shoppers prioritise cost and few consider safety, the outcome is predictable. Counterfeiters cash in while brands lose both revenue and reputation.

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### **Protecting consumers is protecting long-term growth.**

Every fake sold during the festive season slows momentum and chips away at brand equity. Once confidence is lost, growth becomes harder to sustain. The brands that continue to grow this season are the ones protecting belief as fiercely as they protect sales.

For Gen Z, a replica can signal savvy spending; for older buyers, it's often mistaken for a genuine bargain. This generational divide widens the trust gap. One side knowingly normalises imitation, while the other unknowingly funds it.

# Black Friday: high season for crime

**Every flash deal and limited-time offer becomes another opening for deception.**

During Black Friday, infringers capitalise on the same surge in attention and urgency that fuels legitimate sales. Every flash deal and limited-time offer becomes another opening for deception.

When shoppers move fast, scrutiny drops and risk soars. The result is a perfect storm of **volume**, **distraction**, and **misplaced trust**.

*Christmas 2024: Counterfeit Labubu dolls accounted for 90% of all fake toys seized by the UK Border Force (Intellectual Property Office, 2024).*

**It's fertile ground for every kind of brand abuse.**





# Tackling IP crime is a collective responsibility

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*At the IPO, we are working in partnership towards a long-term ambition of making IP crime and infringement socially unacceptable to all.*

*Tackling IP crime is a collective responsibility, and we all have a part to play. Our consumer-focused campaigns are grounded in real-world evidence, raising awareness of infringement and the risks to the public it brings. Therefore, we urge law enforcement, brands, and platforms to join us by sharing their experiences and insights. **Together, we can shift perceptions - empowering consumers with the ability to identify illegitimate products and content, and to understand the wider impact of IP crime.***

## **Helen Barnham,**

Interim Deputy Director for Enforcement Policy, UK  
IPO





## The Main Forms of IP Abuse



### Counterfeits

Direct trademark infringement, with fake goods posing as genuine.



### Copycats

Lookalikes that mimic your packaging, tone, or design but stop short of using your name.



### Impersonation

Fake brand profiles, websites, ads and customer-service accounts used to trick buyers (and even employees).



### Design & Artwork Theft

Unauthorised use of visuals, shapes, prints, or other creative assets to market copycat or unrelated products.



### Patent Abuse

Functional imitation of your innovation, hidden deep within manufacturing or supply chains.

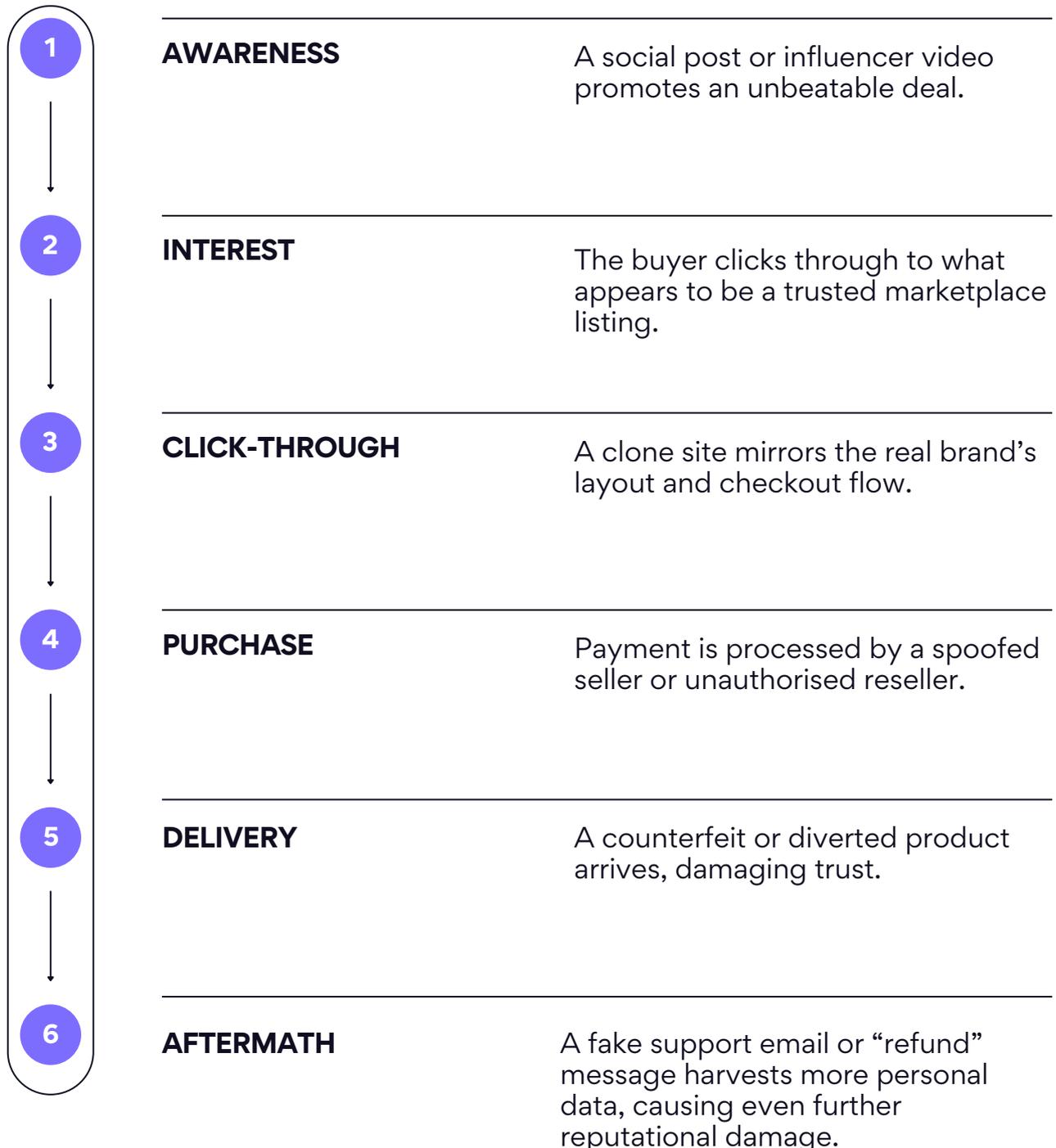


### Grey-Market Reselling

Genuine products diverted into unauthorised channels that undercut official pricing.

# The anatomy of a Black Friday scam

During the shopping rush, a single customer journey can pass through all of these risks: often within minutes. Follow the journey of a single shopper, and see how fast a legitimate purchase can turn into a counterfeit sale.



# Super threats & evolving tactics

**Counterfeiters adapt and scale quickly. Brand protection must act faster.**

Today's counterfeiters operate like corporations, combining automation, AI and global logistics to move faster than ever before.

Here's what today's large-scale brand exploitation looks like in practice:



## Super fakes

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No longer the crude imitations of old. Super fakes are produced with industrial precision using high-grade materials, AI-generated package and product designs, and authentic-looking serial numbers. They bypass basic safety checks, reach legitimate marketplaces, and erode brand trust and revenue from the inside out.



## Print-on-demand counterfeits

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As highlighted in our analysis, [Illicit Merchandise: The Growing Battlefield for Leading Brands](#), counterfeiters now exploit print-on-demand services to turn stolen designs into instant products. Powered by AI image generation and automated listing tools, this process now moves at lightning speed. Infringers can transform logos, slogans, and artwork into thousands of counterfeit items within minutes.



## Listing piggybacking

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One of the fastest-growing marketplace threats. Counterfeiters attach fake products to genuine listings, using trusted ASINs or SKUs to inherit reviews, credibility, and visibility. To consumers, the difference is invisible, until the product arrives.



## AI-generated product images

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AI has given counterfeiters the power to create entire product catalogues that don't exist. Hyper-realistic visuals and synthetic environments make every listing look professional, blurring the line between real and fake. Traditional image-matching tools can't keep up with the volume or variety.



## Deepfake endorsements

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AI impersonation is accelerating. Fraudsters now use deepfake influencers and voice clones to promote counterfeit goods through ads and short-form video, mimicking real partnerships. As shared in our webinar, [Proven Strategies to Combat Advanced Impersonation](#), these campaigns spread rapidly and can damage brand credibility overnight.



## Clone websites and typosquatting

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Clone sites replicate authentic e-commerce pages down to layout, tone, and checkout flow. Many rely on typosquatted domains that differ from the real one by a single letter – diverting both revenue and customer data. Once trust is broken, recovery is slow and expensive.



## Industrialised counterfeiting networks

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At the top of the chain sit industrialised networks. These are global operations that leverage automation, fulfilment services, and AI-driven logistics to flood markets in real time. As we discussed in [Harnessing the Power of AI to Combat Global Counterfeiting](#), these enterprises move faster, exploit grey areas, and adapt instantly when detected.

Every new technology that drives efficiency also drives exploitation. To stay ahead, brand protection must evolve at the same pace – combining detection, enforcement and intelligence to neutralise these super-threats before they reach the consumer.

# Platforms under pressure

## Where counterfeiters move fastest, and how their tactics change by channel.

Black Friday and the festive season put online shopping platforms to the test. As sales volumes surge, **enforcement teams are stretched thin** and **automated moderation systems can't keep pace**.

### Counterfeiters know this.



They **exploit** the **blind spots** of **every major channel**, creating a fragmented threat landscape.

The same fake can appear across multiple platforms in multiple different forms, for example:

- a listing on Amazon,
- a giveaway on Instagram,
- a clone site in search results,
- and a resale offer in an encrypted chat.

Each platform brings its own vulnerabilities, its own enforcement speed, and its own impact on brand value.

The table below highlights where IP abuse is most active, how it manifests, and what it costs brands.

Platform	Threat Type	How it Works	Impact
AliExpress / Alibaba / Temu / TikTok Shop	Counterfeits	Fake storefronts, hijacked ASINs, fake listings	Lost revenue
TikTok / Instagram/ Facebook	Impersonation	Deepfake ads, fake giveaways, fake accounts and pages	Damaged trust
Temu / Shein	Design theft	Printed replicas & dupes	Brand dilution
Phishing sites / Domain	Typosquatting	Fake domains and checkout pages	Data theft
Amazon / eBay / Walmart	Grey market goods	Unauthorised sellers list genuine products outside approved regions or channels	Price erosion, disrupted distribution
Telegram / WhatsApp	Private sales	Encrypted deals, chatbots	Hard to trace
Redbubble / Etsy / Other POD sites	Design theft, Print on demand	Printed replicas & dupes	Brand dilution



# The 99% Solution: Protecting Brands Through Peak Shopping

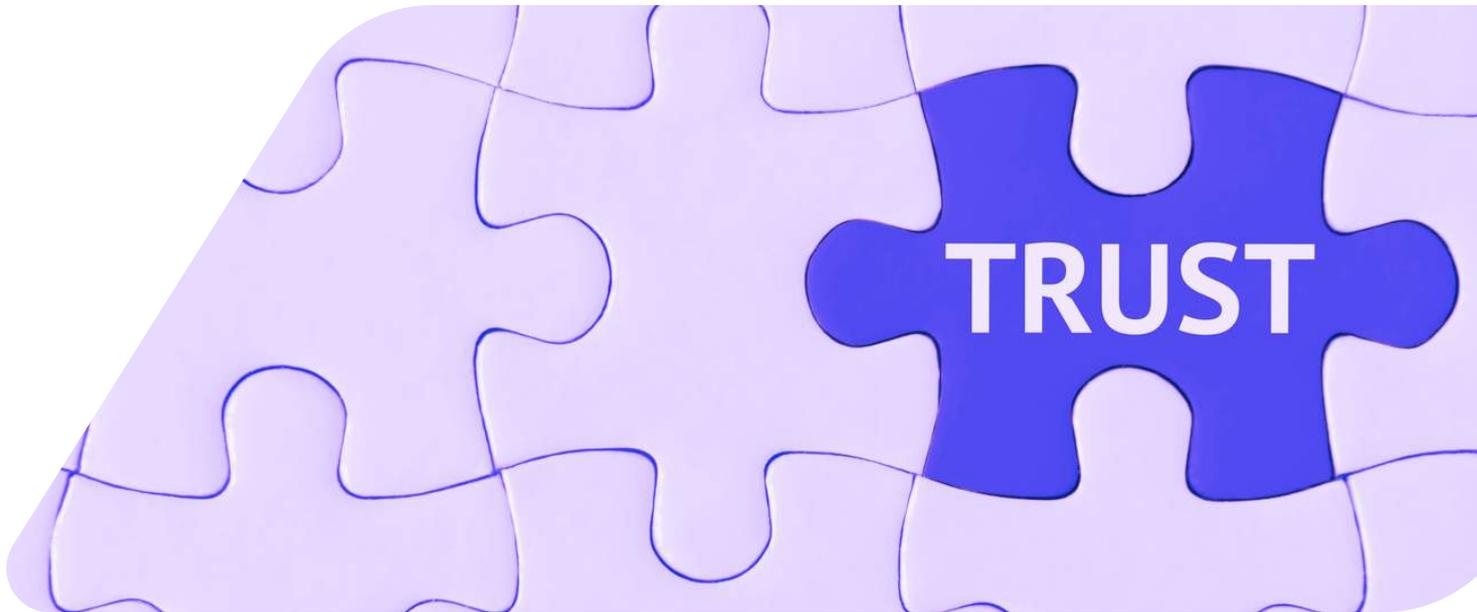
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*“Peak shopping periods are critical for brands and consumers, however, at Amazon, we must plan for any potential increased risks and threats during these busy periods all year-round. For example, **we have invested \$billions in proactive controls on our platforms that block at least 99% of suspected infringing listings before they’re reported.**”*

*“With all the necessary preparations in place, brands can be confident that our controls are vigorous also during peak demand.”*

**Tiphaine Grosse,**  
Global Brand Engagement Manager  
AMAZON US





# Strategy playbook:

## Protecting trust and revenue

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The faster you act, the more revenue you protect.

The existence of counterfeit products can severely damage a brand's reputation because the fakes often lack the quality of genuine items, leading to negative consumer experiences and safety hazards. Counterfeiters don't wait for brands to catch up.

A resilient brand protection strategy covers three essentials: **detect early**, **enforce fast**, and **educate continuously**. Together, they form the foundation for safeguarding both trust and sales this Black Friday and throughout the festive season.



# Protecting Your Edge: Why Proactive Measures Pay Off

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*"Brands that adopt proactive brand protection safeguard their competitive edge by preserving revenue and customer trust. The best strategies don't just count takedowns; they measure how brand protection strengthens brand equity and drives growth."*

**Alicia Clark,**  
Brand Protection Manager  
SnapDragon



## 1. Detect Early

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### **Proactive, AI-driven detection across marketplaces and social media.**

The most effective defence starts before the damage is done.

SnapDragon's Augmented Intelligence approach combines global monitoring with human expertise to identify threats the moment they surface, not weeks later.

Our AI scans thousands of listings and social posts every second, flagging suspicious activity, while our analysts verify, prioritise, and act.

#### **Detect early means:**

- Continuous monitoring of key marketplaces, search engines, social media, and domains.
- Pattern recognition that spots new sellers, duplicate imagery, or sudden price anomalies.
- AI-powered logo and image similarity detection that identifies emerging threats faster and at scale.
- Visibility that turns insight into immediate action.

**If you're always reacting, you're already behind.**

## 2. Enforce Fast

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### **Rapid takedowns backed by legal foundations.**

Speed is critical when the stakes are seasonal.

SnapDragon combines expert enforcement with proven legal frameworks and platform partnerships to remove threats quickly and decisively. Our enforcement experts ensure every takedown is compliant, defensible, and repeatable, so your protection scales without friction.

*“Automation and evidence are your force multipliers.”*

**Kieron Smith, Chief Technology Officer**  
SnapDragon



**Enforce fast means:**

- Streamlined workflows for submitting infringement claims.
- Partnership with marketplaces for priority removals.
- Legally sound evidence gathering for repeat offenders.

**Detection is only powerful if it ends in action.**

### 3. Educate and Reassure

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**Empower your customers and partners to spot authenticity.**

Brand protection doesn't end with removal, it ends with confidence in the provenance of products. Educating buyers and supply-chain partners builds resilience and trust that no counterfeit can replicate.

SnapDragon supports initiatives like the [Unreal Campaign](#) – where our own CCO, Mary Kernohan, works to raise awareness among young consumers about the dangers of fakes – because informed audiences are harder to deceive.

**Educate and reassure means:**

- Clear messaging about how to verify genuine products.
- Training and resources for distributors and retailers.
- Public awareness that turns trust into loyalty.

**The more your customers know, the stronger your brand becomes.**

## HOLIDAY CHECKLIST

five actions before Black Friday

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- Audit your highest-risk platforms and product lines.**
  - Activate AI-driven detection and alerting systems.**
  - Align with your legal and PR teams on enforcement protocol.**
  - Arm your customer-facing teams with authenticity guidance.**
  - Announce your anti-counterfeit stance: show consumers you're protecting them.**
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Black Friday rewards those who move fastest. With SnapDragon, your brand stays one step ahead: **detecting early**, **enforcing fast**, and **building the trust** that keeps customers coming back long after the sales end.



## From Catch-Up to Control: Automating Brand Protection

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*"Instead of trying to follow up on consumers, **we are really proactively taking down social media ads and websites before the consumers even notice.***

*Without a tool like SnapDragon, we would have never been able to do so, or we would have maybe have to hire three or four people that every day go through all the first Google searches pages and try to scout those ones."*

**Anna Negri,**  
Customer Service Manager  
Nidecker Group



# Enforcement insights from the brand protection experts

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Fast, global, and grounded in evidence.

Detection means nothing without action. When counterfeits appear, speed determines the outcome. Enforcement is where SnapDragon turns intelligence into impact.

## HOW ENFORCEMENT WORKS

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SnapDragon's global enforcement framework combines automation, legal precision, and platform partnerships to remove threats fast and keep them down.

### Takedown Pathways:

**Marketplaces:** Direct enforcement via verified brand accounts and platform partnerships, ensuring counterfeit listings are removed swiftly and permanently.

**Domains:** Rapid domain recovery and UDRP (Uniform Domain-Name Dispute Resolution Policy) filings for typosquatted and impersonation sites.

**Social and IP platforms:** Coordinated removal of fake profiles, impersonation accounts, and stolen content across social networks and official IP enforcement channels.

Every case is supported by verifiable evidence, ensuring compliance, strengthening repeat takedowns, and protecting your brand's rights globally.



## Results that matter

SnapDragon's enforcement impact speaks for itself:

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**600,000+** total takedowns and counting

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**97%** enforcement success rate

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**99% client satisfaction** across global industries

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**15 Excellence Awards** recognising innovation and results in brand protection

**SnapDragon removes threats faster, and at scale, so your sales stay real.**



# Brand protection that delivers

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## How fast action delivers real results.

Across industries, these examples demonstrate how SnapDragon's rapid detection and decisive enforcement safeguard both trust and revenue. Even during the busiest shopping seasons.

# Nidecker Group

Category: Sports & Lifestyle



**63K+**

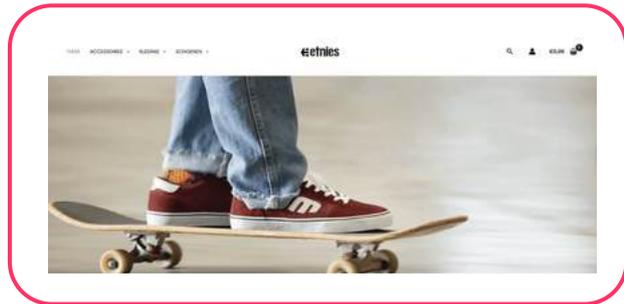
Counterfeit Listings Removed

**96%**

Success Rate



**Real Website**



**Phishing Site**

As demand for Nidecker's snowboard and skate brands increases through the winter season, the company faces growing exposure to opportunistic counterfeiters. When fake listings and impersonation sites began overwhelming search results, customer complaints spiked: threatening both sales and reputation.

SnapDragon acted fast. Using Augmented Intelligence — advanced AI with human oversight — we built tailored protection strategies across Nidecker's portfolio, from Jones to etnies. Within six months, customer complaints collapsed from 99% to 1%, and confidence returned.

*“We went from daily complaints about scam orders to almost none. For my team, it's amazing. For the company, it's a sign that consumer trust is coming back.”*

**Anna Negri**

Nidecker Group Customer Service Manager

**Impact:** Rapid detection and enforcement cut fake listings by the thousands, restoring consumer trust and protecting sales at the height of the winter season.

# Ütensil

Category: Cookware



**5.7K+**

Fakes Removed

**2K**

Yearly Christmas Listings Removed

**99%**

Success Rate



Each Christmas, demand for Ütensil's award-winning cookware spikes: and so do the fakes. Counterfeiters flood global marketplaces with imitation stirrers and copycat designs, threatening both seasonal revenue and customer trust.

With SnapDragon's AI-powered image recognition and rapid takedown strategy, infringing listings are identified and removed fast, ensuring Ütensil's genuine products stay visible during its most profitable season.

*“Over previous festive shopping seasons, SnapDragon has ensured our products remain prominent on Amazon and other marketplaces. Their support has bolstered our success, allowing me to focus on other business priorities.”*

**Gavin Reay**

Founder of Ütensil

**Impact:** Rapid detection protected millions in festive sales, keeping trusted products in baskets and imitations off the shelves.

# Contact Us

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**Every fake listing or imitation product takes a share of your hard-earned sales. During the busiest retail season of the year, protecting that revenue isn't optional; it's essential.**

SnapDragon combines AI-powered detection, expert enforcement, and global experience to keep counterfeits off the market and your genuine products where they belong – in customers' hands.

Talk to SnapDragon about how proactive brand protection can drive stronger, more sustainable growth this Black Friday and beyond.



[www.snapdragon-ip.com](http://www.snapdragon-ip.com)



**UK & RoW:** +44 131 466 9249

**US:** +1 857 400 7041



[thelair@snapdragon-ip.com](mailto:thelair@snapdragon-ip.com)

**LinkedIn**



**SnapDragon**