

CLIENT ALERT

Contracts & E-Commerce

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Greedy domain name vendors, mainly based in China and Hong Kong, are responsible for one of the Internet's latest money-making scams. If your name or company appears on a trade mark or a company record that can be found on the internet, you may be targeted.

Introduction

Chinese domain vendors buy lists with email addresses of executives of Western companies and look for trade marks. Then they try to get the name and email address of a senior representative of the targeted company. If they can not find any, they simply use the info@email or use a generic email that they find on a website to send their deceptive email to.

Working method

Pretending to be a domain name registrar, the swindlers write to trade mark owners to inform them that a third party is about to registrar a domain name in China that incorporates the trade mark owner's IP rights. Kindly they offer to registrar the domain name on behalf of the legitimate trade mark owner in exchange for an unspecified fee. By outlining short deadlines they force the worried trade mark owners to prompt into action.

How to respond to these deceptive letters?

Although there is no such a third party that is interested in registering a Chinese keyword in a Western company's name and no company trying to register the names, a number of unwary trade mark owners have fallen victim to the scam.

If you are ever targeted by these fraud, there is absolutely no rush to react. Please ignore their email or reply with a firm rebuttal using a one-liner, like:

"We will not be registering any domains through your services. Please note that the terms that you select are close to/match our trade marks. We protect our trade marks".

For more information, please contact the professional(s) listed below, or your regular Crowell & Moring contact.

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