

Q&A

Counterfeit Goods Warning for Super Bowl 50



Akino Chikada, Senior Product Marketing Manager, MarkMonitor

Akino Chikada is a Brand Protection Product Marketing Manager for the MarkMonitor AntiFraud solutions. She started her career in public relations and marketing in London and has worked in Europe, Asia and the United States. She has led and served interim roles in global marketing strategies, product marketing, events management, public relations, corporate communications and regional marketing. Akino holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University College of London, a Master of Science from the London School of Economics, and has trilingual fluency in English, Italian and Japanese.

Q&A

On Monday February 1st, Akino Chikada was interviewed on San Francisco's KCBS Radio about the counterfeiting of Super Bowl merchandise. This is an edited transcript of the interview.¹

KCBS: Thousands of people are descending on the Bay Area for Super Bowl 50. Everyone wants to take home some souvenirs: merchandise, memorabilia, tickets and the like are in high demand and counterfeiters know that. They're out in force to provide you with every trinket you could possibly want except, well, except real sanctioned stuff.

For more on the amount of counterfeit goods Super Bowl brings in and tips on what to look out for we turn to KCBS Ring Central News Line to talk with Akino Chikada, senior product marketing manager for brand protection firm MarkMonitor.

\$19.5M

More than \$19.5 million dollars-worth of counterfeit goods were seized by Super Bowl Federal officials last year.

Thanks for the time today. So have the busts begun of these counterfeiters?

The Super Bowl is one of the most popular sporting events as we know and that means there's a lot of an opportunity for counterfeiters to take action. Before last year's Super Bowl, Federal officials seized more than nineteen and a half million dollars-worth of counterfeit goods², so it is a major problem.

Now law enforcement and organizations like yours talk about unsuspecting customers getting ripped off, but do you really think they're all unsuspecting? Some people like a bargain and really don't care if they're sanctioned.

That's definitely true. We recently published a report and it said about twenty percent of consumers know that they're purchasing counterfeit goods.³ So there is a small percentage of those are purchasing counterfeit knowingly. However there's a very high percentage of people who don't realize that they're purchasing a counterfeit good, whether online or in person.

“The price is definitely a good tell sign, if it’s too good to be true that can only mean there’s a high chance that it’s a counterfeit good.”

Akino Chikada, Senior Product Marketing Manager, MarkMonitor

So, isn’t the tip-off the price.

The price is definitely a good tell sign, if it’s too good to be true that can only mean there’s a high chance that it’s a counterfeit good. But there are other things that people should look at. If it’s a physical item then people should definitely look at the quality: the colors, the weight of the jersey, the fabric quality. Also the NFL tags and stickers on the items. If it’s NFL jerseys in particular then look at the hologram.

However if people are shopping online there are other things to be aware of. One of the tricks people use is cybersquatting. Consumers should always look at the name and address bar and check if everything looks legitimate and there are no typos. But as you said, price is definitely one of the major tell signs.

And what is cybersquatting?

Cybersquatting is where a person is basically squatting on your domain name.

OK. So you might see a website like ‘NFL’ and it might say ‘always_NFL’ or something like that?

Right. Or it might say ‘NFL.com’ or something that’s very similar. A lot of people don’t double check the URL that they’re going to. That kind of re-direction of traffic is definitely one of the scams.

And who is hurt by counterfeit goods if you’re not paying fifty bucks for a jersey?

Actually there are multiple people who are hurt as part of the process. Obviously the person purchasing the counterfeit good, especially if they didn’t know that it was a counterfeit item. It could be a double whammy for them if they’re purchasing online. Because not only are they purchasing a counterfeit good but the fraudster or the criminal has access to your bank account which can lead to fraudulent activities. In addition to that it obviously harms the business vendor – intellectual property theft a serious crime. Not only do businesses lose revenue, but it also hurts the brand image and, in addition, American jobs

are threatened by this. A lot of the time these counterfeit goods are manufactured in Asia, China predominantly. And sometimes those working conditions are terrible. So there are lots of victims.

Thank you very much for sharing the information.

For more information about MarkMonitor, our solutions and services, please visit **markmonitor.com** or call us at **1-800-745-9229**.

1. KCBS MarkMonitor, KCBS-AM, February 1, 2016. <http://67.214.100.182/Player?ShareId=3b11d319-9028-41e2-a3bc-18ff0277be78&PortalId=3cddb705-54f4-45f7-97d3-ae049ae4e988&EmailAddress=bhendrix@metromonitor.com&FileId=d23aa494-c3a3-45ca-be22-ae65efb6f6b0>
2. Federal agencies seize more than \$19.5 million in fake NFL merchandise during 'Operation Team Player', U.S. Immigration and Custom Enforcement, January 28, 2015. <https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/federal-agencies-seize-more-195-million-fake-nfl-merchandise-during-operation-team>
3. MarkMonitor Online Barometer, MarkMonitor, January 2016. <https://www.markmonitor.com/download/Infographics/MarkMonitor.infographic.Online.Barometer.pdf>

About MarkMonitor

MarkMonitor, the leading enterprise brand protection solution and a Clarivate Analytics flagship brand, provides advanced technology and expertise that protects the revenues and reputations of the world's leading brands. In the digital world, brands face new risks due to the Web's anonymity, global reach and shifting consumption patterns for digital content, goods and services. Customers choose MarkMonitor for its unique combination of advanced technology, comprehensive protection and extensive industry relationships to address their brand infringement risks and preserve their marketing investments, revenues and customer trust. For more information, visit **markmonitor.com** or call us at **1-800-745-9229**.

About Clarivate Analytics

Clarivate Analytics accelerates the pace of innovation by providing trusted insights and analytics to customers around the world, enabling them to discover, protect and commercialize new ideas faster. Formerly the Intellectual Property and Science business of Thomson Reuters, we own and operate a collection of leading subscription-based services focused on scientific and academic research, patent analytics and regulatory standards, pharmaceutical and biotech intelligence, trademark protection, domain names, brand protection and intellectual property management. Clarivate Analytics is now an independent company with over 4,000 employees, operating in more than 100 countries and owns well-known brands that include *Web of Science*, *Cortellis*, *Thomson Innovation*, *Derwent World Patents Index*, *CompuMark*, *MarkMonitor* and *Techstreet*, among others. For more information, visit **clarivate.com**.

More than half the Fortune 100 trust MarkMonitor to protect their brands online.

See what we can do for you.

MarkMonitor Inc.

U.S. (800) 745-9229

Europe +44 (0) 207 433 4000

www.markmonitor.com