

VICTORY BY DESIGN

Helping World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc. (WWE) triumph over design clearance challenges.

World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc. (WWE) is not only a major sports entertainment company but an American cultural phenomenon, as well.

WWE events like RAW, SmackDown and Extreme Championship Wrestling (ECW) are viewed by millions of fans around the world via cable and pay-per-view television, as well as through DVDs and other published works.

According to Lauren A. Dienes-Middlen, Senior Counsel, Intellectual Property for WWE, the company generates a continuous stream of logos and branded designs to promote new talent and events. These designs, emblazoned on T-shirts, DVDs and other products, represent a significant revenue stream.

"WWE logos and design marks are some of our most valuable business assets," Dienes-Middlen says. "Performing design full searches before use is crucial to avoid potential conflicts."

To effectively protect WWE, Dienes-Middlen says she needed a trademark research partner who could offer thorough, accurate design clearance results and deliver those results rapidly to keep pace with WWE's fast-moving business.

INTO THE RING

To help her make the decision—and sell it to senior management—Dienes-Middlen arranged a contest of her own.

"I did a side-by-side design search of a mark using Thomson CompuMark and a leading competitor," Dienes-Middlen says. "There was definitely a difference, not only in the accuracy of the results, but in the ease of understanding and reviewing the information."



She noted that Thomson CompuMark's SAEGIS® online screening and international coverage were other key Thomson CompuMark competitive advantages.

"With Thomson CompuMark, I know I'm getting a thorough, accurate search I can rely on when advising decision-makers," she says. "That confidence is crucial. It's my name on the recommendation and I have to be able to defend it. I know I can rely on Thomson CompuMark."

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Senior Counsel
Intellectual Property for WWE



ENHANCED CODING PROCESS

One reason for the quality of Thomson CompuMark results is the proprietary process used for design searches—a process that goes beyond that performed by other research firms.

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) employs a design code system initially developed by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Six-digit codes are used to represent specific design elements, with multiple codes describing the various design elements of a given logo. These codes allow designs to be searched within a database.

Thomson CompuMark has enhanced the USPTO coding system, adding additional design categories—including a category for stylized lettering, something most other research firms do not code for. This “enhanced” coding system allows greater precision when coding designs. This, in turn, allows Thomson CompuMark to be more precise when searching design trademarks, delivering results with greater relevance and accuracy than standard processes would allow.

See the figures below for a comparison of the standard coding system and Thomson CompuMark’s proprietary coding system.



Figure 1: Design coding example using standard system. Note that only three major elements are coded.

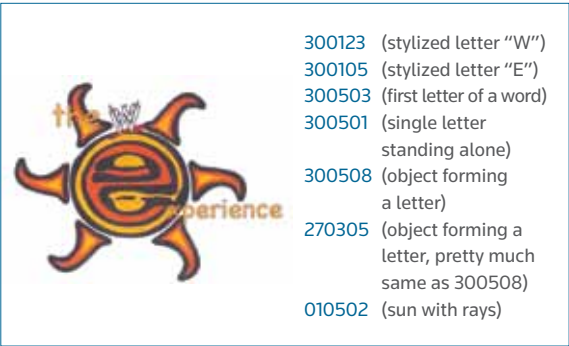


Figure 2: Design coding example using Thomson CompuMark system. Note the coding of stylized lettering, which cannot be coded using standard system.

Thomson CompuMark's proprietary, "enhanced" design coding enables analysts to deliver results that are more precise, accurate and relevant.

EXPERIENCED PROFESSIONALS

Just as important as the process, however, is the knowledge and experience of the Thomson CompuMark Design Search Team, according to Team Leader Thomas McBride.

“All of our analysts have 20 years or more of design and trademark search experience,” he notes. “In addition, our analysts do both the design coding and the design research. They know how to break down and code designs quickly and accurately. This gives our analysts invaluable insight when searching designs. No one else matches our expertise.”

RAPID RESPONSE

Of course, no matter how thorough search results are, they must be delivered in time to support business decisions. This is especially challenging for WWE.

“Ours is a fast-moving business with new creative designs being developed all the time. Because we have live shows every week, new designs often must be cleared at a moment’s notice,” WWE’s Dienes-Middlen says. “The fact that Thomson CompuMark is capable of performing a design full search the same day is huge. My client groups are constantly impressed with the speed of turnaround. It encourages them to come to Legal for clearance.”

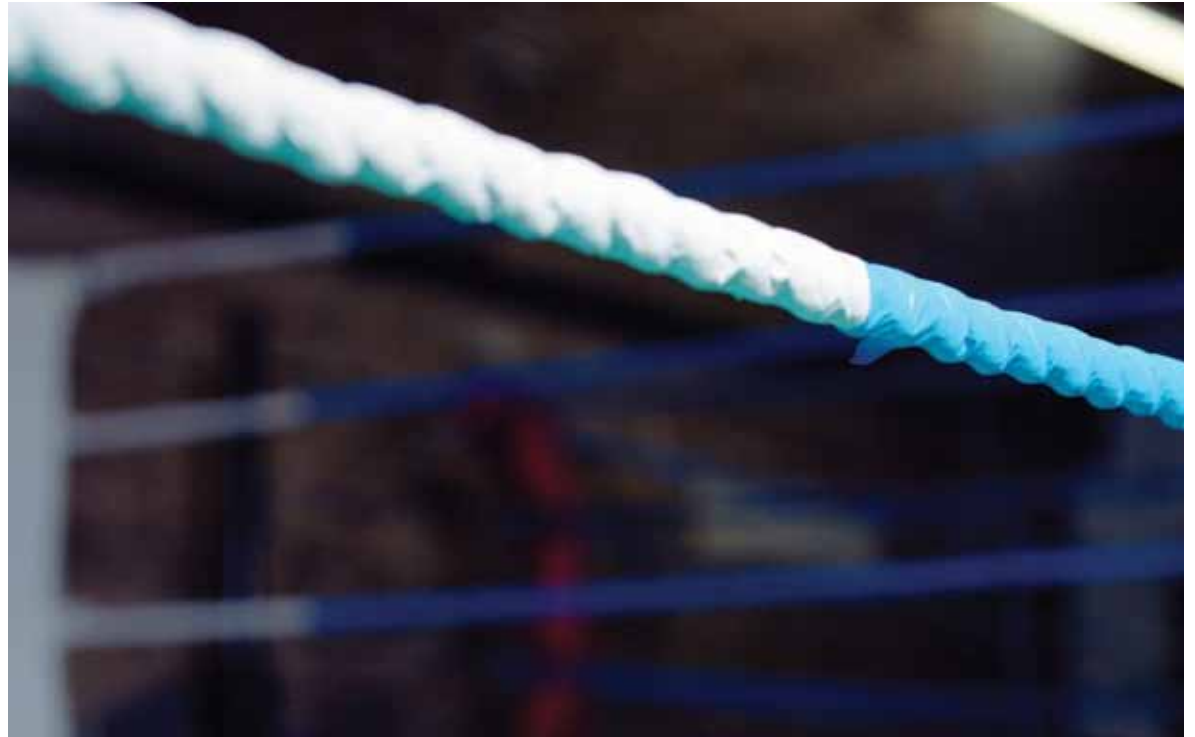
One reason for this rapid turnaround is Thomson CompuMark’s experienced, dedicated Design Search Team.

“Having a dedicated Thomson CompuMark analyst assigned to our account really helps. He knows our company, our category and our business,” Dienes-Middlen says. “When he tells me when to expect the search results, I have the confidence to tell my client groups when I will have them. And I always do.”



SUCCESS BY DESIGN

WWE relies on unique, powerful logos and branded designs to capture the energy and excitement of its events and talent. Due to the competitive nature of its business, WWE pays careful attention of clearing and protecting these branded images. The fast pace of WWE's business, with new designs introduced continuously, requires fast, accurate research.



IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

When those design search results arrive, Dienes-Middlen says they provide the in-depth information she needs to advise her colleagues.

"My client groups can't see me as an obstacle to the creative process. They have to see me as someone who is working with them," she says. "Because the Thomson CompuMark design search is so detailed and precise, I have the information I need to advise the creative staff in modifying the mark to make it work."

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With WWE continuing to expand its reach into new global markets and media, design marks will only become more critical to its business. But Dienes-Middlen says, "Bring it on."

"Keeping pace with WWE's continuous need for fresh, creative designs is always a legal challenge," Dienes-Middlen says. "Thomson CompuMark's superior design search people, processes and proprietary resources help me tackle those challenges every day."

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To learn more about our U.S. Full Design Search, please call us today at (800) 692-8833.

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