

Success in the battle against product piracy: Counterfeiter of Sennheiser headphones convicted by UK court

Wedemark, 16 March 2015 – Audio specialist Sennheiser has been actively combating product piracy in a range of ways over several years. In late February, the company scored a further victory in this ongoing campaign, with the conviction of an online trader from Cricklewood, London who was caught selling counterfeit Sennheiser products. The offender was put on probation supervision and was given a community sentence.

The 31-year-old admitted selling counterfeit Sennheiser headphones with a total value of EUR 235,000 to over 7,000 online customers via Amazon. He was put on probation for nearly a year and will be required to complete 200 hours of community service. Moreover, legal action is now pending, and the trader may be held liable for damages. Sennheiser UK Ltd has supported the investigating authorities by providing significant information resources.

Trademark protection is customer protection

“Combating product piracy is not just about averting financial loss. We are also concerned about the loss of our brand image. Customers are disappointed with the shoddy workmanship found in counterfeit products but they are often unaware that they’ve been deceived,” says Dr. Andreas Sennheiser, CEO of Sennheiser electronic GmbH & Co. KG. “Counterfeit branded products lack the relevant sound qualities; they don’t meet our high quality standards, nor have they been through Sennheiser’s strict final inspection and testing.” In some cases use of low-quality, fake headphones can even result in hearing damage.

Effective action against product pirates

A key measure in the fight against product piracy is the PrioSpot security label from tesa scribos®, which is now used for marking all Sennheiser packaging, as well as all of the premium manufacturer’s products, which include microphones, headphones and wireless transmission systems. These special labels have both visible and hidden security features. Consumers, traders and customs officers can very quickly carry out online checks on the authenticity of a product. Each product also carries a QR code, making it possible to verify the item via smartphone app in just a few seconds.

To curb the number of fake products that are sold online, Sennheiser regularly screens certain web portals for suspicious merchandise, especially in Asia. Moreover, Sennheiser works closely with customs authorities in a number of countries and this has contributed towards a significant reduction of fake imports into the EU in 2014.

“We’ve already had a lot of success with these existing measures – and now we’ve scored a major victory in the UK,” says Dr. Andreas Sennheiser. “We will continue to take action against criminal counterfeiters, so that our customers and partners can continue to be confident in receiving the high levels of quality that they have come to expect from Sennheiser.” This applies to all customers: anyone who has purchased a product from an authorised dealer can be assured of genuine Sennheiser quality.

About Sennheiser

The Sennheiser Group based in Wedemark near Hanover, Germany, was founded in 1945 and has gone on to become a leading manufacturer of microphones, headphones and wireless transmission systems. Sales in 2013 totaled 590.4 million euros. Sennheiser employs more than 2,700 staff worldwide and operates plants in Germany, Ireland and the USA. The company has a worldwide network of subsidiaries in France, Great Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, Germany, Denmark (Nordic), Russia, Hongkong, India, Singapore, Japan, China, Australia and New Zealand, Canada, Mexico, and the USA. It also has long-established trading partners in other countries. Georg Neumann GmbH, Berlin, a maker of studio microphones and monitor speakers, and Sennheiser Communications A/S, a joint venture making headsets for PCs, offices and call centers, are also part of the Sennheiser Group.

More information about Sennheiser is available on the internet at www.sennheiser.com.

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