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HELPDESK UPDATE

Issue 4 - First Anniversary Issue

The Helpdesk one year on

What have been the highlights of the Helpdesk's first year?

How do I use the Helpdesk?

What services does the Helpdesk provide and how are they accessed?

Helpdesk case study

Real experiences of SMEs in China

THE HELPDESK ONE YEAR ON

Since its launch in May 2008, the Helpdesk has provided free, practical advice to thousands of businesses across China and Europe. The Helpdesk routinely answers China IPR questions from across Europe, produces business tools for developing IPR value and managing risk in China in 6 languages, and delivers IP workshops in the EU and China to SMEs on the China IPR issues that are important to them.

Helpdesk Highlights May 2008 – May 2009

- Launch of the **Solution Centre** and **Case Study Catalogue**, which comprise a series of online resources where SMEs can learn from the experience of other European businesses in China, investigate what they can expect to encounter in taking their business to China, and access expert advice.
- Publication of expert written materials on China IPR for SMEs. These guides focus on incorporating IPR best practice into your business strategy, IPR tips for specific industries and IPR protection and enforcement strategies. These are all available online and have been distributed through partner organisations across Europe.
- Co-ordination of training seminars and workshops for European SMEs with current or planned business in China. From online IPR protection seminars in Prague, to Medical Equipment IPR training in southern China, Helpdesk experts have trained thousands of SMEs on how to avoid common IPR pitfalls and make the most of their assets.

The Helpdesk in Numbers: Year One

SMEs trained: **1,750** Unique users of the online portal: **18,000** Number of materials distributed: **21,400**

Who can use the Helpdesk?

The Helpdesk assists all European SMEs who are concerned with IPR in China. Building an effective IP strategy in China is crucial for protecting your IP from infringement and securing the long-term success of your business at home and abroad. IP affects all parts of your business, and the Helpdesk exists to help you integrate IP into your China strategy, including:

- ◆ Dealing with business partners and distributors in China
- ◆ Sourcing in China
- ◆ Manufacturing in China
- ◆ Attending trade fairs in China
- ◆ Registering your IP in China
- ◆ Developing your China business plan
- ◆ Enforcing your rights

Ask our experts an IPR question

SMEs can e-mail, telephone or visit the Helpdesk offices in Beijing to receive **free** tailored information and assistance related to IPR queries. Whether you are planning to enter the market in China and are collecting information for your business' next big step, or if you have encountered infringement in your China business, your query will receive a response from our experts within 5 working days.

Contact Alex Bell, Helpdesk Manager, to receive IPR advice:

enquiries@china-iprhelpdesk.eu

Tel: +86 (10) 6462 0892

Office C319, Beijing Lufthansa Center
50 Liangmaqiao Road, Beijing 100016

HOW CAN I USE THE HELPDESK?

Visit the Online Portal

Learn about China IPR using the portal's online business tools. The Solution Centre shows you how to deal with commonly encountered IPR issues, while the Case Study Catalogue allows you to learn the 'dos and don'ts' of China IPR from the experience of real businesses. The Helpdesk's E-learning Modules gives online interactive training on how to use China's IPR system to protect your company's IPR.

Use The Helpdesk's Training Workshops and Materials

The Helpdesk arranges regular workshops throughout Europe and China. These workshops provide specific, focused advice to European SMEs. The Helpdesk works with partners across Europe and China to hold SME focused workshops. Workshops are led by Helpdesk experts, with years of hands-on China IPR experience relating to a wide range of topics, including:

- "Know before you go": a beginners' guide to attending trade fairs and building business partnerships in China
- Building an IPR strategy for China
- Protecting your online assets
- Working with Chinese customs
- Enforcing your rights in China – tips for successful results
- IPR for your industry – tailored IPR strategies for specific industries

To learn more about upcoming training events, to view our catalogue of materials or to arrange an event for your SME network, please visit the online portal (www.china-iprhelpdesk.eu) or contact the Helpdesk directly on enquiries@china-iprhelpdesk.eu

Ask a Question: enquiries@china-iprhelpdesk.eu

CASE STUDY

Background

In March 2009, an Italian ceramics manufacturer was approached by a self-styled domain name registrar warning them that a company was applying for a number of Chinese domain names using the same brand name as the Italian company's. This self-styled registrar notified the Italian SME that it would accept the Chinese company's domain name application unless the Italian SME responded immediately. The SME promptly referred this issue to the China IPR SME Helpdesk which was able to provide decisive support.

Actions taken in response to China IPR SME Helpdesk support

Based on Helpdesk research, many inconsistencies and fallacies were discovered in the registrar's email to the Italian SME. Most importantly, a domain name already existed in the Italian company's brand name, registered to one of the trademark applicants mentioned in the e-mail. With other evidence, this was deemed sufficient proof that this was indeed an email written in bad faith and that SME ought to take steps to protect its domain name in China.

Following information and guidance provided by the IPR Helpdesk, the SME was able to quickly and decisively reject the fraudulent domain name registrar's requests and took the necessary steps to register their domain name in China. Furthermore, with the help of a China-based attorney, the Italian SME was able to force one of its trademark infringers to stop using the SME's name in its domain name.

Business lessons

- Register your domain name in China early
- Only use officially recommended registrars to register your domain name
- Beware of unsolicited emails from self-styled IP "registrars"
- To use competent, China experienced lawyers to handle potential disputes

To view the Helpdesk guide to protecting your domain name, visit www.china-iprhelpdesk.eu

The screenshot shows the China IPR SME Helpdesk website. At the top, it features the European Union flag and the text 'A project funded by the European Commission, DG Enterprise and Industry'. The main header includes 'CHINA IPR SME HELPDESK' and 'Business tools for developing IPR value and managing risk'. Below the header, there are several sections: 'UPCOMING EVENTS' with a date '23 June 2009', 'BUSINESS TOOLS' with links to 'China IPR Solution Centre', 'China IPR Case Study Catalogue', 'Helpdesk Publications', and 'Ask A Question', 'UNDERSTANDING IPR' with links like 'Getting Started', 'Assess Your IP', 'Find Your Way Around IPR', 'Support for European SMEs', and 'IPR for Your Business', and 'HELPDESK INFORMATION' with links like 'About The Helpdesk', 'Contact Us', and 'Subscribe to Our Newsletter'. A central section titled 'ASK A QUESTION' contains a diagram with 'What you need to know about managing IPR for your business' and a central diamond shape with 'Dealing with counterfeiting' in the center, surrounded by 'Business partners', 'Sales & distribution', 'Business promotion', 'Research & Development', 'Manufacturing', 'Sourcing', and 'Licensing'. Below this is a 'Helpdesk News' section with several news items. At the bottom, there is a disclaimer and logos for 'DEVELOPMENT' and 'EUROPEAN COMMISSION'.