Hilfiger threatened with trademark suit

By Cassidy Mantor - September 13, 2016

Tommy Hilfiger Fall/Winter 2016 is facing a potential trademark suit for its use of a "GiGi" trademark owned by an independent New York-based company.

Graphic Image, the owner of the GiGi New York mark, issued Hilfiger a cease and desist letter upon seeing Hilfiger's newest campaign which features "GiGi" copy celebrating its spokeswoman Gigi Hadid and her newest collection.

GiGi New York is a third generation company that employs 200 people and makes genuine leather bags and agendas in its New York-based factory.

Arguably stemming from Hilfiger's brand ambassador Gigi Hadid's name, Hilfiger responded to the cease and desist letter saying it would not stop using the Gigi name in promoting its line.

Additionally, Hilfiger said it was not concerned about consumer confusion in its use of Gigi in its brand marketing. The line is called Tommy x GiGi by Gigi Hadid, and most Hilfiger consumers are privy to the fact that Hadid is involved with the brand.

GiGi New York wrote in their letter to Hilfiger that it has owned the common law priority rights to the GiGi lettering since 2010, and that it "owns federal trademarks for its 'GIgi' family of marks."

GiGi New York is concerned about consumer confusion since the typography is similar in the Hilfiger products, as well as the reputation Hilfiger has of using questionable factories abroad. GiGi New York manufacturers its leather goods in NY, while Hilfiger's synthetic leather products are produced in foreign factories subject to different labor standards.

GiGi New York is currently operating a pop-up shop in NY's Meatpacking District on Washington Street.

Tommy x GiGi is available online on Tommy.com.

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