

Legal TV streams and merchandise crucial for quality sports in Southeast Asia

IPKey and LaLiga backs ASEAN fight against counterfeiting and piracy

Bangkok, Thailand. 26 April 2019

Sports fans may think that buying a counterfeit jersey of their favourite team or watching a weekend football match through an illegal streaming site is a harmless practice. But, if sports fans truly support their sports heroes, they should really go for genuine merchandise and official media channels.

The TV rights in professional sports are typically licensed for international media distribution to make live, high-definition broadcasts available to fans worldwide. By watching official sports broadcasts and online streaming, sports fans see the match in the best-possible quality, and support their team by adding to the viewership data that is used to attract sponsorship and licensing fees.

Revenue from official merchandise is equally important for quality sports. In addition, counterfeit sportswear is generally of low quality, is less sustainable, and potentially even harmful to consumer health.

Speaking from the IP Key Southeast Asia and LaLiga exhibition booth at World Intellectual Property (IP) Day 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand, today, LaLiga Delegate for Thailand Jose Maria Gotor noted that revenue from TV licensing and official merchandise are critical to pay for recruitment programmes, training facilities, support staff and other services that keep sports teams competitive.

“When LaLiga fans watch pirated matches online, they are essentially endangering the Spanish football teams that they love,” Mr. Gotor commented. “There are plenty of legitimate ways to catch a live LaLiga match in Southeast Asia, especially on the BeIN Sports app or through your local cable TV provider.”

LaLiga is the premier division for men’s football in Spain, and high-profile teams such as Real Madrid and Barcelona FC have massive followings in Asia.

Among dignitaries attending the opening ceremony for the event was the Head of the Trade Section of the EU Delegation to Thailand, Minister Counsellor Philipp Dupuis. “The protection and enforcement of IP rights are key objectives for the EU. The sports sector is significantly contributing to our economies and relies on the protection of intellectual property assets to survive. Unlicensed broadcasts and the sale of counterfeit merchandise put this sector in danger. By avoiding counterfeit goods, fans can make sure that the show goes on,” he said.

World IP Day 2019 focuses on IP and sports, with the event in Thailand hosted by the Department of Intellectual Property. The EU-funded IP Key Southeast Asia programme teamed up with LaLiga to highlight the importance of IP in sports, particularly football, at a dedicated ‘Support Your Team – Choose Official Products’ exhibition booth at the event.

The exhibit featured a display of all 20 LaLiga team jerseys and their IP components, competitions and giveaways, as well as experts on hand demonstrating how genuine sports broadcasts and merchandise help develop and maintain quality sports leagues. Other highlights at World IP Day 2019 included a visit by Muangthong United FC football staff, sports science and technology exhibits, and a discussion forum on IP and sports excellence.



Funded by the European Union



ABOUT IP KEY SOUTHEAST ASIA:

The World IP Day 2019 exhibition booth is an initiative of the IP Key Southeast Asia (IP Key SEA), a four-year EUR 7 million programme funded by the European Union and implemented by the EUIPO aimed at supporting IP rights protection and enforcement across Southeast Asia, with a view to creating the appropriate legal and economic environment conducive to trade and investment in the region. By contributing to the enhancement of IP frameworks and implementation of best practices, IP Key SEA aims to ensure a level playing field for both local enterprises and EU stakeholders. IP Key SEA is one of three EU-funded programmes dedicated to IP that are being implemented by the EUIPO, together with IP Key China and IP Key Latin America.

IP Key SEA operates concurrently with another EU-funded project also implemented by the EUIPO, ARISE+ IPR, which shares the same thematic scope. Each programme has a distinct focus and approach, with ARISE+ IPR targeting economic integration within ASEAN and IP Key SEA focusing on fostering convergence in the area of IP between individual Southeast Asian nations and the EU, particularly with a view to supporting bilateral trade agreements with comprehensive chapters on intellectual property rights, whether concluded or under negotiation, as well as IP dialogues. The programmes are complementary and have the same ultimate objective: to improve the intellectual property environment in the region for the benefit of all stakeholders operating with and within the region.

ABOUT THE EUIPO:

[The European Union Intellectual Property Office](#) (EUIPO) is an agency of the EU, based in Alicante, Spain. It manages the registration of the European Union trade mark (EUTM) and the Registered Community Design (RCD), both of which provide protection in all 28 EU memberstates, as well as carrying out cooperation activities with the national and regional intellectual property offices of the EU. Under the goals of its [Strategic Plan 2020](#), the EUIPO, in cooperation with national and regional EU IP offices, aims to promote global cooperation on IP between EU partners, third countries and multilateral organisations.

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