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## Rio 2016 branding guidelines

A brief guide for third parties who are not official sponsors or partners of the Olympic or Paralympic games.

Now that 2016 is upon us, Olympic and Paralympic Games focused marketing is already beginning to emerge. With the Rio Olympic Games fast approaching, we can expect Olympic and Paralympic themed messages to slowly infiltrate every aspect our lives as businesses around the world make the most of the International sporting event which comes but once every four years and unites the world through sport for a short period of time. For those readers that want to get into the spirit of the games, it is important to ensure that you do not infringe the intellectual property associated with the Games. Below, we have set out a brief guide to illustrate what you can and cannot do when it comes to using official branding.

### The Brands

There is a vast amount of Intellectual Property associated with the Olympic and Paralympic Games which comprises logos, symbols, images, videos, official expressions, anthems and songs amongst others. The IP associated with the Games is a forever growing body of rights which expands to incorporate new IP at each edition of the Games.

The principal protected IP consists of:

#### The Olympic Rings



#### The Paralympic Agitos



#### The Olympic & Paralympic Flames



#### The Olympic Motto

**CITIUS, ALTIUS, FORTIUS**

(Latin for 'Faster, Higher, Stronger')

#### The Paralympic Motto

**SPIRIT IN MOTION**

As well as the **Olympic and Paralympic creeds**.

Other protected IP includes the look of the games, mascots, pictograms, posters, medals and torches associated with the Rio 2016 Games, as well as historical versions of these things which have been associated with previous editions of the Games.

In addition, there are a number of protected expressions and designations including 'Olympic Games', 'Paralympic Games', 'Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games', 'Rio 2016 Games', 'Rio Olympiad', 'Rio 2016 Olympiad', 'XXXI Olympic Games' to name but a few.

## How can I use the Rio 2016 brands?

Only organisers and official partners of the Games can use the official Rio 2016 brands for commercial purposes. Other third parties can make limited use of the Rio 2016 brands within the guidelines prescribed by the Rio 2016 Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Third parties who are not official sponsors or partners of the Games **cannot** use the Rio 2016 brands for:

- **Advertising or propaganda**, especially advertising with the purpose of promoting the sale of products and services.
- **As a theme or focus of any kind of competition or promotion** which might cause a direct association with the Games, for example, prize draws to win tickets to the Olympic or Paralympic Games and promotions based on the number of medals won by a particular country are forbidden.
- **Games countdown clocks** and other devices or software applications which fulfil the same function; the exclusive rights to such things are held by Omega, one of the Games International sponsors.
- **The Images of Athletes** who are participating in the Games cannot appear in advertising campaigns during the competition period, as well as 15 days before and 15 days after the competition. The aim of the restriction is to prevent ambush marketing. Ambush marketing is common during events of this nature and refers to the situation where third parties who are not official sponsors of an event take

advantage of the publicity of the event by creating a false association with it. The use of an athlete's image is one of the most common ways that third parties try to associate themselves with the Games without using the protected brands.

- The production of any type of product or material for promotions, institutional or commercial purposes
- The name of a commercial or business establishment, a domain name or on a website with a commercial purpose.

Third parties who are not official sponsors or partners of the Games **can** use the Rio 2016 brands for:

- **Editorial and journalistic purposes** as long as there is no commercial association between the published content and the Games. The Brands can only be applied to articles and/or materials whose subject matters relates to the Games. This includes news websites, blogs and pages on social media websites. The brands must not be used outside of the article or blog post etc. without authorisation. For example, whilst it is fine to use the brands within a news article about the Games on a website, it is not acceptable to use the brands on the main page of the website, away from the article.
- **The communication of opinions** and to illustrate cultural expressions as long as there is no commercial purpose or association with the Games. For example, a cartoon celebrating the start of the Games which included the Olympic rings would be acceptable as long as there was no commercial purpose.
- **As the central theme of an event** including for educational purposes or for debate and discussion about the Games. However, you should not use protected official expressions, such as 'Olympics' or 'Rio 2016', to name your event. To avoid confusion, all materials produced for an event which mentions the Games must include a notice indicating that there is no official connection with or endorsement by Rio 2016.

## Conclusions

The key message is to avoid using the Rio brands for commercial purposes and to avoid creating false associations between the Games and third parties who are not official sponsors or partners of the Games. If in doubt, you should seek authorisation to your use of the brands.

Detailed guidelines can be obtained from the website [www.rio2016.com/en/copyright](http://www.rio2016.com/en/copyright) and you should consult this website for updates and further information before using the Rio 2016 brands.

## How can A.A. Thornton & Co. help?

If you have any further queries regarding the use of the official Rio 2016 branding, then please do not hesitate to contact us via our website at [www.aathornton.com](http://www.aathornton.com). Our registered trade mark attorneys are qualified to advise on all aspects of trade mark law, and provide the following services:

- Advising on your choice of trade marks and their registrability
- Trade Mark Audits and IP portfolio management
- Due diligence of trade mark rights

- Searches, investigations and advice on filing strategies
- Preparing, filing and prosecuting national, EU or international trade mark applications
- Facilitating registration of trade marks overseas
- Managing renewals of trade marks
- Trade mark watches to identify competitors' applications and registrations
- Handling oppositions, cancellations and appeals
- Negotiating amicable settlements and co-existence agreements
- Negotiating and drafting licence agreements and assignments
- Advising on infringement of trade mark registrations and attacks on validity
- Liaising with solicitors and barristers in the enforcement or defence of registered and common law rights

## Contact

For more information please contact Sarah Neil via email at [smn@aathornton.com](mailto:smn@aathornton.com) or your usual A.A Thornton & Co. advisor.

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