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AGMA Conference Addresses Intellectual Property Rights Protection

Best Practices for Conducting IP Investigations and Using Pricing to Mitigate Gray Market Activity among Topics Discussed by AGMA Members

LOS GATOS, Calif., December 6, 2011 –[AGMA](#), a non-profit organization dedicated to addressing the [gray marketing](#), [counterfeiting](#), software piracy, and warranty and [service abuse](#) of branded goods around the globe, recently held their quarterly industry forum to discuss various topics related to brand protection issues. Hosted by Avaya Inc. in Denver, Colo., AGMA member companies, U.S. government representatives and members of law enforcement agencies were on hand to provide insight into how to best protect a company's intellectual property (IP) and safeguard one of its most valuable assets – its brand.

AGMA member and host company, Avaya Inc., opened the conference with a presentation on Avaya's software IP journey. Mary Ann Littler, services vice president for Avaya Client Services Channels, shared initiatives that the company has taken over the last two years to educate associates, channel partners and customers on Avaya software IP policies and direction. During the forum, Littler noted that Avaya has increased global audits to monitor channel partners and customers, taking action when necessary to address compliance gaps. Avaya has a full-time analysis team to monitor the market for gray market activity, which has resulted in its issuing a number of Cease and Desist orders for trademark, copyright, intellectual and property infringement in the past year.

Darko Kirovski , a senior researcher from Microsoft Research, spoke to audience members about RFDNA – an emerging technology that Microsoft has developed to address gray market and counterfeit challenges for hardware devices. Kirovski explained the underlying technology of this fingerprint radio frequency model, which enables the reliable identification of a device – including its origin and intended market - through offline and online handheld reader solutions.

Milton Springut, managing partner of Kalow & Springut, LLP, a leading IP boutique located in New York, gave an interactive presentation titled ‘Proper Conduct of IP Investigations.’ The presentation covered the various legal and ethical considerations which govern investigations, an important part of IP enforcement efforts. Springut presented the audience with eight scenarios which commonly confront IP owners during such investigations, and then explored the various applicable laws and ethical rules pertaining to each.

KPMG partner Matt Behan, along with Adele McLean from Aveus, reviewed strategic pricing and its impact on gray market activity. Behan suggested that manufacturers must take a proactive approach to protect their profits and brand. By creating a strategic pricing plan, a corporation can manage internally generated price arbitrage, control oversupply to the market, remove emotion from price authorization, and create discipline across the sales organization. The presentation concluded that ultimately control over pricing is the most effective way to control gray market activity.

According to AGMA president Chris LaChappelle, “As the largest group solely focused on IP protection in the high tech industry, AGMA is on a mission to promote IP protection so that the industry can thrive and contribute to economic prosperity, innovation and security. AGMA’s initiatives are global in scope and conducted at the national level, and our quarterly member meetings are great examples of the industry joining forces to share strategic ideas and discuss the introduction of better controls and processes in mitigating threats to IP.”

To learn more about AGMA’s initiative or to become a member, please visit www.agmaglobal.org.

About AGMA

AGMA is a non-profit organization comprised of influential companies in the technology sector. Incorporated in 2001, AGMA's mission is to address gray market fraud, parallel imports, counterfeiting, software piracy, and service abuse of technology products around the globe. The organization's goals are to protect intellectual property and authorized distribution channels, improve customer satisfaction and preserve brand integrity.

AGMA welcomes any technology manufacturer, as well as persons or entities that own or hold intellectual property rights to finished goods outside the technology industry; product and service providers; government and law enforcement officials who provide goods and/or services to combat gray market fraud, counterfeiting and warranty and service abuse threats. AGMA uses a variety of avenues to cultivate change in the marketplace, including event speaking, educational initiatives, benchmark studies, industry guidelines, and, where appropriate, public policy advocacy. To learn more about AGMA's initiatives or to become a member, please visit www.agmaglobal.org.

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