



Since 1950 IP Protection in the Heart of Europe

No. 04 - April 26, 2019

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DAY CELEBRATES SPORTS

On 26 April 1970 the Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) entered into force, and exactly this day, of all days, has been chosen to celebrate World IP Day, to promote awareness of intellectual property (IP).

In the 2000, following suggestions from several WIPO members, including a suggestion in 1999 from Mr. Jiang Ying, Commissioner of the State Intellectual Property Office of the People's Republic of China, the WIPO recognized the importance of getting people interested in issues relating to IP and designated an annual World IP Day, which takes a different theme every year and gives everybody, from IP offices to universities and law firms, along with ordinary people all over the world, an opportunity to join in this day of celebration. People can just discuss the annual theme or re-tweet posts on social media to "make some noise" of course but, for those who want to go all-out, the theme become the focus of events, workshops, competitions and much, much more, all to excite people's interest in the theme and, of course, in IP.

Every year the WIPO posts the [event map](#) on its website with all the events organized for the day, where you can find out what's happening worldwide.

Over the years the themes chosen have always reflected the hot topics of society. For example, in 2009 the problem of the global warming inspired the theme of "Green Innovation", to encourage the growth of sustainable innovation; in 2018 the WIPO campaigned against gender discrimination with the theme of "Powering Change: Women in Innovation and Creativity", and called on people to post names of famous females scientists and inventors on social networks.

This year's campaign theme is "Reach for Gold: IP and Sport", and as the name implies it is focused on the world of sport. The WIPO says on its website that "it explores how innovation, creativity and the IP rights that encourage and protect them support the development of sport and its enjoyment around the world". The connection between the two words "IP" and "sport" is actually quite close: just think of the importance of innovation in new sports technologies, materials, training, energy foods and equipment (and the patenting of these innovations), and then of course there trademarks and branding to maximize commercial revenue from sponsorship, merchandising and licensing agreements. It's easy to see that the multi-billion dollar global sports industry is defended and helped in maximizing its incomes with the underpinning of IP rights protection: among other factors, it is the strategic use of these rights that empowered the development of the global sports industry, increasing revenue with sponsorship deals between athletes and brands, with the sale of broadcasting rights to the media and with the large-scale production of technical products tested by athletes and teams.

This year, like every year, it's important to be a part of this celebration because this is one of the few chances we have to make some noise around the intellectual property field: a very specific branch of the law of which most people are unaware or only partially aware, but which represents one of the most powerful assets in the growth of a country and, more generally, of society as a whole.