

UPDATES FROM IPOS

October 2025

Dear readers

Welcome to our latest update on developments relating to IP & tech dispute resolution in Singapore.

High Court decisions

[*Yang Qiang v Gallop APAC Pte Ltd*](#) [2025] SGHC 187

The central issue in this case before the General Division of the High Court of Singapore was whether the second defendant or the first claimant is the beneficial owner of 90% shareholding in the first defendant.

Among the ancillary issues was an IP-related one, on whether the first defendant (Gallop APAC Pte Ltd) committed passing off in relation to the second claimant (GallopAir Pte Ltd). One of the elements to be established is goodwill. However, GallopAir Pte Ltd admitted that it did not have customers. Instead, it sought to establish goodwill (the attractive force that draws customers) by arguing that it was an attractive customer to service providers who wanted to sell goods or services to it. The court declined to extend the concept of goodwill to a party that has not demonstrated attraction to customers but instead claims that it is seen as an attractive customer. That would confuse goodwill with reputation.

[*GNC Holdings LLC v ONI Global Pte Ltd and another*](#) [2025] SGHC(I) 25

The Singapore International Commercial Court largely upheld an arbitration decision, in the latest development in a three-year franchise dispute in the wellness retail field.

The decision and the respondent's appeal were reported in the media [here](#) and [here](#).

[*Dr Who Waterworks Pte Ltd & 2 Ors v Dr Who \(M\) Sdn Bhd & 3 Ors*](#) [2025] SGHCR 35

In the earlier substantive decision of the High Court in [*Dr Who Waterworks Pte Ltd and others v Dr Who \(M\) Sdn Bhd and others*](#) [2023] SGHC 156, trade mark infringement and passing off were established.

Following the substantive decision, High Court Assistant Registrar Gan Kam Yui assessed the first Plaintiff's loss of profits from a particular infringing act, as well as, separately, the Defendants' account of profits for another infringing act. Only the Plaintiffs relied on an expert witness, a qualified Chartered Valuer and Appraiser, and Chartered Accountant, with more than 35 years of experience in the public accounting profession.



IPOS decisions

[*Hangzhou Pingpong Intelligent Technology Co. Ltd v Speedy Trade Finance Limited*](#) [2025] SGIPOS 4

The Principal Assistant Registrar found for the opponent on the ground of passing off. Despite not conducting business in Singapore at the relevant date, the opponent enjoyed goodwill in Singapore because of its pre-trading activity which generated demand for its services.

As an aside, the issue did not have the benefit of robust contestation from both parties. The applicant chose not to make submissions, and its pleadings and evidence disclosed little more than a bare denial of the opponent's case.

[*TNSG Biotech Co Ltd v Murray Colin Clarke*](#) [2025] SGIPOS 5

At the start of a cross-border commercial relationship, there is often a tendency to overlook the need to set out clearly in writing the rights and obligations of both sides, including the ownership and use of trade marks. This can have the consequence that sorting out such conflict when it arises later is far harder, and more expensive in both time and money, than it need be.

In this opposition, the Opponent and Applicant were connected to each other by business dealings. The IP Adjudicator found that the Applicant held the genuine belief that it was the legal owner of the trade mark in question and did not act in bad faith in filing the opposed application to register that mark. The opposition therefore failed.

IPOS public consultation on proposed changes to IP regime

As Singapore's IP landscape evolves, so must its policies. To ensure our IP regime remains relevant and continues to serve innovators, businesses and creators effectively, we are seeking feedback on proposed improvements across patents, trade marks, registered designs, plant varieties and geographical indications.

For disputes before the IPOS Registrar, among the proposed legislative amendments is one to update the Scale of Costs to increase the costs that may be awarded. It is also proposed to give the Registrar the power to award off-scale costs in limited circumstances e.g. where a party demonstrates unreasonable or undesirable behaviour. Other proposed amendments are to provide that deadlines to file a notice of opposition to the registration of a trade mark are not extendable once missed, and that the Registrar has no discretion to extend deadlines to file counter-statements in a trade mark opposition beyond the maximum period of 4 months.

The consultation period runs from **15 October 2025 to 25 November 2025**. The consultation paper can be viewed [here](#). You may submit your feedback to us via FormSG [here](#).

Mediation case under WIPO-Singapore ASEAN Mediation Programme

[*Rasa Fitness & Dance Academy v Nur Badriah Binte Johari*](#) [2025] MED 1

A partnership in the business of providing fitness classes, and a fitness trainer, attempted to resolve their trade mark dispute with the help of a Singapore mediator. The parties started off relying heavily



on their legal positions, but in private caucuses, the mediator skilfully drew out the parties' true concerns and perceptions. Read more [here](#).

Media coverage on Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC)

The Business Times on 21 October 2025 reported that [Singapore's international commercial court eyes bigger role in global disputes](#). SICC President, Justice Philip Jeyaretnam, said in an interview that the SICC is handling an increasing number of disputes in emerging sectors, such as technology and digital assets. Such cases present unique challenges, including novel legal questions – such as whether cryptocurrencies constitute property – and technical complexity arising from the borderless nature of digital disputes.

VICPA–WIPO Pilot Mediation Programme

The Visual, Audio, Creative Content Professionals Association and WIPO signed an [MOU](#) on 22 October 2025 to promote the use of mediation to resolve disputes in the creative sector — an initiative that fosters dialogue, trust, and fair outcomes for creators. Under the arrangement, WIPO mediators in Singapore render mediation services to freelance creative professionals on a low bono basis.

Featured events

Protecting Value and Promoting Growth: Mediation and Arbitration for Fashion and Luxury Disputes

WIPO-CI Arb Conference

WIPO and CI Arb convened this online conference on 30 September 2025 to promote understanding on how arbitration and mediation can be optimised to serve the unique needs of the fashion and luxury sectors.

Singapore IP lawyer and mediator Joyce Tan spoke on the panel *Arbitration, Mediation, or Court Litigation? Strategic Considerations for Fashion and Luxury Brands*.

2025 WIPO Intellectual Property Judges Forum

The WIPO IP Judges Forum is convened annually and facilitates the exchange and discussion of practices on issues of common concern among judiciaries. It took place on 14 and 15 October 2025 in Geneva, Switzerland.

Singapore High Court Judge, Justice Dedar Singh Gill, moderated a panel on *Calculation of Damages in Civil Proceedings*. He is a member of the WIPO Advisory Board of Judges (2023-2025), and also the lead judge of the IP/IT List in the Supreme Court of Singapore.

IP Mediation Conference 2025: Unlocking the Power of Mediation

The Boards of Appeal of the European Union Intellectual Property Office convened the 5th edition of the IP Mediation Conference on 16 and 17 October 2025 in Malta. The event is an opportunity to exchange knowledge, best practices, and future trends in the field of IP mediation.



Singapore mediator and Chairman of Singapore International Mediation Centre George Lim spoke at the session *Interacting with the Future: Leading Voices in the Quest for Combining AI with IP Mediation* on 17 October 2025.

ASEAN-USPTO Online Colloquium Series for the Judiciary on Civil and Criminal IP Case Management

The USPTO Global Intellectual Property Academy and the ASEAN Secretariat jointly organized the above colloquium for judicial officers from ASEAN member states.

Singapore Judicial College Executive Director, Judge Justin Yeo, spoke on *Judicial Education Trends* on 9 October 2025.

Singapore High Court Judge, Justice Kwek Mean Luck, spoke on a panel on the subject of *Appellate Review of Administrative and Trial Court Decisions in IP Matters* on 23 October 2025. Justice Kwek is a judge of the IP/IT List in the Supreme Court of Singapore.

Singapore International Commercial Court International Judge, Justice Christopher Sonchi, spoke on *Intellectual Property Issues in International Trade Litigation and Bankruptcy Cases* on 28 October 2025, covering issues such as the valuation of IP in bankruptcy contexts. Justice Sonchi is the former Chief Judge, United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware, Wilmington, Delaware.

Navigating Unregistered & Unregistrable IP Rights: The international commercial perspective (Practical IP Enforcement Series (PIPES))

On 27 October 2025, Singapore disputes lawyer and IPOS IP Adjudicator, Prof David Llewelyn, gave the keynote lecture on common commercial pitfalls when navigating unregistered and unregistrable IP rights. This is part of the larger programme which discussed how businesses can assert ownership and defend against infringement; and navigate this field from an international commercial perspective. IPOS Principal Legal Counsel, Gabriel Ong, moderated the panel comprising: Prof Llewelyn, Diyanah Baharudin (Netflix), Just Wang (Meta), and Hong Sze Chen (Google and YouTube).

Mediation, Convention, and AI in Action: A New Era of Dispute Resolution

The Singapore International Mediation Centre (SIMC) and KCAB International jointly presented the above event on 31 October 2025 in South Korea. Experts shaping the future of dispute resolution discussed how mediation and technology are redefining the field.

SIMC CEO, Chuan Wee Meng, was among the speakers and gave a demonstration of SIMC's Mediation AI Assistant (MAIA 2.0).

If you know of anyone who would like to be added to this mailing list (which deals primarily with IP/IT dispute resolution in Singapore), please drop us a note at ipos_hmd@ipos.gov.sg. IPOS also separately maintains another mailing list for circulars, legislative amendments and other related matters which you can join by contacting news@ipos.gov.sg. For any comments or feedback (or to draw our attention to any interesting news we might have missed), please email



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