

Second Life - A New Dimension For Trademark Infringement

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The New Virtual World

Millions must have marveled at the new horizons described in the conceivably prophetic 1982 movie "Blade Runner", which portrayed the existential boredom cloaking our planet and humans' endeavor to relocate to new outer worlds. Merely twenty years later, in 2003, San Francisco-based Linden Research, Inc. (a/k/a Linden Lab), has opened the door to, arguably, a pro tem alternative to travels to a new world, all without leaving the comfort of an armchair, as long as an Internet-connected computer is within the reach of the "explorer's" hand. The new world's name is Second Life.

In common terminology, Second Life (SL) is a massive multiplayer online role-

playing game (MMORPG) that enjoys an astonishing popularity on a global scale. SL is not a traditional online multi-player game, with losers, winners, points and levels, and the capability to defy gravity, but rather a virtual universe (also called "in-world") in its own right, with characteristics usually ascribed to the physical, real life (RL) world. It has large and exponentially growing interacting populace, and the society functioning along the rules of the modern RL society, including quasi-governance, with its strengths and shortcomings, all within certain (albeit virtual) territoriality.

The interaction between the SL inhabitants, called avatars or residents, is akin to that in the RL society. However, the two primary factors that differentiate the in-

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