Amazon's Project Zero lets brands remove fake product listings

Through a new initiative called Project Zero, Amazon wants to empower brands to help stop the spread of counterfeit products on the marketplace. Previously, brands could only flag potential counterfeits for Amazon to review and delete, but the Project Zero program will allow brands to delete counterfeit products from the site themselves without Amazon's help.

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"Project Zero combines Amazon's advanced technology, machine learning, and innovation with the sophisticated knowledge that brands have of their own intellectual property and how best to detect counterfeits of their products," the company said in a blog post.

Amazon said the program is carried out using three tools:

Automated protections

Powered by machine learning, automated protections continuously scan Amazon stores and remove suspected counterfeits. Brands provide Amazon with their logos, trademarks, and other key data about their brand, and then Amazon scans over 5 billion product listing updates every day, looking for suspected counterfeits.

"We've been testing these automated protections with a number of brands, and on average, our automated protections proactively stop 100 times more suspected counterfeit products as compared to what we reactively remove based on reports from brands," the company said.

Self-service counterfeit removal tool

This tool provides brands with the ability to remove counterfeit listings themselves. Previously, brands would need to report a counterfeit to Amazon, after which the report would be investigated and action taken. With Project Zero, brands no longer need to contact Amazon to remove a counterfeit listing. Instead, they can do so, quickly and easily, using the new self-service tool.

This provides brands with an ability to directly control and remove listings from the store. This information also feeds into

Amazon's automated protections so they can better catch potential counterfeit listings proactively in the future.

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Product serialisation

Product serialisation is a service that allows Amazon to individually scan and confirm the authenticity of every one of a brand's products that are purchased in Amazon's stores. The product serialisation service provides a unique code for every unit that is manufactured, and the brand puts these codes on its products as part of its manufacturing process.

Every time a product using the serialisation service is ordered in Amazon's stores, they scan and verify the authenticity of the purchase. With this product serialisation service, Amazon says it can now detect and stop counterfeiting for every product unit before it reaches a customer.

Invite-only

For now, Project Zero is an invite-only program, so only Amazon's chosen brands will be allowed to join and remove listings. Amazon says that it's granting brands the power because it believes that "the combined strengths of Amazon and brands can drive counterfeits to zero," but also notes that "brands must maintain a high bar for accuracy in order to maintain their Project Zero privileges."

The company will also be requiring that Project Zero users undergo required training, and says that it'll be actively monitoring to prevent abuses.

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