

Five-Year Prison Sentence for Selling \$1.27 Million USD of Counterfeit Armani Watches in Shanghai Trademark Case

Article By:

Aaron Winingger

In an [announcement](#) from the [Shanghai High People's Court](#) on November 3, 2022, the People's Court of Chongming District, Shanghai Municipality sentenced defendant Ding to imprisonment of five years for the crime of counterfeiting a registered trademark and imposed a fine of 1.5 million RMB (~\$209 thousand USD). Ding had sold 58,813 counterfeit watches bearing the Emporio Armani trademark having a value of 9,153,683 RMB (~\$1.27 million USD).

From April 2020 to October 2021, defendant Ding, in collusion with Li (who was prosecuted in a separate case), manufactured and sold watches bearing the counterfeited registered trademark of Armani without obtaining the permission of the right holder of the registered trademark “

EMPORIO ARMANI

.” Ding was responsible for purchasing some watch components while Li was responsible for purchasing other watch components, and hired persons to rent manufacturing site and manufacture fake Armani watches. Ding then sold them together with Li through the Internet. Upon determined that 58,813 counterfeit watches were sold, with a value of 9,153,683 RMB. A further total of 13,815 counterfeit watches were seized with a value of 1,947,195 RMB.

The Chongming Court of Shanghai held that defendant Ding, in collusion with others, used a trademark identical with a registered trademark on the same kind of registered without the permission of the registered trademark owner, and the circumstances were especially serious, constituting the crime of counterfeiting a registered trademark. At the same time, the defendant Ding committed the crime together with other persons, and played the role of organizer and leader and was therefore a principal offender, and he should be subject to criminal liability for all crimes.

The announcement concluded,

Intellectual property rights shall protect intellectual achievements and encourage and protect innovations. Combating the criminal activities of infringing upon registered trademarks is of great significance in promoting fair competition and optimizing the business environment. All citizens have the obligation to conscientiously abide by the relevant laws and regulations on trademarks, protect the exclusive right to use trademarks enjoyed by trademark registrants

according to law, and never evade the law for the sake of seeking personal gains.

The announcement noted that this case was the first case regarding intellectual property concluded by the Shanghai Chongming Court after removing jurisdiction from the Shanghai IP Court for non-technical IP and other cases.

Criminal enforcement for intellectual property infringement continues to be a useful tool for those that own Chinese intellectual property. Past cases in Shanghai that generated prison sentences include counterfeiting [shoe polish](#), [3M masks](#), [Cartier jewelry](#), [Lego bricks](#), [Dyson hairdryers](#), and others.

The full text of the announcement can be found [here](#) (Chinese only).

© 2025 Schwegman, Lundberg & Woessner, P.A. All Rights Reserved.

National Law Review, Volume XII, Number 308

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/five-year-prison-sentence-selling-127-million-usd-counterfeit-armani-watches>