

Language Preservation with Trademark Registration

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The intersection between trademarks and language is self-evident because both systems rely on words or elements of speech capable of conveying meaning. Words are often the building blocks of spoken and written language. Similarly, words are often key components of marks that serve as indicators of source, or symbols that inform the public who is responsible for a product or service. While the potential for new brands or marks may appear infinite, there are entire languages that are already extinct or dead. According to linguists, languages become extinct when there are no longer any speakers (e.g., Aramaic) and languages are dead when there are no native speakers left, but the language is still spoken or used (e.g., Latin). Many languages spoken today will become dead or extinct in as little as a few weeks or months. At least 50 percent of today's spoken languages will be extinct or seriously endangered by 2100. This article explores the idea of using trademark registration, along with traditional language preservation practices, to extend the life of dead and extinct languages.