



WARNING 1

Some companies and individuals are sending out unsolicited invitations to applicants and owners of UK trade marks and patents, inviting them to apply for entry in various (sometimes official sounding) publications and "registers" in return for payment of a fee. These parties tend to make their offers in the form of invoices, which are usually sent out after the publication of the official UK application.

You should be aware that these companies are not linked to any Government or Community Institution and there is no obligation to pay them.

The only Offices that are able to provide legal protection for patents, designs and trade marks in the UK are the Intellectual Property Office itself, the European Patent Office and the Community Trade Mark Office (more formally the Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market - OHIM).

The Community Trade Marks Office (www.oami.europa.eu) and the European Patent Office (www.european-patent-office.org) have examples of these invoices on their websites.

WARNING 2

Other businesses are writing to applicants for UK trade marks offering (for a fee) to file a Community trade mark application based on the data present in the UK application. If you decide to consider such an offer you should check:

- a) Whether the person is offering to represent you before OHIM in the event of any problems with, or objections to, your application (not everyone can), and
- b) Whether the fee quoted by the UK service provider includes the official fees for making a Community trade mark application and, if not, how these will be paid.

If you receive such a letter or invoice, check carefully to see exactly what services you are being offered and whether it comes from an official source such as those listed above. If you are in any doubt, please check with your registered Trade Mark or Patent Attorney, or with your Solicitor, or contact us.

If you need to find a qualified legal representative, try the following

itma.org.uk
cipa.org.uk
lawsociety.org.uk