

insights

TYPES NOT MAPPED YET July 13, 2022 | TTR not mapped yet | Thomas A. Polcyn

The Thompson Coburn brand enters the Metaverse

Thompson Coburn has stepped into the virtual world by becoming one of the first major U.S. law firms to apply for trademark protection for our brand in the Metaverse.

What is the “metaverse”? The term metaverse doesn’t really refer to any one specific type of technology. Broadly speaking, the technologies that make up the metaverse can include virtual reality (VR) – characterized by persistent, “always on” virtual worlds that continue to exist even when you’re not playing or actively engaged in them, as well as augmented reality (AR) that combines aspects of the digital and physical worlds. It doesn’t necessarily require access exclusively via VR or AR – a virtual world, like aspects of popular video games such as Fortnite, can be accessed through PCs, game consoles, and even mobile phones, and could therefore be considered part of the metaverse.

It also translates to a digital economy, where users can create, buy, and sell goods and services. There is vision for a metaverse that allows you to create a persona and to acquire assets that you can take with you across platforms. It is anticipated that no single entity or entities will have control over the metaverse – rather, it is expected to be much more decentralized, like the Internet.

While the metaverse is still in its early stages, Bloomberg anticipates the value of the global metaverse could reach almost \$800 billion by 2024. Bloomberg states that nearly \$48 billion was generated in this burgeoning space in 2020 alone.

After discussions by Firm Management and our firmwide Innovation Committee, Thompson Coburn’s Intellectual Property team sought to protect our brand in the metaverse. Thompson Coburn is among the first AmLaw 200 law firms to seek a trademark protection in the metaverse.

“It’s important for us to operate where our clients operate, whether in a physical geographical location or, in this case, a virtual universe,” said IP Co-Chair [Tom Polcyn](#). “By securing our trademark now for the metaverse, we’re protecting our brand in this new digital environment. We’re also laying the foundation to interact with our clients in the metaverse and help advise them on the multitude of business and legal questions related to operating in the metaverse and other virtual worlds.”

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thomas

Thomas A. Polcyn