

US cites Amazon's foreign platforms over counterfeit goods

April 29 2020



US officials say Amazon is the focus of complaints that it facilitates sales of counterfeit merchandise in five countries

Amazon was placed on a US government "notorious markets" list Wednesday over complaints that it failed to crack down on sales of

counterfeit merchandise in five of its global e-commerce platforms.

The US Trade Representative's office placed Amazon on the list of retail operations under scrutiny for intellectual property protection.

As part of its annual review, USTR said Amazon platforms in Canada, Britain, France, Germany and India were cited.

The report said [copyright holders](#) complained about "alleged high levels of counterfeit goods" in the five markets.

Some expressed concern that in Britain, for example, "it is difficult for consumers and right holders alike to determine who is selling the goods and that anyone can become a seller on Amazon with too much ease because Amazon does not sufficiently vet sellers on its platforms," the document said.

The report said Amazon's counterfeit removal processes were cited as "lengthy and burdensome, even for right holders that enroll in Amazon's brand protection programs."

Amazon said it "strongly disagreed" with the findings and called the report a "purely political act" by the administration of President Donald Trump, who has engaged in a public feud with the company and its founder Jeff Bezos.

"Amazon makes significant investments in proactive technologies and processes to detect and stop bad actors and potentially counterfeit products from being sold in our stores," a spokesperson said in an email.

"We also work closely with [law enforcement agencies](#) and are reporting all confirmed counterfeiters to help them build stronger criminal cases."

The 2019 Notorious Markets List provides examples of sellers believed to be facilitating counterfeiting but the agency noted that it is not "a legal finding of a violation" or prelude to enforcement action.

"This year's review process also identified a growing concern about the proliferation of counterfeits facilitated by [social media platforms](#)," the report said, including the Chinese-based WeChat.

"USTR will further study and monitor these concerns," the report said.

The 49-page report also listed streaming media and e-commerce websites under scrutiny in China, Italy, Poland, Indonesia and other countries.

It said Pirate Bay, a popular digital media operation which has been the target of authorities for years, remains active despite the shutdown of some of its websites.

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Citation: US cites Amazon's foreign platforms over counterfeit goods (2020, April 29) retrieved 23 April 2024 from

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