

ACID[®] MAGAZINE

YOUR VOICE AGAINST DESIGN THEFT

A Touch of Glass!

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MastaPlasta p18-19



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How the King's Trust Help
Make Young People's Dreams
a Reality

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What a year it's been!

With everything going on in the world at the moment – Trump, Putin, Musk... I think we can all be forgiven for feeling a bit over 2025 already. BUT! It's so important not to lose sight of the positives around us and everything we're achieving together, both big wins and small triumphs.



So, this issue, we're focussing on our home-grown talent, our members' and ACID's successes alike, the doors we're pushing through, the commitment to campaigning and the joys that innovating and designing brings to so many.

Our Guest Editor is Neil Sheppard, Volunteer Mentor with the King's Trust (p6-7). Through Neil, we are very lucky to meet a fantastic variety of innovative and inspiring young people, supporting them with all things intellectual property (IP) as they launch their new businesses. Neil's journey with IP is really interesting, and the King's Trust work is an invaluable source of guidance for many starting out on their own.

ACID has had an extremely busy start to the year, most notably TEMU's presence at Spring Fair causing both controversy and opportunity. I'm sure you'll have all seen our communications on this, and rest assured, we're continuing to communicate with TEMU about the sheer volume of copyright and design infringement on their

marketplace. ACID Member Wee Wishes tell all about their battle on p10-11, so it's imperative we keep the lines of communication open now that we have them established. We also held talks with Hyve regarding the decision to host TEMU at Spring Fair in the first place. Though not a decision ACID support, having TEMU at Spring Fair has opened the door to communications rarely achieved with an online marketplace. There is a long, long way to go to make changes but TEMU seem open to listening. This is a huge step forward, and we'll keep making these strides on behalf of ACID members and the wider design community.

The Copyright and AI Consultation, which closed on 25th February, has been another invaluable opportunity to speak together, and loudly, on IP rights. ACID's response, along with thousands of others', calls for respect, regulation and recognition of creators' rights in AI. Dids gives a summary of



why this is so intrinsically important on p4. Almost immediately afterwards, the IPO released their Design Survey, which closed on 1st April, ahead of the Design Consultation which is expected to launch this Summer.

AI is, of course, the hot topic of the moment and will remain so for the foreseeable. It was interesting to attend the MAKE UK conference in March, as AI in manufacturing is seeing exponential growth. The message was nothing but positive and, to some extent, unavoidable – use it or be left behind. However, nobody had mentioned IP and, when I questioned the risk of copyright infringement in, for example, Design for Manufacture, the room fell momentarily into concerned silence. We can't afford to be complacent and ACID Legal Affiliates, Taylors Solicitors, give their take and advice on the current AI landscape on p14-15.

As ever, Q1 is a busy time for shows and talks at ACID. Following Spring Fair, I was delighted to attend and speak at MyDCA, a regional membership event for our partner the Direct Commerce Association (DCA). Victoria Revel-Higgins, DCA Managing Director, shares their story on p20-21.

ACID partners are a great part of our wider community and we always enjoy being part of their events. The Furniture Component Expo, hosted by the British Furniture Association (BFA) ran for its second consecutive year in Telford during March. Kelly Hudson, Director at ACID Legal Affiliate McDaniels Law, and I were pleased to attend and give a talk on all things IP to the ever-growing number of exhibitors joining this new show. Later in March, The Garden Industry Manufacturer's Association (GIMA) held their Members' Day in Warwick, where I was joined by Tony Catterall, Senior Partner at ACID Legal Affiliate Taylors Solicitors, who gave an insightful talk on the pros and cons of AI to IP.

Exhibitions and events are a huge part of ACID's work, and we're really excited to be back at Clerkenwell Design Week (CDW) this year, hosting another AI panel discussion following the success of our inaugural AI panel last year. CDW is a fantastic event – read all about them on p12-13. Such events are also a fantastic opportunity to meet our members and, despite the unexpected furore, Spring Fair was teeming with creativity and it was a pleasure to see so many ACID members

there, as always. One ACID member enjoying the exhibition scene is PetPen (p16-17) who were part of Crufts 2025, showcasing their innovative line of alternative dog crates. And, speaking of innovation, ACID member Mastaplasta have come up with a fantastic approach to ensuring you never tip your drink over on holiday (p18-19) – something extremely valuable to know, especially as we look forward to sunnier days and think of jetting off!

*So, pop the kettle on
(or pour a cheeky glass of something),
put your feet up...
turn the news OFF...
and enjoy reading about the
good things going on in
the ACID world.*



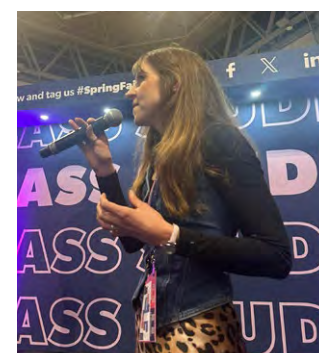
A BlackBird Sang at Spring Fair



Blade and Rose at Spring Fair



Laura and Kelly Hudson from McDaniels Law at the Furniture Component Expo



Laura speaks to TEMU at Spring Fair



Cardology at Spring Fair



Laura and Lola Design at Spring Fair



Amica at Spring Fair



Laura Newbold Breen,
ACID CEO

MAKE IT FAIR

WHEN THINGS ARE FAIR, THEY'RE UNBIASED OR THEY FOLLOW THE RULES. UNFAIR IS THE EXACT OPPOSITE.

MAKE IT FAIR

The government is siding with big tech over British creativity.

The powerful News Media Association (NMA) "Make It Fair" campaign highlighted concerns over the UK government's intention to take forward all 50 recommendations set out by Matt Clifford in the AI Opportunities Action Plan. This includes proposals amending intellectual property (IP) laws to allow AI and Big Tech companies to use copyright content for training purposes without obtaining permission, providing attribution, or offering compensation to creators. Thousands of content creators strongly oppose this move, arguing that it undermines their rights and removes accountability from AI developers.

The current government plan suggests that creators can "opt out" of having their work used by AI, but no effective system exists to facilitate this process. As a result, AI systems operate anonymously without transparency or accountability, leaving creators powerless to protect their IP.

The NMA played a pivotal role in mobilising opposition to these changes, following an unprecedented 11,000+ responses to the AI and Copyright Consultation. The organisation successfully unified the media sector against the potential devaluation of the UK's creative assets. The NMA insists that AI firms must disclose which specific works they have used, ensuring transparency and accountability for content creators.

A fair and ethical approach to AI requires collaboration, respect, and the protection of both moral and commercial IP rights. The UK has a unique opportunity to implement a licensing framework that safeguards creators while fostering AI innovation. This would allow both AI and creative industries to coexist and thrive, rather than being forced into competition.

AI undeniably bring advantages in design by improving prototyping, ideation, automation, and efficiency across various sectors, from interactive and user experience design to sustainability, engineering, new product development and medical advancements, to name but a few. Design finds solutions in every aspect of our lives. However, designers and other creators face immense challenges in policing the unauthorised use of their IP. Sadly, the design economy and its unique DNA, a crucial part of the UK's knowledge assets, is still little understood by government and policy makers.

The current status of AI copyright legislation reveals significant conflicts:

- The Labour Party has opposed safety provisions within the Data (Use and Access) Bill.
- The NMA disregarded a policy paper from the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, which urged MPs to reject transparency amendments.
- The Oxford Consultation on Copyright and AI, a coalition of academics, AI experts, and creatives, argues that ministers are creating unnecessary conflicts between the technology and creative sectors.
- Google and OpenAI, thus far, have refused to appear before MPs to clarify their stance on AI licensing.
- The Creative Rights in AI Coalition, of which Anti-Copying In Design (ACID) is a member, has commissioned research into the economic impact of weakening copyright protections. The study will assess the potential revenue loss for the UK's creative industries if AI companies were required to pay for copyrighted materials and how such changes could affect the economy.
- Given the overwhelming response to the AI and Copyright Consultation, legislative changes are unlikely within the next year. This provides an opportunity to establish regulations that ensure AI development respects IP laws rather than undermining them.

Pro-Creative Industries campaigner Baroness Beeban Kidron said recently,

"What are the government thinking? What is Labour for? They are giving away what is not theirs to give away!" whilst historian and philosopher Yuval Noah Harari warns, **"AI must be regulated, before it starts regulating us".**



Dids Macdonald OBE
Chair and Co-Founder of ACID
Director of Public Affairs/IP
Policy & Campaigning

Missing a Trick



It has always mystified me why major brands in the UK have been vehement in their opposition to criminalising the deliberate infringement of unregistered designs, whilst such a change would benefit designers the most. In my view, the major brands are missing a trick by not embracing ACID's lobbying for this legislative change.

Having been a Council member of the Anti-Counterfeiting Group (ACG) for many years, which represents

But what happens when there are no registrations for a particular product line that would enable action to be taken against organised criminals? When budgets are tight how does a company know with any certainty which product lines to protect through registration? Registrations can be expensive when made in bulk.

In these circumstances, there is no deterrent to counterfeiting and piracy and, just as importantly, no legal teeth with which the statutory enforcement bodies can prosecute the infringers. Copyright law is almost certainly a non-starter now in light of the

of the counterfeiters and act as a powerful deterrent to their behaviour in the same way that changes to copyright law in 2002 did with music and film pirates.

So when brands are next faced with having to make a decision on whether or not to support designers in their campaign to level the IP playing field and criminalise the deliberate infringement of unregistered designs, we hope that they will also come to see that such a change would benefit their companies and shareholders as much as ACID's designer members.

"Copyright law is almost certainly a non-starter now in light of the water-rower case"

most of the major brands, I have witnessed first-hand the massive efforts and resources invested in combatting counterfeiting and piracy across many different sectors. I have also worked with the major brands and the statutory enforcement bodies in enforcement action in both the civil and criminal courts.

When bringing cases, the brands usually bring legal actions for trade mark infringement of their names, or logos, or get up. Since 1994, when it first became possible to protect a shape under trade mark law, many brands have taken advantage of this and registered the shapes of their products as trade marks, in addition to registering their design.

water-rower case. A prosecution for fraud or conspiracy to defraud could be brought but only if the evidence supports it, and it doesn't serve as a deterrent.

This is where criminalising the deliberate infringement of an unregistered design would assist. Having a law on the statute books criminalising the deliberate infringement of an unregistered design would bring this IP right into line with copyright, trade mark and registered design law. The possibility of a ten year prison sentence for any director, servant, officer or manager of a company proven to have consented or connived in the crime of a company, or an unlimited fine, would certainly concentrate the mind



Nick Kounoupas,
ACID Chief Counsel and IP
Director

A JOURNEY TO IP ENLIGHTENMENT!

NEIL SHEPPARD
LLB BSc (Eng.)

I started working life as an aircraft industry apprentice in 1972 and went on to get a degree in aeronautical engineering. After that I joined Unilever in their research division as an engineer which gave me my first introduction to the concepts of intellectual property (IP). Seven years later, I transitioned into sales and marketing in Unilever's speciality chemicals businesses, covering worldwide businesses including product areas protected by worldwide patents. I was now seeing the importance of IP protection. It underpinned a major investment and expansion into the North America brewing industry that I was involved in.

Twenty years ago, I left corporate life and set up a consultancy helping small businesses to establish and grow. In 2008 I also joined the Prince's Trust (as it was then) as a volunteer mentor on their Enterprise Programme, helping young people to fulfil their dreams and establish their own businesses. They ran a 4-day course to help young people to understand what was involved in running a business and through helping on that I have met hundreds of incredible young people. Inspiring and rewarding are two words that do not go anywhere close to my experiences over the past 17 years with the Trust.

In the small businesses that I helped through both my consultancy and the King's Trust it became clear to me that most of their legal knowledge was often obtained through "a friend of a friend" (if at all). They needed better help to keep them out of trouble but couldn't afford solicitors fees. So, I started a

law degree but also enrolled on an IPO sponsored masterclass on how to IP audit businesses. It was there that I met Dids Macdonald OBE, who had established an organisation called ACID specifically to help small businesses and entrepreneurs protect their IP.

Armed with the masterclass qualification, a new law degree and the knowledge of ACID I continued my work with the King's Trust to help the aspiring businesses of the future understand the requirements of business law (contracts, employment and data protection) together with how to

protect their business IP which is often overlooked. To be clear I am NOT a regulated solicitor and do not give legal advice, but I explain their legal obligations and try to point them in the right direction legally. With their IP specialist Legal Affiliate team, I have pointed countless young people to ACID over the past 15 years since I met Dids.

IP is often the forgotten part of law but that can lead to longer term serious problems. I remember seeing some statistics some years ago that said that in the 1960's 80% of the value of the FTSE100 was in tangible assets (land, buildings, machinery etc) – today 80% of its value is in intangible assets primarily IP but less than 10% of businesses have any sort of IP policy or much understanding of IP, which is very worrying.

the young person has inadvertently trodden on. I have to say that after a "without prejudice" conversation with their IP lawyers they are normally very understanding and even helpful, but it is clearly better to avoid that in the first place.

Copyright protection of their creative works is another major area, with the key being able to prove the date of the creation. Uploading works to the ACID IP Databank is easy to do, given the "strict liability" basis of copyright law. A good understanding of copyright is also important for issues like website/platform development where contracts (executed as deeds) should contain an assignment of rights from the designer to the owner.

One case currently on my desk concerns a young person who is refurbishing baby and children's equipment for re-use (better sustainably than recycling them!). I was asked about the health and safety aspects - which are very important - but there are also some complex IP issues concerning the original branding which need addressing. Selling the items under new branding could lead to claims of trade mark infringement or passing off but removing the original trade mark could be considered as tampering with a trade mark and simply applying a new logo label could cause confusion. These issues are solvable but cannot be solved by ignoring them.

We live in an increasingly regulated business world which cannot be ignored, and IP is often something either misunderstood or not understood at all. Compliance is often easy when you have the right advice which is where ACID can help greatly.

"In the small businesses that I helped through both my consultancy and the King's Trust it became clear to me that most of their legal knowledge was often obtained through "a friend of a friend" (if at all) "



Finally, if you are or someone you know is under 30 years old and is setting up or thinking of setting up their own business, the King's Trust is here to help – we look forward to hearing from you.

www.kingstrust.org.uk



Our young people have an enthusiasm and determination that is truly inspirational, but it needs to be combined with an understanding of business law. Trade marks are an area that I focus on a lot – both ensuring that we protect their brand and also dealing with the fallout of a "cease and desist" letter from some large corporate whose toes

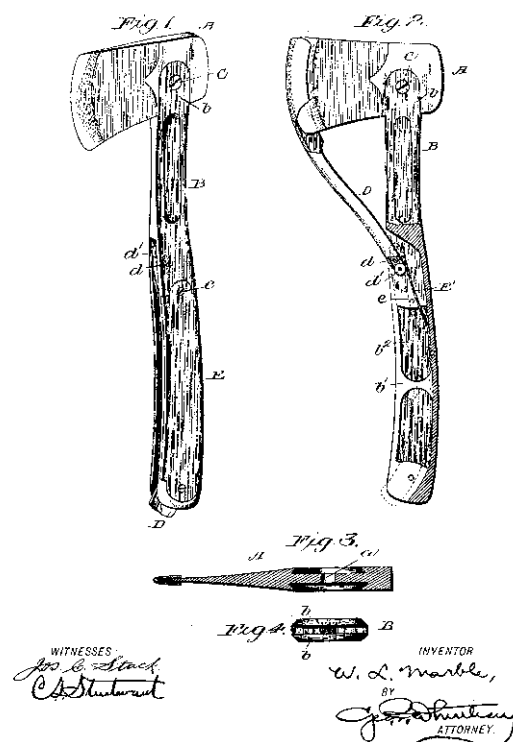


GUEST EDITOR
Neil Sheppard,
LLB BSc (Eng.)

Patents Explained

In February, ACID hosted a Lunchtime Learning 'Patents Explained' webinar with Jonathan Pratt, Partner, and Dr Michael Newsome, Patent Trainee, from ACID Legal Affiliate Boulton Wade Tennant LLP. Some of the key takeaways are summarised below and a full recording is available to ACID members via the Member Hub.

(No Model.)
W. L. MARBLE.
SAFETY GUARD FOR AXES.
No. 604,624. Patented May 24, 1898.



What is a patent?

A patent protects underlying technical features of an invention, this differs to registered design protection which protects the appearance of a product. Therefore, patent protection can be an important part of IP protection for designers, in addition to design rights.

The requirement for something to be 'an invention' is that it is novel (that it has not previously been disclosed anywhere in the world) and inventive (that it is not an obvious modification to anything which has previously been disclosed). The invention which is protected is defined in the claims of the patent, which are at the end of a patent specification.

The patent claims could be for either a product or a method of manufacture, and the owner of a patent can exclude others from working the claimed invention for a period of up to 20 years.

Think before marketing your product

Any of your own public activities involving the product, such as marketing or selling it before filing a patent application can prevent a patent from being granted in the UK or Europe. Therefore, it is highly recommended to contact a patent attorney prior to launching or marketing a new product if you suspect that you may have invented something.



Future Webinar

Boulton will be hosting another webinar on

"Registering a Design"
on 10 July 2025 from 12.30 – 13.30pm



To sign up, scan the QR code or visit:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/qzZbj0-WShaBVprMeZBzrw>

When designing a product to fulfil a particular purpose, or achieve a benefit, three questions were suggested to help in determining if you have invented something:

- Is the benefit achieved by the product new?
- Is the benefit achieved by the product in a new way?
- Did you have to solve any problems when designing or manufacturing the product?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, it's very possible that you have arrived at something which may be patentable.

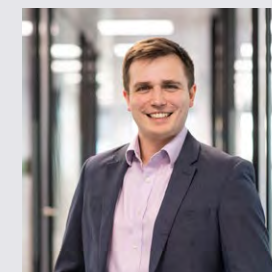
Patent infringement

In the UK, patents for a product are infringed by making; using; disposing of (i.e. selling); offering to dispose of; importing; or keeping a product according to the invention. There are analogous types of infringement for patented methods. Patent infringement does not require intent, or even knowledge of the patent (with one specific exception).

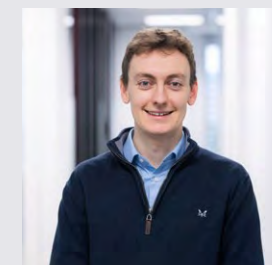
What to do if you are accused of patent infringement

Patent infringement is a complex area of law; and asking a patent attorney to confirm the situation is strongly advised. To provide the patent attorney with as much useful information as possible, some useful steps are to check the UKIPO's patent register online to:

- Check if the patent is in force, has been renewed, or if it is yet to be granted
- Check the priority date of the application; as a patent cannot be infringed by something which was being done before the priority date, this can be a vital defence.
- Read the claims of the patent; and see if your product includes all the features of a claim.



Jonathan Pratt,
Partner, London



Dr Michael Newsome,
Patent Assistant,
London

If you would like to contact Michael or Jonathan to discuss anything regarding patents, they can be contacted by emailing boulton@boulton.com.

boulton

Case Study:

Wee Wishes vs. TEMU

The Gift Card Industry Continues Fighting Design Theft

Introduction

Wee Wishes, a Scottish brand known for its unique and humorous greeting cards inspired by Scottish culture, recently faced a devastating intellectual property (IP) infringement case. Laura Mysak, the founder of Wee Wishes, was alerted by a stockist who noticed one of her designs being sold on the e-commerce platform TEMU. This discovery led to an overwhelming and frustrating journey in the fight against design theft.

Discovery of Infringement

The initial tip-off from a stockist prompted an immediate investigation. What Laura found was deeply concerning—multiple sellers on TEMU offering direct copies of Wee Wishes’ original designs, particularly those featuring Highland cows. The similarities were undeniable; these were not just imitations but exact replicas of her work.

Despite TEMU listing seller names and addresses, Laura could not identify any of them, leaving her unable to hold an individual party accountable. This anonymity only exacerbated the challenge of taking action against the infringement.

The Emotional and Business Impact

For a small business like Wee Wishes, the consequences of such copying extend far beyond lost sales. Laura relies on the quality and authenticity of her products to sustain her livelihood. The copied versions lacked the craftsmanship of Wee Wishes’ originals, which include special finishes like die-cut foiling and hand-

finishing techniques. The fear that consumers might mistakenly associate the inferior products with her brand posed a severe threat to her business reputation.

The psychological toll was immense. Running a family business means every sale counts, and the risk of financial insecurity loomed large. The rise of influencers promoting cheap, mass-produced goods on TEMU only added insult to injury, as many consumers remain unaware of the hidden cost to original designers.

The Struggle Against TEMU’s System

Quantifying the financial damage proved difficult. The TEMU listings boasted sales of these copied cards in the hundreds, potentially amounting to a significant loss in revenue. However, the more profound impact lay in the brand’s reputation. If customers unknowingly purchased a lower-quality counterfeit, they might assume that Wee Wishes’ products were of the same inferior quality, discouraging them from buying directly from the brand in the future.

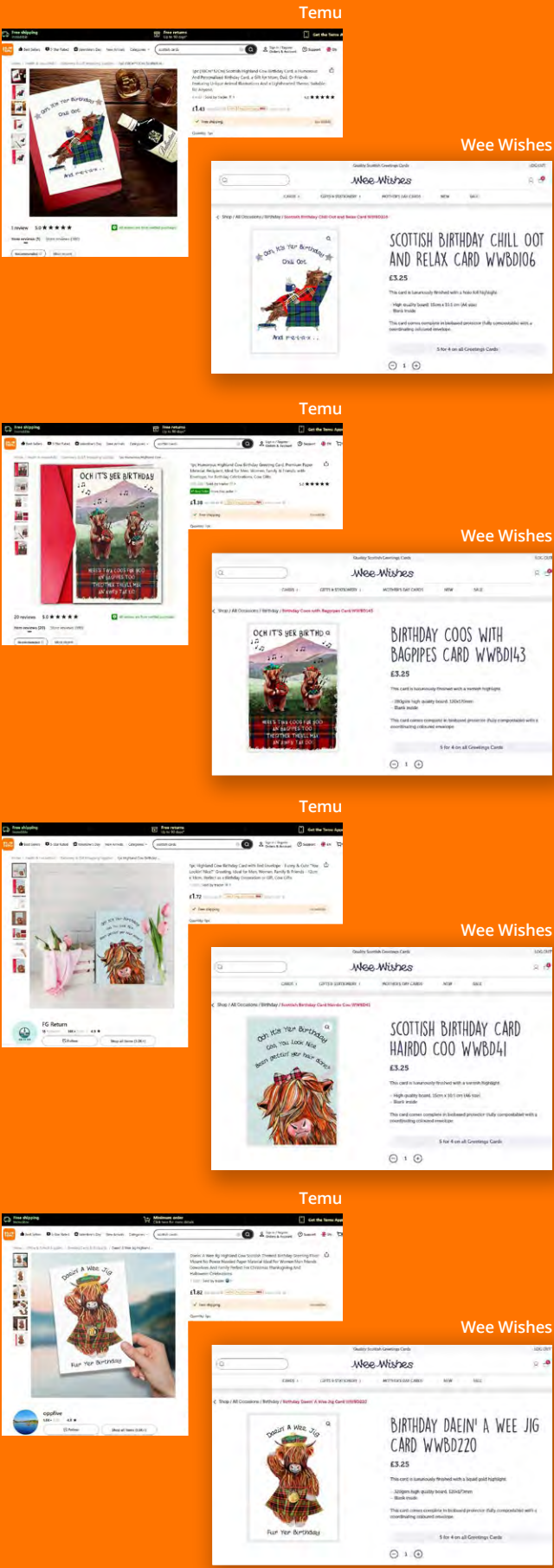
The damage also extended to business relationships. UK stockists, who carefully curate unique, high-quality Scottish products, could perceive the presence of Wee Wishes’ designs on TEMU as a devaluation of their exclusivity. One stockist even reported that a customer had mentioned finding the cards on TEMU, highlighting how quickly such issues can spread.

Taking Action

To combat the infringement, Wee Wishes took several steps:

- **Reporting to TEMU:** Hours were spent manually identifying and reporting listings using TEMU’s online forms, only for the designs to reappear under different sellers within weeks.
- **Legal Consultation:** Seeking expert advice, Laura hoped to find a more effective solution. However, she was disappointed to learn that, beyond issuing cease-and-desist letters, little could be done to prevent future infringements.
- **Leveraging ACID Support:** As a member of Anti Copying In Design (ACID), Wee Wishes received crucial guidance and support in navigating the IP landscape.
- **Strengthening IP Protection:** Laura implemented additional measures, such as displaying the ACID logo on products and uploading designs to the ACID IP Databank, obtaining their PIPCU endorsed certificate which ACID members are reporting as successful in delisting TEMU copyright infringements.
- **Raising Awareness:** While publicly addressing the issue could risk driving traffic to TEMU, Wee Wishes engaged with ACID and the Greeting Card Association (GCA) to highlight the broader issue of design theft.

Greg and Laura from Wee Wishes



Ongoing Challenges and Future Hopes

One of the most disheartening challenges remains the recurring nature of the infringement. Even after successful takedown requests, new listings emerge within weeks. TEMU’s lack of direct, meaningful support only compounds the frustration – there is no designated contact person to track ongoing cases or take proactive action against repeat offenders.

Looking ahead, Wee Wishes urges stronger legal enforcement. If platforms like TEMU were held accountable for IP breaches, requiring them to prevent repeat offenders from listing copied designs, it could create a safer environment for independent designers.

The design community plays a crucial role in amplifying these issues. By continuously raising awareness, there is hope that government action can be taken to protect small UK businesses from such exploitation.

Wee Wishes’ battle with TEMU is a stark reminder of the vulnerabilities faced by independent designers in the digital age. While the internet offers immense opportunities for exposure and sales, it also presents significant risks. Without stronger IP enforcement, small businesses will continue to bear the burden of protecting their work.

Laura remains determined to fight for her brand, but the question remains: **When will large e-commerce platforms take real responsibility for protecting original creativity?**

If you would like to know more about Wee Wishes go to: www.weewishes.co.uk

Clerkenwell Design Week returns with its largest edition yet (20 – 22 May 2025)

London's EC1 district will once again transform into a global design hub as Clerkenwell Design Week (CDW) returns from 20 – 22 May 2025. The 14th edition is set to be the largest yet, introducing three new venues: The Charterhouse and Charterhouse Square, Studio Smithfield and Church of Design at St Bartholomew the Great. With over 15 venues and 160 local design showrooms, the event promises an immersive experience featuring cutting-edge product launches, installations, exhibitions and talks.

From bricks to water

Leading this year's festival is a major new public artwork by British artist, Alex Chinneck, set in Charterhouse Square. This special commission marks Chinneck's return to

sculpting with brick and playing with architectural elevations. Meanwhile, Albion Stone and Hutton Stone return to Clerkenwell Green with a new pavilion designed by Hawkins\ Brown and engineered by Webb Yates. *Brick from a Stone: Arch Revival* features two nearly four-metre-high freestanding vaulted arches. One is constructed from sandstone bricks in various hues from Hutton Stone's quarries, while the other is crafted from Heritage Portland Stone bricks from Albion Stone's Dorset mine. Each arch is composed of a single layer of 102mm-thick stone bricks, demonstrating the material's versatility as a load-bearing architectural product.

This year, CDW also partners with Dezeen for the first time to launch the *Shaping Water* competition in collaboration with Villeroy & Boch and Ideal Standard. Architects and designers are invited to create a large-scale installation exploring

the essence of water, to be installed at the historic St John's Gate of the Order of St John.

Scandi design leads the lineup

The 2025 festival continues its global outlook, with Scandinavian brands leading the international showcase. Danish powerhouse HAY will present its latest collections by Erwan Bouroullec and Doshi Levien at MillerKnoll's St John's Square showroom, while String Furniture makes its festival debut at Old Sessions House. Lighting innovations also take centre stage, with Muuto presenting a new table lamp by Benjamin Hubert, and Mater showcasing its Terra collection, crafted from its patented waste material Matek™, a blend of recycled electronic waste and coffee shells.

This year's British Collection sees Pluck launching a kitchen furniture range in collaboration with Schotten & Hansen, featuring richly hued Douglas Fir veneers. Also making waves in British design, Origin Furniture introduces a steel-framed seating collection by David Irwin, upholstered in Camira's innovative tech-knit fabric.



Albion Stone & Hutton Stone
Brick from a Stone: Arch Revival

The festival's international scope expands with the debut of a Spanish Collection at The Charterhouse, showcasing brands such as Naturtex, Gandia Blasco and Viccarbe, while the new Austrian Collection at Detail presents the latest from Mafi, Forcher, Vertessi and Sheyn. The popular Danish, Italian and German Collections will also return, celebrating the design prowess of their respective nations.

First speakers announced

The festival's official talks series, *Conversations at Clerkenwell*, returns with a stellar lineup of speakers, including Sabine Marcelis and Pearson Lloyd. This year, it will be hosted at The Charterhouse, with the auditorium designed by Kapitza. The programme features 18 sessions, including three daily talks hosted by Dezeen. Curated by brand consultant Katie Richardson, the series offers thought-provoking discussions led by top industry figures and upcoming design talent – covering topics from colour and interior trends to heritage renewal and AI in design.

ACID partners with CDW again

CDW is a strong advocate for intellectual property (IP) rights

and has partnered with ACID for many years. Together, they've collaborated on various events, highlighting the importance of IP protection in the creative industry and the support available to designers.

Following its panel discussion on AI – as part of the *Design Meets* programme, launched at last year's festival – ACID returns with a follow-up session, reuniting their legal affiliates and industry experts to explore the implications of AI one year on. On 20 May 2025 (11:30), panellists will discuss the latest AI consultation, the Government's stance on AI and copyright, the potential

impact of AI on IP protection and broader perspectives on AI's role in shaping our future.

To sign up scan here



Photo: Sam Frost



Photo: Sam Frost



Photo: Sam Frost

Clerkenwell Design Week 2025 takes place across EC1, London, from 20 – 22 May.

Visit:
clerkenwelldesignweek.com
registration is now open.



HAY Quilton sofa by Doshi Levien



Alex Chinneck - *From the knees of my nose to the belly of my toes*
Photo: Stephen O. Flaherty



Muuto Strand Table Lamp by Benjamin Hubert

Data mining for Artificial Intelligence Is IP being undermined?



Rebecca Horne,
Intellectual Property
Disputes Solicitor

Taylors Solicitors LLP
www.taylors.co.uk/index.htm

First, let's discuss what text and data mining (TDM) is. TDM is the process of scraping through information from computerised material and extracting the data from it. Generative AI tools are only able to produce content based on the knowledge with which they have been trained. Much of that trawled content is material that is subject to various intellectual property (IP) rights, including copyright, trade marks, designs and patents.

In December 2024, the UK government brought out a consultation which set out proposals for reforming the current legislative position on copyright and artificial intelligence (AI). The aim of the consultation was to 'develop a copyright and AI framework that rewards human creativity, incentivises innovation and provides the legal certainty required for long-term growth in both sectors'. It is widely thought that the current UK framework does not meet the needs of either AI innovation or protection of content creators' rights.

This is not the first time the government and other organisations have attempted to achieve some clarity on the subject. In 2022 the UK government sought to expand the current exception permitting text and data mining of copyrighted works for non-commercial use. The proposal was for the exception to be significantly broadened to cover all purposes and was met with outcry from content creators. It was soon abandoned by the government.

In 2023 the UKIPO was tasked with attempting to establish a voluntary code of practice, however this was dropped when the UKIPO and stakeholders were unable to agree on terms of the code.

Now, the UK government is having another go at reforming the current position through its 2024 Copyright and AI consultation.

In the consultation, the government set out 4 options for reform:

Option 0 – Do nothing.

Clearly this option isn't going to progress innovation within AI in the UK, nor is it going to provide clarity for content creators when their rights are infringed.

Option 1 – Strengthen licensing requirements

This option would allow AI models to use UK based copyrighted work if they had an express licence to do so. How that express licence is granted and how content creators would be remunerated is unknown.

Option 2 – Allow a broad data mining exception

This option previously had content creators up in arms in [2022]. It would involve the AI training on UK copyrighted works without much exception – including for commercial use. This is a thieves' charter, described by Baroness Kidron as "economically damaging, technically unfeasible and narrow minded".

Option 3 – Allow a data mining exception, but only where creators have not exclusively reserved their rights: the "opt-out" model.

This appears to be the most viable option. The UK AI market would be able to progress through competitive training, whilst also protecting the rights of those who do not want to have their works used for this purpose. In that instance, an express reservation of rights would be needed.

I speculate whether an opt-in model would be more protective of rights holders that are not as savvy at protecting their IP as larger commercial outfits. At the same time, content creators could use the opportunity to negotiate licences for their works to be used to train AI models and open up further revenue streams in doing so, whilst also contributing to the UK's innovation of AI.

It is clear that something needs to be done to refine the current legislative position to maintain protection of IP rights holders, whilst balancing this against the need for AI innovation. It seems the most likely proposal will be option 3, however I have reservations on how this will work in practical terms, especially for works already published, and for those who may not fully understand the implication and nuances of the opt-out model.

Member Focus Pet Pen

Faith Capstick, ACID's
Social Media & Communications
Executive interviews Pet Pen



Faith Capstick,
AUTHOR
ACID's Social Media
& Communications
Executive



Meet PetPen, the stylish and safe alternative to traditional pet crates, designed with innovation and sustainability at its core. Inspired by a personal experience, PetPen reimagines pet housing as a beautiful, furniture-quality piece that seamlessly fits modern interiors while prioritising pet safety and comfort.

Committed to intellectual property (IP) protection, PetPen has secured trade marks and is exploring design rights to safeguard its originality. As an Anti Copying In Design (ACID) member, PetPen champions design integrity and stands against copying in the industry. Discover how this brand is transforming pet furniture while protecting its innovative designs.

Can you tell us about the inspiration behind PetPen and what sets your pet accessories apart from others in the market?

PetPen was inspired by a personal experience with our Puggle, Jackson. As a puppy, he got his teeth stuck in the bars of a traditional metal crate, which made us realise how outdated and unsafe they can be. When we got our next puppy, Pixie, we wanted a better alternative, something safe, stylish, and practical. Because we found nothing we liked, that's how PetPen was born. Unlike standard crates, PetPen is designed to be a beautiful, furniture-quality pet home that blends seamlessly into modern interiors while keeping pets comfortable and secure.

This year, it was amazing to showcase PetPen at Crufts 2025. It was the first time ever



showing it in person & got some lovely feedback. People loved how much nicer it was than their traditional crate. It was a long 4 days but one we all really enjoyed, meeting people that have followed our journey for a while & also people that had never seen it before.

What steps do you take to ensure that your products are designed with sustainability and quality in mind?

We carefully select our materials to ensure they meet high standards for quality and sustainability. I made sure all materials can be easily dismantled to make for easy recycling and we work with manufacturers who align with our values of ethical

production and durability. By designing PetPen to be a long-lasting, stylish piece of pet furniture, we also help reduce waste compared to cheaply made, disposable alternatives. I had our design tested by a company called Design Conformity who quoted: "PetPen is in the top 5% of designs we've evaluated." Adam Hamilton-Fletcher.

How does PetPen approach innovation in your product designs, and what role does creativity play



in your company's culture?

Innovation is at the heart of PetPen. Traditional pet crates haven't changed much in decades, so we set out to completely rethink them - making them safer, more practical, and better suited to modern homes. Creativity drives every part of our business, from design to problem-solving and customer experience. We're always looking for ways to improve and expand our range, whether through new features, accessories, or additional product lines.

Have you faced any challenges with copying or infringement of your designs, and how have you addressed these issues?

To be honest I haven't seen any imitations of PetPen on the market (yet) but as we gain exposure I anticipate that being an issue. We've taken proactive steps to protect our designs, including securing trade marks & obviously being part of ACID.

What motivated PetPen to join ACID, and how do you see ACID membership benefiting your brand?

We joined ACID because we believe in protecting original design and ensuring that small, independent businesses like ours aren't undermined by copycats. ACID's work in raising awareness and providing legal support is invaluable, and being part of a community that stands for design integrity is something we're proud of.

Have you brought anything new to the marketplace recently that you would like to share?

Yes! We've recently expanded our range to include accessories that complement PetPen, such as bespoke luxury pet beds and blankets, and branded LED lights and feeding bowls. These additions help create a complete pet space that's

Are there any specific steps you take to protect your IP rights? For example, do you use or rely on trade marks, legal agreements, design rights, registered or unregistered?

We have registered trade marks for PetPen in the UK, and we also plan to gain design protection as we understand that a patent is no longer possible. My concept would be to protect the design of the PetPen Pod which in turn would cover the full PetPen design details.

What advice would you offer to a new designer?

Protect your work from the beginning. Register your designs, secure trade marks, and document your creative process. It's also important to build a strong brand identity so customers recognise and trust your originality. Lastly, be prepared to defend your work - unfortunately, copying is common, and having the right protections in place makes all the difference.

ACID values the support of its members to enable it to campaign for design law reform. Do you have any messages for Government/Policy Makers on IP issues? Do you think that copying of designs is deliberate and blatant?

Design protection needs to be stronger and easier to enforce, especially for small businesses. Copying is often deliberate, with some companies exploiting legal loopholes to get away with it. Stronger penalties for infringement and better support for designers would help ensure that innovation is rewarded rather than stolen.

Have you signed the ACID IP Charter?

Yes, I fully support ACID's mission. We believe in standing up for design rights and ensuring that original creators are protected.

both functional and stylish. We're also working on new designs and product variations to offer even more choices for pet owners, such as the PetPen Pod, which connects to any existing PetPen.



ACID MEMBER RECALLS THE MOMENT INNOVATION SPARKED AT SEA

While enjoying a day on a vintage motorboat in the Venetian Lagoon, Stephan Pavlou experienced a classic “lightbulb moment” that led to the creation of the Glass Anchor – a clever product designed to keep glasses upright in challenging conditions, whether on boats, at picnics, or on the beach.

Stephan recalls the moment: “There was Prosecco being passed around and a delicious array of food was spread out, and the boat was motoring along – warning: this is definitely a first-world problem at this point!” As the boat moved, it became clear that holding glasses was a struggle and placing them down without spilling was nearly impossible. Our host was trying to put juggling balls round the glasses to try to hold them in place and I looked at her and I said: ‘I can do better than that.’”

From that moment, the concept for Glass Anchor was born. Designed to look like a padded leather mat with six slits at regular intervals, it allows stemmed glasses to easily slip in and out, securely holding them in place even on rough surfaces. **Stephan explains,** “Design should work around people, not the other way round”.

After initial sketches, Stephan collaborated with Intellectual Property lawyer Mark Jolly of Wilson Gunn, who previously helped him secure a patent for MastaPlasta leather repair patches – a product that earned Stephan and his partner, Donna Clarke, two Queen’s Awards for Enterprise. Rigorous testing confirmed the uniqueness of the Glass Anchor, and Stephan successfully secured patents worldwide.



“The Glass Anchor has been tested at extreme speeds in choppy conditions without a single accident,” **Stephan shares.** “We’ve tried it on rowing boats, even gondolas, and discovered it’s also perfect for picnics or a day at the beach”. Friends and family now keep their Glass Anchors handy for any outing.

Stephan emphasises the simplicity

“There was Prosecco being passed around and a delicious array of food was spread out, and the boat was motoring along – warning: this is definitely a first-world problem at this point!”

of the product, “It’s a simple product but not every new gadget needs to be high-tech. This one doesn’t even have screws, glues, or fixings of any kind. You just throw it down on a table, the boat deck, or wherever. That’s what makes it work so well on any kind of boat or uneven surface”.

One of the major benefits of the Glass Anchor is its ability to accommodate traditional glassware, promoting a move away from disposable plastic cups – a feature that appeals to environmentally conscious consumers. “The freedom of Glass Anchor also means hospitality on cruise ships can be more flexible”. **Stephan notes,** adding that RV markets in the U.S. are also a



accessible price of £55 (65 euros). It is available online with global sales spanning the U.S., Italy, Finland, and the Mediterranean.

Reflecting on the journey, Stephan says, “It is still early days, but it does feel like the start of MastaPlasta all over again”.

With the fourth full production run underway, Stephan is optimistic about the future, with aspirations of achieving a King’s Award for Enterprise.

Visit glassanchor.co.uk for more information.

potential customer base.

The product debuted at the Genoa boat show, where it quickly sold out. Initially priced at 130 euros due to small production runs and bespoke fabrics, the Glass Anchor has since evolved, now featuring a luxury, hard-wearing vegan leather and a more



Meet the Maker: Stephan Pavlou

From an early age, Stephan Pavlou was immersed in the world of creativity, working in his father’s fashion manufacturing business in Clerkenwell. By age 20, he had launched his own fashion brand and even won a Vogue/ Courtelle designer of the year award in the 80s. A career shift to furniture design eventually led to MastaPlasta, a popular solution for repairing furniture, which is now used by various industries, including the armed forces and theatres.

Taking Direct Action on Copycats:

Meet ACID Partner, Direct Commerce Association (DCA)

The DCA is a not-for-profit trade body founded in 2004 by retailers to encourage the sharing of knowledge and experience between businesses while driving higher operational standards. DCA member companies serve a diverse range of niches, as well as mainstream market segments. Their merchandise offerings are often exclusive and innovative, with price points as varied as the member brands themselves.

DCA is proud to support brands of all sizes – through both periods of high growth and more challenging trading conditions.



Victoria Revel-Higgins,
Managing Director

www.homeofdirectcommerce.com



Member Challenges

Over the past 20 years, we have seen and heard it all – including countless stories from members whose products have been copied, eroding years of hard work and investment. It simply isn't fair.

With advancements in AI and the rise of online marketplaces like Temu and Shein, it is more critical than ever for brands to take the necessary steps to protect their intellectual property (IP) – especially if they manufacture outside the UK or plan to expand into new regions. For entrepreneurs from creative backgrounds with little business experience, navigating IP protection can be a minefield, and mistakes can carry heavy penalties.

The economy also presents significant challenges, with consumer confidence still fragile following the COVID-19 pandemic. Added to this are increased tax burdens, trade tariffs, and the ongoing war in Ukraine. Given these difficulties, it would be understandable for some businesses to consider closing their doors. However, resilience is at the core of every DCA member, and whatever challenges they face, we are committed to supporting them.



Supporting Members

DCA supports its members in a variety of ways:

- Our website, www.homeofdirectcommerce.com, shares the latest news, market insights, and industry articles.
- We organise regional and national events, bringing brands and expert practitioners together to share best practices.
- We offer a continuous stream of webinars and online sessions covering a wide range of topics.
- We host the Direct Commerce Awards, celebrating the best brands, agencies, and suppliers in the sector.
- Our Expert Register recruitment service connects brands with top talent for permanent, interim, and consultancy roles.
- We are always available for confidential conversations, providing guidance and connections that help members overcome challenges.

DCA's Partnership with ACID

DCA is always looking for new ways to support its members, and we are delighted to be partnering with Anti-Copying In Design (ACID). Our organisations share a strong synergy, and we know that any DCA member in need of IP protection couldn't be in better hands.



Running a business can be lonely, but DCA provides a network of support to help members navigate the ups and downs.

Member SHOUT OUT

A warm welcome to some of our new members. We have been delighted to share their work through our social media channels. Keep up with our latest news on Facebook, X and Instagram.



Broadlands Pottery

Handcrafted bunting and personalised gifts. Each piece is made with love and care, hand-finished to the highest standard, making them truly special keepsakes. Whether you're looking for a unique gift or a decorative touch for your home, Broadlands Pottery's creations bring warmth and charm to any space.

Instagram: @broadlandspottery
Website: www.broadlandspottery.co.uk



Willow Tree Interiors

With over 30 years of expertise, Willow Tree Interiors is renowned for designing and crafting exquisite kitchens and bespoke furniture. From their workshop in Lower Dicker, East Sussex, and showrooms in Hailsham and Heathfield, they have built a reputation for delivering exceptional quality across Sussex, Kent, the UK, and beyond.

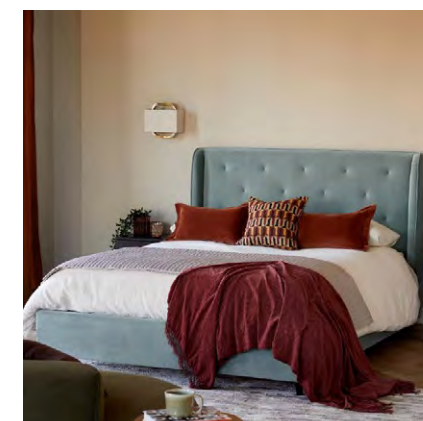
Instagram: @willowtreeinteriorsltd
Website: www.willowtreeinteriors.com



Wee Wishes

This family-run greetings card publisher from Fife, Scotland, creates high-quality, quirky cards for all occasions—many with a brilliant Scottish twist! Designed in their wee studio, their cards capture the charm, humour, and everyday banter of Scottish life.

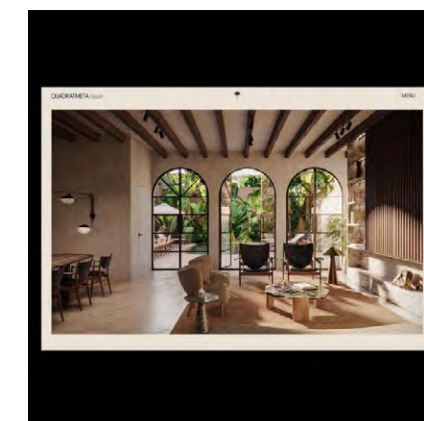
Instagram: @wee_wishes
Website: www.weewishes.co.uk



Danetti

Since 2006, Danetti has been crafting high-quality, aspirational yet attainable furniture designed to seamlessly fit into modern homes. Their people-first approach means every detail is carefully considered, from aesthetics to functionality.

Instagram: @danetti_com
Website: www.danetti.com



Casa Ren Studio

Founded by Sharon Glover and Lauren Rhodes in Manchester, Casa Ren is a multi-disciplinary studio dedicated to supporting interior designers and architects. By blending storytelling, creativity, and in-house design expertise, they craft ready-made resources to make life easier for designers juggling countless tasks.

Instagram: @casarenstudio
Website: www.casarenstudio.com



Jessica Pass

Inspired by the natural world, Jessica Pass creates bold, intricate jewellery infused with the beauty of the landscapes she grew up in. From the Peak District to the Norfolk coast, her designs capture nature's elegance with extraordinary craftsmanship. With a background from Central Saint Martins and the Royal College of Art, Jessica's signature jewelled hinged insects and nature-inspired pieces have gained a loyal following.

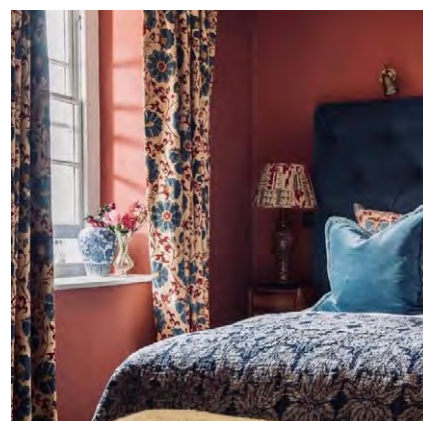
Instagram: @jessicapass.london
Website: www.jessicapasslondon.com



Becca Who

Known for her bold and opulent style, British designer Becca Who creates statement fabrics, luxury wallpapers, and accessories that bring expressive interiors to life. Based in Lancashire, Becca's designs are rich with hand-drawn details, painterly textures, and unexpected touches—perfect for those who love highly decorative and original design.

Instagram: @beccawhodesigner
Website: www.beccawho.com



Lewis and Wood

Though small in size, Lewis & Wood is a powerhouse of distinctive design, creating stunning fabrics and wallpapers loved by interior designers and decorators. Their collections blend boldness with sophistication, tradition with innovation, and always maintain a unique, carefully crafted quality—never mass-produced.

Instagram: @lewisandwood
Website: www.lewisandwood.co.uk



Weaver Green

Based in Devon, Weaver Green creates stunning products that combine the benefits of plastic recycling with uncompromising style and texture. From hand-loomed textiles to fair trade practices with artisans across Europe and Asia, their commitment to sustainability and ethical production is truly inspiring.

Instagram: @weaver.green
Website: www.weavergreen.com



Spoonflower

Spoonflower creates bespoke wallpaper, fabric, and home decor while proudly supporting independent artists. Perfect for interior designers, home furnishings, or sewing extraordinaires, their custom-made designs are ready to inspire your next project.

Instagram: @spoonflower
Website: www.bio.site/spoonflower



Lulu B London

Known for their effortlessly elegant and timeless jewellery, Lulu B London creates pieces for women of all ages. 2024 marks an exciting milestone with their first in-house designed collection, crafted with care and attention to detail.

Instagram: @lulublondon
Website: www.ulub.co.uk

New Members

ACID welcomes the following new members to the ACID Community

Company	Industry	Company	Industry
Broadlands pottery Ltd	Ceramics	M. Elizabeth Jewellery	Jewellery
Big Pixel	Design Agency	Minka Jewels	Jewellery
Dauntless	Fashion	Dale's Handmade Ltd	Other
DRYR	Fashion	Tina Morgan Designs	Other
Imogen's Imagination	Fashion	Deni-Deni Ltd	Product Design
Bark Interiors Ltd	Furniture	Vantrax Ltd	Product Design
BEDTREND	Furniture	Jo Scott Art	The Arts
Nifty Bargains Ltd	Furniture	Alpha Clinical Limited	
Sliding wardrobes 4U	Furniture	Chomp	
Willow Tree Interiors	Furniture	Evokia Design Ltd	
WS Specialist Logistics Ltd	Furniture	Smart Garment People Ltd	
Cygnetre designs	Giftware	Verity Lamb Designs	
Gail Myerscough	Graphics	Berni Parker Designs	Greetings Cards
Printmob	Graphics	Tom Raffield Limited	Lighting
Wee Wishes	Greetings Cards	David Lloyd	Product Design
EventWell	Interior Design	Of Life & Lemons Ltd	Giftware
Jessica Pass London	Jewellery		

Anti Copying In Design Ltd

All Mail to:
Anti Copying In Design Ltd
Fetcham Park, Lower Road,
Fetcham, Leatherhead,
KT22 9HD

Membership Office:

+44 0800 080 3230

Email: info@acid.uk.com

Online: www.acid.uk.com

Social Media:

 @ACID_tweets

 Anti.Copying.In.Design

 anti.copyright.in.design

ACID Registered Office:
6 Lion Avenue, Twickenham,
TW1 4JG
Company Reg. No 3402512.
VAT Reg. No 707 5923 23

Nothing in this newsletter is intended to be a complete statement of the current law and you should always take specialist advice in respect of your own particular circumstances

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Events

10th April
ACID Lunchtime Learning
All About Licensing with Stone King
→ Register

9th May
Farnham Maltings Creatives Network Day
→ Register

15th May
ACID Lunchtime Learning
Taking It Personally: Directors' Liability with McDaniel's Law
→ Register

20-22nd May
Clerkenwell Design Week
→ Register

10-11 June
Exclusively Housewares
→ Register

12th June
ACID Lunchtime Learning
AI and IP: What's New For Designers? with Howard Kennedy
→ Register

1st July
ACID Lunchtime Learning
Intellectual Property Enterprise Court (IPEC) with Taylors Solicitors
→ Register

ACID's Joining Criteria for New Members

In accordance with our policy that all new members are provisional members for the first 6 months of their subscription period, a list of all provisional members is available on request and will be published by industry sector in the next ACID magazine. In the event that there is any complaint against a new member, please write to the Chief Executive Officer together with any substantiated facts. Hearsay, rumour or unsubstantiated facts will not be considered under any circumstances. Any complaint that should arise will be put before a panel comprising ACID's legal advisor, Chief Executive Officer and two Corporate ACID Members from a different industry sector. If the panel decides that a complaint should be upheld their decision will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.



A MEMBER OF
ACID
ANTI COPYING IN DESIGN

