



‘CELEBRATING CYPRUS IP DAY 2026’

Intellectual Property, can be a Positive Force for Growth, if the copycat culture is curtailed. A UK perspective.

Γεια σας και καλό απόγευμα. Είμαι ενθουσιασμένος που βρίσκομαι εδώ για το Cyprus IP Day 2026.

**Dids Macdonald, Anti Copying in Design
(ACID) Chair & Co-Founder,
VC - UK Alliance for Intellectual Property**



FROM *DESIGNER* TO *IP WARRIOR*



PATENTS



TRADEMARKS



COPYRIGHTS



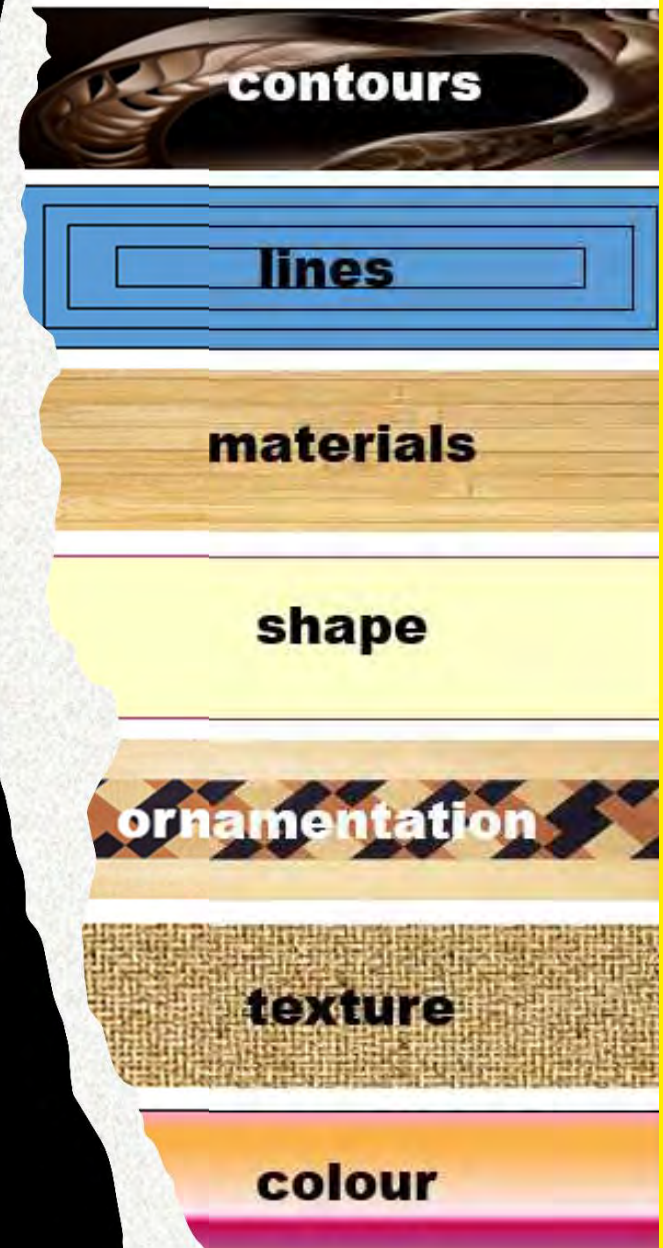
INNOVATION
PROTECTION

PROTECT
CREATE
INNOVATE

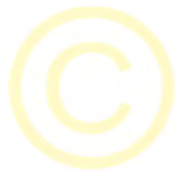


**EU and UK Registered
Design (25years) EU
Unregistered 3 years,
UK Unregistered
Supplementary Right 3
years.**

**(l) Original v cheap
copies (below....)**



ACID Stats



FOUR PILLARS

Education & Awareness
Deterrence-Support-Campaigning

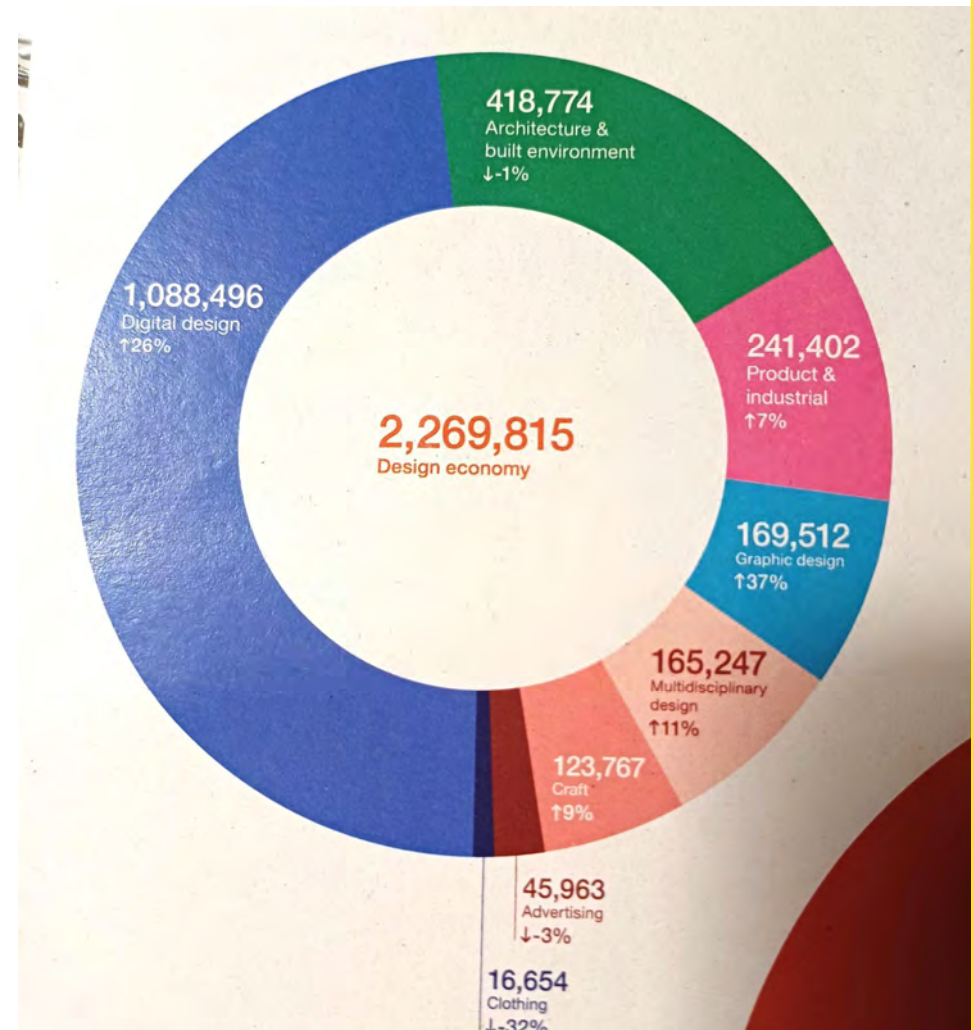


Achieved **Intellectual Property Act 2014 & Small Claims Track for IP** and other design law reforms



c. **90% ACID Members believe design IP infringement is deliberate**





Total designs in Designview

25,085,488
DESIGNS



OVER
24
YEARS

since the EU Registered
Design was created



FROM
80
COUNTRIES



But when you consider
the UK has



630,000
THOUSAND
designers

who rely on
3D design



That's an average of

13,466
per year
per country



13,466 designs
per country each year



It is reasonable to assume that
UK and EU designers
rely on
unregistered design rights.



FLEXIBLE PROTECTION

No registration required



SUPPORTS CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Enables designers to bring ideas to market



BUILDS A STRONGER INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

Protects design, drives investment and growth

Designers

Whether in the UK or across the EU,

Same talent. Same challenge



In support of designers who rely on copyright and unregistered design protection – an ACID IP Databank

Evidence of IP ownership is vital – The ACID IP Databank is a secure vault for lodging designs or copyright works, e.g., images as an addition or alternative to registering your designs official at the UK Intellectual property Office.

Essential evidence for providing an audit trail from idea to marketplace.

ACID LED CAMPAIGNS

2008 Campaign to introduce a Small Claims Track for SMES to take low value claims. Implemented in 2012. Between 2012 and 2015 261 cases. Scheme now expanded across UK.

2014 Spearheaded a campaign. Making the intentional infringement of a registered design a crime. IP Act 2014

Disparity of IP rights - copyright and designs

2014-2025 Is the UK Design Framework Fit for Purpose?

- **Calls for Evidence**
- **Questionnaire**
- **Consultation, await recommendations**

Our aim: intentional infringement of an unregistered design a crime

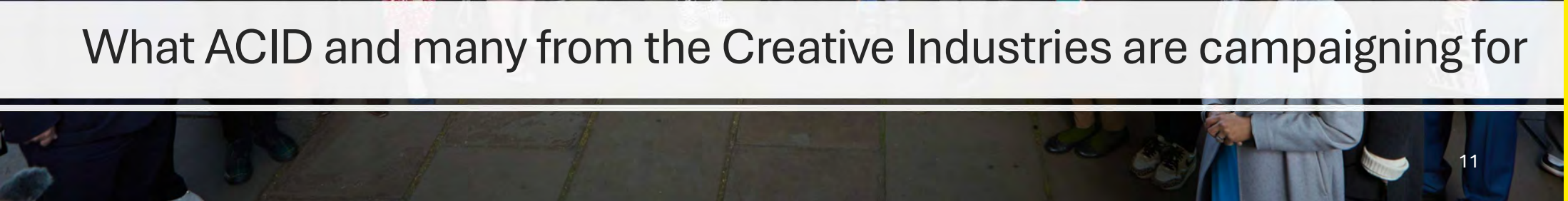
2025 Copyright and AI Consultation





UNFAIR! Creators - A disparity of IP rights' protection – a writer or artist has protection their **lifetime plus 70 years**, the bespoke furniture designer and maker has protection for a **maximum of 25 years**.

Copyright and unregistered designs, **automatic life plus 70 years, unregistered designs, max 15 years** .



11

MAKE

**ANTI COPYING IN DESIGN (ACID)
CAMPAIGNING**

IT FAIR

**Along with many others, we want
to see**

- **Transparency**
- **Recompense**
- **Attribution**
- **Labelling**

**And continue to lobby
government to Make it Fair**

**The government is siding with
big tech over British creativity**

Copyright and AI Consultation in February 2025 – the ACID response included the following:



Chat Gpt made these “copies” or new designs in less than 15 seconds.

1. Make a new dress design in **the style of Paul Smith and Chanel.**
2. Design a new vacuum taking the best elements of **Dyson and their competitors Dux.**

There is also a Human Rights position here

Section 1(b) of the HRA mirrors Article 1 Protocol 1 of the ECHR and this states as follows:

“Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions. No one shall be deprived of his possession except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law.”

When ACID talks to businesses about AI the most important aspect is what we don't know!

Considerations should be focused on:

- Identifying opportunities, mitigating risks
- Who owns generated AI
- The importance of protecting confidential information and data
- Employees and AI policy and responsibilities
- The urgent need for labelling, consumer confidence and trust
- For designers, online marketplace copying and resellers
- What due diligence, governance and regulation should look like

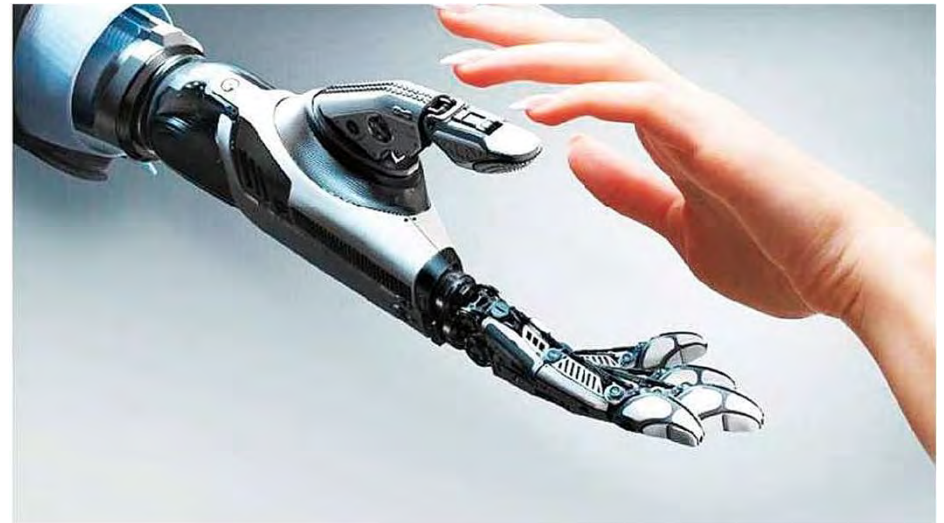


AI – WHY AI MATTERS AND HOW DO YOU USE IT SAFELY?

Positives - Design ideation, visualisation, product descriptions, marketing, customer service, forecasting and procurement. Public sector systems and processes, solving crimes, scientific and medical advancements et al

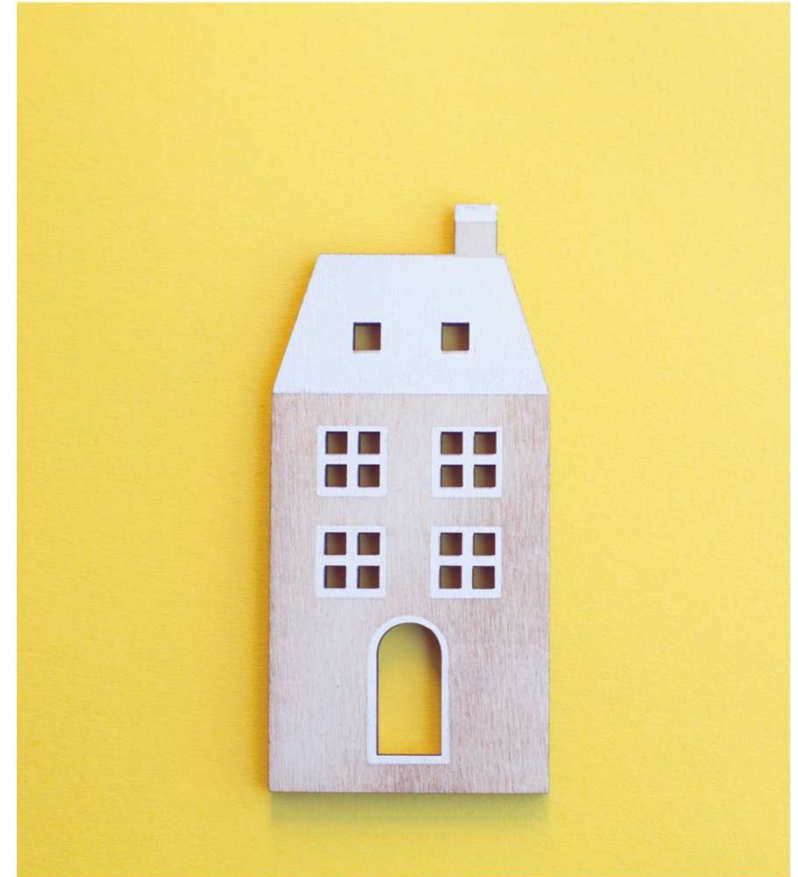
It is imperative to distinguish between *using AI as a tool* and *AI replacing part of a creative/business process*.

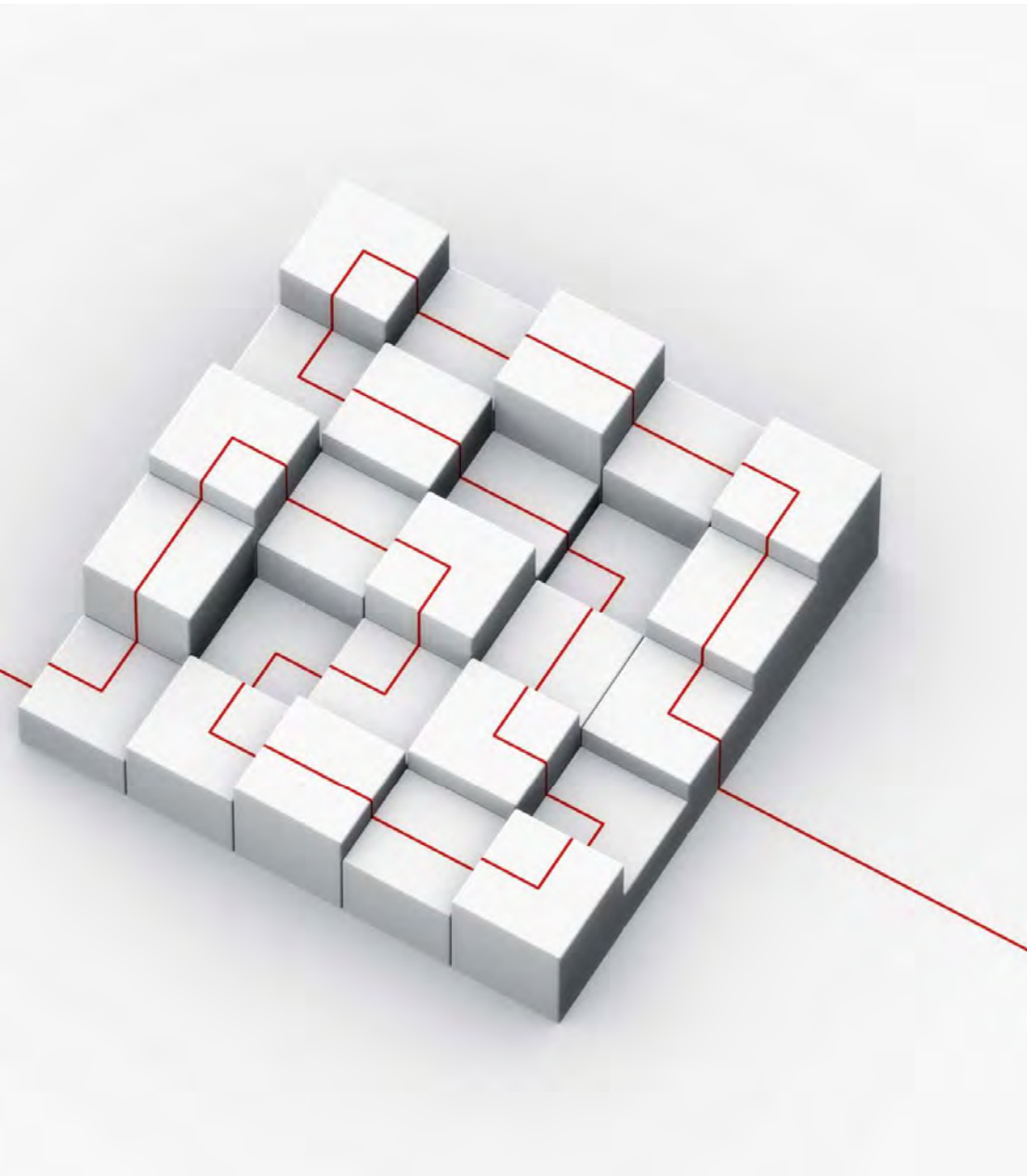
The question is no longer whether businesses will use AI, but **how they use it safely**.



Who owns an AI-generated design?

- if AI creates or substantially contributes to a design, **who owns the intellectual property?**
- Human creativity and input remain critical to many existing IP rights.
- Simply pressing "generate" may not give a business the same protection as creating a design through human authorship.





Protecting your existing designs from AI

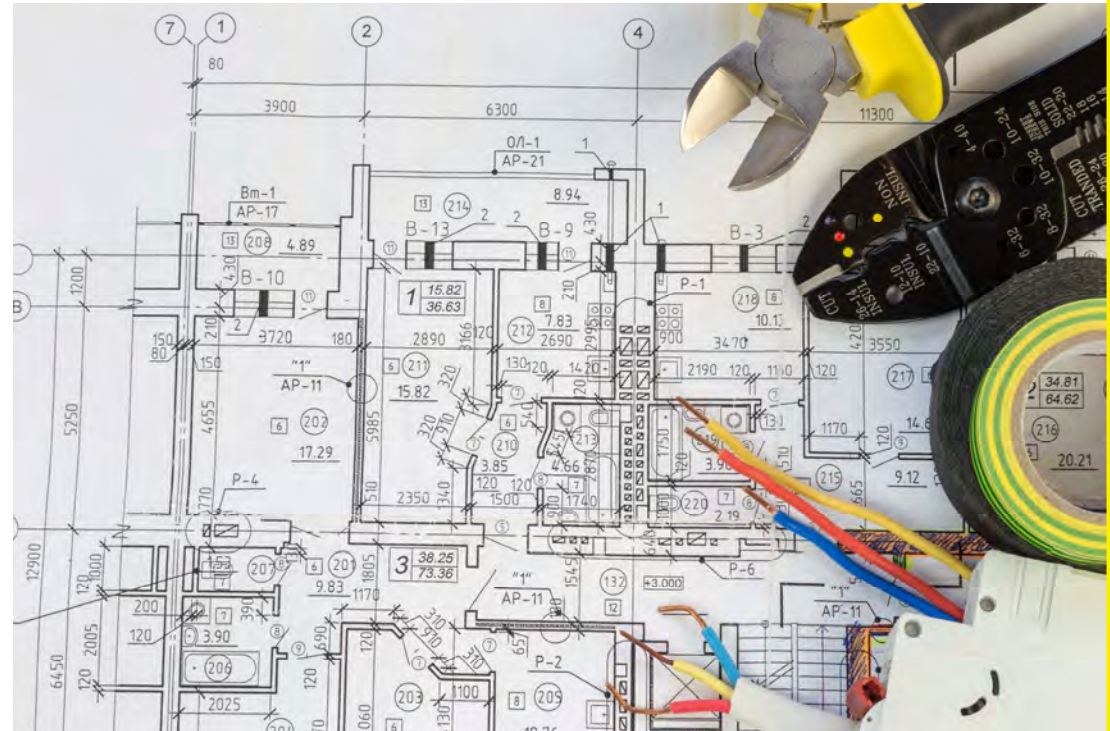
- The flip side: how might competitors, AI companies or marketplaces use your product imagery, designs and catalogues?
 - The importance of copyright, design rights, trade marks and contractual protections.
 - Create practical steps for documenting provenance and ownership of important designs such as registration or using the free ACID IP Databank.
-

Copyright

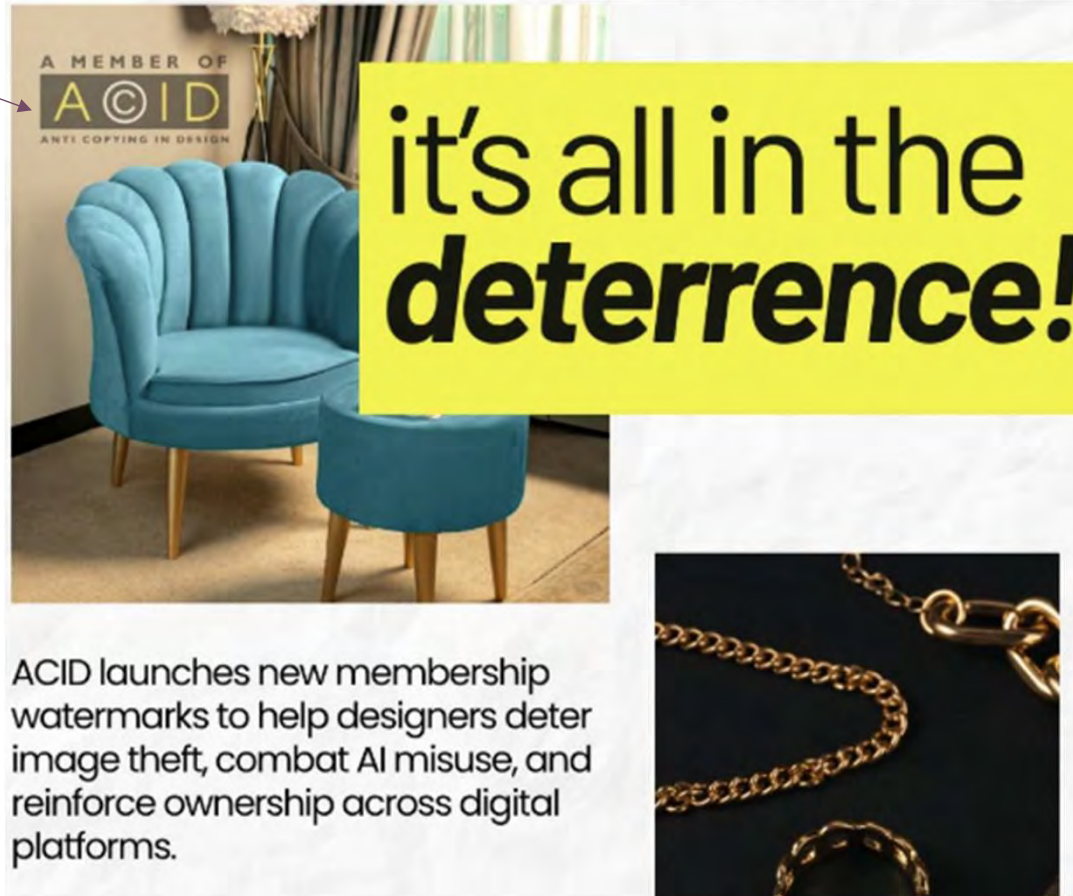
Automatic right in the UK, lasting for life of author + 70 years

Typically applies to 2D works

Think about all the copyright work that you or your business owns and create guard rails around its unauthorised use



A MEMBER OF
ACID WATERMARK
LOGO FOR
IMAGES



A MEMBER OF
ACID
ANTI-COPYING IN DESIGN

it's all in the
deterrence!

ACID launches new membership watermarks to help designers deter image theft, combat AI misuse, and reinforce ownership across digital platforms.



ACID ADVICE TO BUSINESS

What are the five main takeaways!

- 1. Know what AI your business is actually using.**
- 2. Never put confidential information into an unapproved AI tool.**
- 3. Don't assume AI-generated content is automatically yours.**
- 4. Keep evidence of human creativity and design provenance.**
- 5. Put sensible AI rules in place before you need them.**

And a final
thought....

Philosopher Yuval Noah
Harari

**“We should regulate AI
before it regulates us”.**

Food for thought!

Thank you!



Please scan and
sign the ACID IP and
AI Charter and
pledge your support
to IP RESPECT,
COMPLIANCE AND
ETHICS





‘CELEBRATING CYPRUS IP DAY 2026’

Intellectual Property, can be a Positive Force for Growth,
if the copycat culture is curtailed and there is global governance
Around AI - A UK perspective.

THANK YOU!

**Dids Macdonald, Anti Copying in Design
(ACID) Chair & Co-Founder,
VC - UK Alliance for Intellectual Property
Dids.Macdonald@acid.uk.com**

