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# The fight against product piracy

Not all products that say ebm-papst on them are actually made by ebm-papst. An interview with **Ralf Duceck**, Director Intellectual Property at ebm-papst.

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**Mr. Duceck, what is your role as Director Intellectual Property at the company?**

Together with my seven employees, we handle all tasks related to patents, designs, and trademark protection. This includes pursuing patent infringements. I make sure that counterfeit ebm-papst products are taken off the market and don't damage our good name.

**How does this work exactly?**

We work on this with an agency called CorSearch, whose software – which also uses artificial intelligence – scours the internet for offers of ebm-papst products. The adaptive software recognizes counterfeits, which then end up on a list. We look at this list and decide which advertisements need to be deleted.

**Is that how it always works?**

No, sometimes we are also approached by customers who are familiar with the quality of our products but are suddenly experiencing problems. An example of this was when a customer contacted us to complain that the fans they had installed were too loud. We found out that the supplier had unknowingly purchased counterfeit ebm-papst products on the internet because we had a supply bottleneck at the time. Actually, despite all the frustration, we took it as a compliment, as the customer was used to a higher level of quality from our products.



Ralf Duceck, Director Intellectual Property at ebm-papst (Photo | ebm-papst)

### **How many counterfeits do you pursue on a routine basis?**

In collaboration with CorSearch, we reviewed around 70,000 online ads in 2021. Of these, CorSearch reported 60,000 to us as potential fakes, and 42,080 were removed.

### **Are there sometimes false alarms?**

That's quite a rare occurrence, but it does happen. We once had a case where a trainee placed pictures of counterfeit goods in an offer on the internet. However, when we checked, we found that the trader was authorized and that the issue with the pictures was just an oversight.