



European Communities Trade Mark Association

31 May 2012

**Report on the meeting of the
New OHIM Website User Working Group,
24 May 2012, Alicante, Spain**

*Reported by Benjamin Fontaine, Secretary of ECTA Geographical Indications Committee,
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This was the second meeting of this working group, which took place at the premises of the OHIM in Alicante, and which was well attended by NGOs – including ECTA - and by the OHIM staff.

The OHIM welcomes the feedback received so far from the user associations. Most of the suggestions received so far are in the process of being implemented. The OHIM plans to go live with its new website in November this year, and another user working group will be organized before then, presumably in September.

During the meeting the OHIM staff, led by the project manager Nicolas Vigneron, presented a number of developments which, by and large, were largely supported by the assistance. These include, in particular:

- New and modern website, based on a mega menu concept, which will be easily accessible on smart phones and tablets;
- New application for the online filing of CTMs, which will offer two interfaces: a basic tool – for new users – and a complete tool – for regular users -. This new feature will contain a search engine to help applicants find specifications of goods and services which are accepted by the OHIM. The system will also provide applicants with an automatic pre-rights search: this raises some concerns, at least from some users, as the information provided is not exhaustive and may prove difficult to interpret correctly by many applicants. In the end, the OHIM would like to offer a common tool for e-filing throughout the EU;
- Dashboard where users will be able to manage all their files, create and manage various accounts (with specific permissions), set up email alerts, etc.;
- Post registration service, including the possibility to fill in custom declaration recordals;
- Interactive access to the manual on the practice of the OHIM: for example, when viewing a specific article of the CTMR, the user will have the possibility to access the relevant extracts of the OHIM manual, and to the relevant case law of the ECJ. The idea behind this project is to cross reference all the sources of information made available by the OHIM;



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The OHIM also presented a new search engine, referred to as “e-search plus”, which is working very fast and provides for numerous searching tools.

Lastly, the users were also informed about the projects of the OHIM Academy. The Office is currently defining its missions, which will include in particular an e-learning platform. At this stage, training in IP is the global objective.