

**FAKE-FLUENCER CAMPAIGN ON INSTAGRAM****MEDIA RELEASE****BERN, 23. MARCH 2021****DON'T BE FAKE. BE ORIGINAL**

The global trade in counterfeit branded products is booming. However, consumers do not often think about the serious consequences when buying these products. By purchasing a counterfeit, they are financing criminal activities, jeopardising jobs and are even putting their health at risk. According to the WHO, 10% of all medicines sold on the internet are counterfeits. Moreover, harmful chemicals are regularly found in counterfeit textiles and children's toys. In 2020 alone, customs offices took around 4,500 packages containing counterfeit goods out of circulation. That corresponds to a goods value of over 40 million Swiss francs – which does not include over 6,500 consignments of medicines.

Instagram – the shopping El Dorado for counterfeit branded products

To raise young adults' awareness of the issues behind counterfeiting and piracy, in particular, we have launched an influencer campaign, together with the creative agency TBWA|Zürich, which centres on online trade on Instagram. Every day, 500 million users make the image-based social media platform a shopping El Dorado for fake products. Integrated Click to Shop functions make it more than easy for users to buy products directly.

To attract more attention to the problem of fake profiles, we did something that usually only cyber criminals would do... **We faked the identity of well-known influencers from the fields of fashion, lifestyle, beauty and music and, in their names, we advertised watches, perfumes and food products that are not even available for purchase.** The difference – instead of the potential shoppers ending up on ominous online shops, we surprised them with a clear message and made them aware of the topic via a specially created landing page. Of course, all of the influencers were in on it, they made their followers aware of internet fakes and spoke out in support of **STOP PIRACY's** work.

"I'm often made aware of fake profiles of myself on various platforms by my community. In the infinite spheres of the internet, it's unfortunately easy to take on someone else's identity, fake things and fool people. By participating in this project, I want to increase my community's awareness of these situations. It's not just about being able to question things, we should question things. Always." – Adela Smajic

"I like pirates. On the big screen and in games, anyway. But, when it comes to spreading my music on dubious forums before it's been released or even plagiarising it or releasing it under a fake name to make money, it's time for the swords to be sharpened. Anyone who produces or creates something puts countless days and often a lot of money into realising a work. If someone then comes along and wants to use it unlawfully to get rich, that's when the fun stops. Counterfeits deceive not only creators, but also consumers. That's why I didn't waste a second when Kingfluencers asked me if I wanted to take part in the STOP PIRACY Fake-Fluencer campaign. It's important to stand up for your rights and to increase the visibility of this topic. There should be no more land in sight for these pirates." – Pedro Rodrigues (Ierocquemusic)



STOP PIRACY is the Swiss anti-counterfeiting and piracy platform. The non-profit organisation works to educate and raise awareness among consumers as well as promote cooperation between the business community and the authorities. STOP PIRACY provides the general public with facts, analyses and information about the risks of counterfeiting and piracy, and what lies behind it.

Links: [Tips for consumers: recognising counterfeits on the internet](#)

For further questions: STOP PIRACY – The Swiss Anti-Counterfeiting and Piracy Platform

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