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Sad Tale of a Trademark Fail

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Earlier this month, Unilever made headlines by accidentally naming its new soap after Kim Jong Un. The shower gel line, created by a Korean designer and aimed at urban millennials in China, is called KJU. Google searches for KJU pull up Kim Jong Un first, and the hash tag #KJU on Twitter references stories about the North Korean leader.



While it is uncertain whether the unexpected connection will help or hurt sales, the story does provide a good opportunity to remind

trademark owners to fully search marks before launching – and not just for strict third-party trademark use. Even non-brand references can directly and immediately impact the goodwill associated with a mark.

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