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Superman® sues Captain Vancouver®

*The Man of Steel wants to stop the Man of Sales
from trademarking himself as a Superhero*

VANCOUVER, British Columbia, Canada - "They tried to say I looked like Clark Kent. I don't see that, maybe Clark Kent's Dad a bit? If I do ... its not my fault," says Ian Brett Realtor, who last week received a letter from DC Comics threatening to sue him for trademark infringement over the word Superhero and perceived similarities between Superman and his superhero character. Ian Brett's character and alter ego is **Captain Vancouver**, Real Estate Superhero. He trademarked 'Captain Vancouver in 2013 but then decided to trademark the phrase 'Real Estate Superhero' last year. It passed all the requirements from the Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO) but then at the last stage, where its advertised, that's when he got the letter from DC comics who is trying to make a connection between Captain Vancouver 'Real Estate Superhero' and Superman. What does a Superhero do when another Superhero wants to fight? "It happens from time to time. Fortunately, one of Captain Vancouver's superhero powers is that he is an expert negotiator, so I wrote a letter to Superman and told him that I thought he lost his way," says Ian Brett.

"Superman is known at the Man of Steel. Captain Vancouver is a Real Estate Superhero, Man of Sales" says Ian Brett. "Personally, I think I couldn't be more different than Clark Kent and Superman. I have a British accent and I wear a naval costume with a tricorn hat and breeches over top of white leggings. Not the red briefs that my superhero counterpart 'Superman' wears. Plus, let me add that I would never wear red underwear on the outside of my pants, what do they think? It's a bit insulting, isn't it?"

Superman is also a flier and says 'up, up and away' My catch phrase is 'house ahoy!' which I say when I launch my 'For Sale Ship' into the sky to help the good citizens of the Metropolis of Vancouver who call on me to help them navigate the choppy waters of Real Estate."

What draws the attention of Captain Vancouver most was that DC Comics claimed to own the phrase 'Superhero' in the USA but to Ian, it does not appear that they have ever registered it in Canada. Regardless, Ian feels the word superhero has become part of everyday language and should be free for all to use and that there are many trademarks that currently use it in Canada. "There's no confusing my Real Estate Superhero with products by DC Comics in the minds of consumers. I'm not registering the word 'superhero' exclusively but the words 'Real Estate Superhero.' It's not like I'm calling myself 'Super Realtor Man' and running around in an exact replica outfit (although I do agree with the general premise that I'm a Super Realtor). I'm a Real Estate Superhero called Captain Vancouver. There's no comparison with Clark Kent or Superman besides Clark is in news while I'm in Real Estate. I'm not sure why they want to oppose 'Real Estate Superhero' unless Superman has plans to sell Real Estate when he retires?"

"More"

Ian also said that DC Comics wanted to stop him from the act of ripping his jacket to reveal his superhero shirt and shield under his nautical jacket.

“If DC Comics and Superman are serious about suing me for the very act of removing my jacket, then they should be suing every other citizen out there because we all take our cloths off and we all point at one time or another!”

As for the shield on Captain Vancouver’s chest. Ian Brett says that although some might try to draw a connection between the two, it’s one that is misinterpreted and the origins of the Captain Vancouver character reveals the inspiration behind the design. “My superhero shield is a portmanteau of the authorized Realtor industry logo that all Realtors are entitled to use in their advertising which I inserted into a ‘nautical navigation triangle’, a common navigational tool. I’m not using the letter ‘R’ instead of an ‘S’ as claimed. Superman’s people even said I had to change my nautical blue shirt to a different colour. The sea is blue and my shirt is blue. Its my corporate brand colours inspired by the Pacific Ocean where the real Navigator George Vancouver journeyed. Its not inspired by the blue-sky Superman fly’s through. Superman doesn’t own the ocean or the sky and he most certainly doesn’t own all triangle shapes and the colour blue,” says Ian.

Ian Brett created his ‘Real Estate Superhero’ persona ‘Captain Vancouver’ as an unofficial city ambassador and in response to daily Realtor shenanigans that was being reported on in the news for the past several years during the height of the Real Estate boom in Vancouver. “We live in the third most expensive city in the world where average homes run in the millions. There was a lot of greed and some questionable practices that came out of that. I think a lot of them forgot what it was like to provide good old fashion service.” Going forward Ian says that he might change the shield as a compromise. “Even though I felt like mailing them back some of their own kryptonite, I decided to send Superman an olive branch,” says Ian. “If they want me to change the nautical triangle, then ok I will consider it but only if they design a new comic for me telling the story of why Captain Vancouver had to change his nautical triangle at the behest of the great Superman!”

If there is a silver lining to being sued by Superman, its that Captain Vancouver has helped a lot of local Vancouver artists. Despite the setback, Ian Brett says that the real estate branding has been super fun. Can we say the word ‘Super?’ We’re almost afraid to ask if it’s trademarked as well.

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For access to Photos, and Legal Correspondence to/from Superman:

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