



Why we are suing Facebook and a request for help

Much has been written and said about our suit against Facebook for infringing upon our registered trademark "Timelines", and we've heard from people who are understandably confused by the whole issue. We'd like to let you know our reasons for doing this and ask for your help.

Why we are doing this

Our company owns a valid [trademark](#) on the term "Timelines" that is for a particular application, specifically for **"providing a web site that gives users the ability to create customized web pages featuring user-defined information about historical, current and upcoming events."** We've spent years building this brand and using it in the above stated way on our site [Timelines.com](#).

Facebook, a company that has applied for or trademarked the terms "Face", "Wall", and "Like" as well as sued others for using "Book" in their names, is using the name "Timeline" for a new product that is focused on how people express and share events and history online. Facebook either knew or should have known (given their rigorous defense of their own intellectual property) that the US Patent and Trademark Office granted us this trademark. People at Facebook could have at least contacted us for permission to use or license the name. They did not.

We're not trying to shut down innovation at Facebook

Let's be clear: we aren't against Facebook launching this new service. Our issue is that they've named and branded the service "Timeline".

We are hoping that Facebook will realize that it made a mistake and that it needs to make things right. We're very proud of the products and services we've built and cannot sit idly by and watch Facebook eliminate the goodwill we've developed. We will vigorously defend our trademark.

How you can help

If you believe a small company has as much right as a big company to defend its intellectual property, then we are asking for your help in spreading the word about our cause:

- Please spread the word and post a [link to this page](#) on your site, blog, [Facebook](#) and [Google+](#)
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- [Tweet it out](#)
- Follow this case on our [Facebook page](#)

Thank you for your support as we defend our trademark – we really appreciate it!

—The Timelines Team

A Brief History

- Timelines, Inc. has been in business since 2007. We have five employees. Our company creates web sites and mobile apps all related to the concept of recording and sharing events. Our services include [Timelines.com](#), [Lifesnapz.com](#) and [Photogram](#).
- Timelines.com was launched in April 2008 to enable people to record and share events – personal events, historical events, local events, - in a unique, collaborative way using photos, videos, text, topics and locations. Our site is "history recorded by the people, for the people", and our tagline is "The History of Us."
- We filed for the trademark for "Timelines" on May 23, 2008, and the US Patent and Trademark Office granted our trademark on September 15, 2009.
- The trademark for "Timelines" was granted to us for "Providing a web site that gives users the ability to create customized web pages featuring user-defined information about historical, current and upcoming events" - exactly what Timelines.com does.
- Facebook has been in business since 2004. The company has over 2,000 employees.
- Facebook announced "Timeline" on September 22, 2011. At the launch, Facebook's CEO Mark Zuckerberg called Timeline "the heart of your Facebook experience" and "the story of your life."
- Facebook gave access to open graph developers to enable Timeline shortly after its announcement.
- Conflicting reports indicated a rollout of Timeline to Facebook's user base of over 750 million users would happen in 1 – 4 weeks after the announcement.
- Sometime after the announcement, Facebook redirected traffic from our Timelines Facebook page to the "Introducing Timeline" page on Facebook.com. (This was later corrected by Facebook after our first hearing in front of the judge).
- Timelines, Inc. sues Facebook for trademark infringement on September 29, 2011. [Here's a link to the Timelines, Inc. filing](#). The case is ongoing. (Note: In the eyes of the US Patent and Trademark Office, the words "Timeline" and "Timelines" are the same)