

From Online Camouflage to Physical Crackdown: KENFOX's Legal Strategy in the LACTOMASON Case

1. Snapshot of the Case

In July-August 2025, KENFOX IP & Law Office executed a coordinated [anti-counterfeiting operation](#) in Hanoi on behalf of a leading South Korean pharmaceutical company, holder of the registered "LACTOMASON" trademark in Vietnam.

The infringer was not a "street-level counterfeiter", but a sophisticated entity constructed to project lawful legitimacy. Operating under the guise of "**Lacto Mason Vietnam Co., Ltd.**", the infringer built a **complete façade of brand authenticity** by copying nearly the entire identity ecosystem of our client - including product packaging, labeling, corporate name, website, social-media presence, and promotional collateral - and then **deploying a digital-only distribution model** (exclusively through e-commerce platforms), **leaving no physical retail footprint** and refusing all in-person purchase or site-visit attempts.

Confronted with this multilayered concealment strategy, KENFOX executed a **tiered investigation program** combining structured online intelligence, **controlled trap-purchases**, covert surveillance, and **logistics-trace methodologies**. Over the course of more than one month, we **penetrated the digital camouflage**, **identified the concealed storage/operational location**, and **compiled a comprehensive, legally admissible enforcement dossier** — sufficient to trigger immediate and decisive administrative action.

On **24 July 2025**, Market Surveillance Team No. 1, supported by police, raided the premises, **seizing nearly 8,500 oral supplements, vaginal suppositories, feminine hygiene products bearing the sign "LACTOMASON"** (LACTO MASON) valued at approximately **USD 58,000**, with recorded unlawful profits of **~USD 2,800**. Resulting penalties - administrative fines plus e-commerce sanctions - **exceeded USD 28,000**, bringing the infringer's immediate financial exposure to **~USD 88,800**.

We further initiated **VIPRI expert assessments** to [remove the confusingly similar mark from product labels and the infringer's company name](#), ensuring long-term protection.

Beyond the raid itself, we filed requests for "Expert Opinions" (in form of Assessment Conclusion) on the likelihood of trademark infringement with the Vietnam Intellectual Property Research Institute (VIPRI) to force removal of the confusingly similar mark from both product labeling and even the infringer's **registered company name** ("**Lacto Mason Vietnam Co., Ltd.**"), cutting off the root of consumer confusion. This matter shows how KENFOX converts complex, digitally hidden infringement into decisive physical seizure, financial punishment, and longer-term structural remedies. For multinational rights holders, this is the standard of protection we aim to deliver in Vietnam: not just paperwork, but market control.

Client: LACTOMASON Co., Ltd., a leading South Korean pharmaceutical company, brand owner of "LACTOMASON".

Infringer: Lacto Mason Vietnam Co., Ltd.

Matter: Infringement of the "LACTOMASON" trademark: A large-scale and sophisticatedly disguised infringement scheme copying the mark on product packaging, spreading it across e-commerce platforms, and legitimizing it through use as a company name, with the intent to misappropriate origin, mislead the market, and unlawfully profit.

2. Why the Case Was Legally Difficult?

This matter was not a routine counterfeit seizure - it was a sophisticated, digitally masked infringement network designed to look legitimate, evade inspection, and convert the client's pharmaceutical goodwill into revenue in Vietnam. The legal challenge was not simply proving similarity; it was dismantling an operation engineered to survive surface-level scrutiny.

(1) A copycat engineered to appear lawful

The infringer did not behave like a street-level counterfeiter. They:

- Used a mark nearly identical to our client's "LACTOMASON"
- Applied it directly on packaging, labels, and marketing materials
- Incorporated the mark into their corporate name ("Lacto Mason Vietnam Co., Ltd.")
- Built online and social-media presence to appear "official".

This level of structured mimicry (spanning the mark, product packaging, e-commerce presence, and even the corporate name) created an outward appearance of legitimacy. This façade enabled the infringer, when challenged, to assert that its activities were lawful and procedurally compliant, thereby causing both consumers and regulatory authorities to be susceptible to initial misperception. Consequently, enforcement in this matter was substantially more complex than in conventional "plain" counterfeiting cases, as it required dismantling an engineered structure of false legitimacy rather than merely comparing signs or packaging.

(2) Digital hiding to avoid inspection

The target distributed primarily through e-commerce, avoided walk-in points of sale, and provided vague or misleading address information. Traditional [evidence collection methods](#) - in-person visits, casual sampling, direct inquiry - failed. This required a hybrid investigative strategy combining online surveillance, covert purchasing, and physical tracing of logistics.

(3) Enforcement without an obvious raid site

Before intervention, the matter appeared stuck: Infringement was clear, but there was no immediately identifiable site for seizure - a common point where rights-holders abandon enforcement. Many enforcers stop here. We did not. We generated actionable intelligence and converted a "digital only" infringer into a raid target.

(4) High evidentiary threshold

Because the infringer appeared "clean" on the surface and operated through a registered company, authorities initially lacked statutory grounds for physical action. We had to build a complete evidentiary file before enforcement — including trap orders, documentation of repeated unauthorized use, and strategic legal memoranda — to empower authorities to move decisively.

(5) Multi-layer legal response required

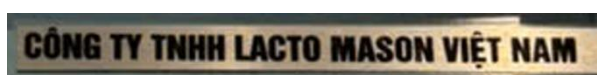
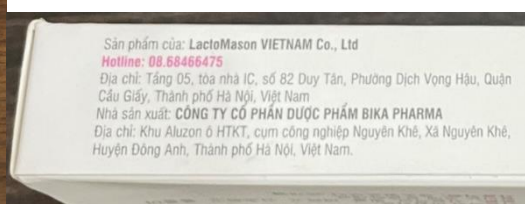
This was not just about raiding products. We needed parallel legal pathways to dismantle the infringer's identity:

- Administrative raid + seizure of ~8,500 products
- Financial sanctions exceeding USD 28,000
- VIPRI Assessment Conclusion confirming confusing similarity
- Removal of the infringing sign from products *and the infringer's company name*

This required simultaneous mastery of trademark law, administrative enforcement, digital evidence, and corporate-name regulations - an integrated strategy few firms can execute.

In short, this case demanded more than legal theory - it required intelligence-driven investigation, multi-channel evidence building, coordinated enforcement with authorities, and post-raid structural remedies. KENFOX turned a digitally shielded infringer into a fully exposed enforcement target, proving that even "invisible" counterfeiters in Vietnam can be located, raided, punished, and stripped of their false market identity.

The trademark "LACTO MASON" is used on the packaging of health supplement products, vaginal suppositories, and feminine hygiene gel cosmetics.





3. Our Strategy and Actions

(i) Intelligence Development & Target Building

We ran a structured investigation for more than a month, combining:

- online monitoring of sales activity,
- controlled monitoring of how the infringing brand presented itself to consumers,
- verification of logistics and fulfilment behavior,
- and discreet field work to tie the online activity to a physical operating location.

This allowed us to convert “vague e-commerce seller” into “identifiable premises in Hanoi at 112 Nam Van Lung, Hoai Duc Commune” which is what Market Surveillance needs in order to raid.

(ii) Legal Grounding and Petitioning

We prepared and submitted a formal Petition to Market Surveillance Team No. 1, laying out:

- ownership and validity of the “LACTOMASON” trademark,
- evidence of unauthorized use,
- evidence of likelihood of confusion,
- the infringer’s commercial behavior and intent,
- and the urgency / scale of harm.

This is important because Vietnamese enforcement bodies act fastest when the legal theory, supporting evidence, and enforcement request are already clean and litigation-ready. We gave them that.

(iii) Coordinated Raid Execution

On 24 July 2025:

- [Market Surveillance Team No. 1](#), working from our Petition, raided the site.
- Nearly 8,500 infringing units were identified and temporarily seized on-site.

We were not passive observers. We coordinated and stayed with the case through execution, not just paperwork.

(iv) Post-Raid Escalation & Brand Clean-Up

Many firms stop at “we got a fine”. We went further. After the raid, we:

- Worked with the authority to formally quantify the total infringing stock value (~USD 58,000) and unlawful profit (~USD 2,800), which supports heavy penalties.
- Drove the calculation of expected fines (USD 28,000+), which pushes deterrence.
- Initiated **two expert assessments** by the [Vietnam Intellectual Property Research Institute \(VIPRI\)](#) to: (i) confirm confusing similarity of the infringing product branding (e.g. “Coco Gel Probiotic”), and (ii) confirm that using “Lacto Mason Vietnam Co., Ltd.” as a company name itself constitutes an infringing element likely to mislead consumers.

That second point is extremely powerful. We are not only going after product stock. We are attacking:

- ✓ the company name,
- ✓ the way it presents itself in commerce,
- ✓ and its long-term ability to continue misleading consumers.

In other words, we’re not just burning inventory. We’re dismantling the infringer’s identity. We seek not only seizure and fines, but structural remedies that stop the infringer from resurfacing under the same name.

4. Outcome / Impact

This enforcement was not simply a raid - it was a **structured market reset** that dismantled a disguised commercial operation and restored clean market conditions for a global pharmaceutical brand.

- **Decisive removal of infringing products:** Nearly **8,500 infringing health-care products** were seized in a single coordinated action, eliminating a high-risk counterfeit supply channel and preventing deception in a sensitive pharmaceutical market.
- **Economic deterrence - infringement made unprofitable:** The infringer absorbed approximately **USD 88,800** in combined exposure - including inventory seizure, recognition of unlawful profits, administrative fines, and platform sanctions - establishing that counterfeiting in Vietnam carries real financial consequence, not merely cost of doing business.
- **Dismantling the false identity:** VIPRI expert conclusions created the legal basis to remove the infringing sign **not only from product packaging but also from the company name**, collapsing the corporate façade and removing the structural source of confusion.
- **Digital ecosystem protection:** By triggering e-commerce enforcement and platform restrictions, we **cut off the infringer’s primary sales channel**, protected consumers online, and shielded legitimate sellers from unfair, misleading “near-brand” competition.
- **Verification of genuine brand origin:** The enforcement reaffirmed the client’s legitimate brand presence and regulatory compliance, safeguarding consumer trust and reinforcing the integrity of a well-established pharmaceutical brand in Vietnam.
- **Long-term deterrence and market integrity:** The infringer did not simply lose inventory - they lost **their brand identity, credibility, and ability to operate under the copied name**. The outcome delivered a clear message: digital concealment and corporate camouflage will not shield infringement in Vietnam.

Bottom line: We did more than seize goods - we **shut down the network, stripped its identity, blocked its sales channels, and reinforced the LACTOMASON brand’s exclusive position in Vietnam’s pharmaceutical market.**

5. Why This Case Proves about KENFOX?

This case proves that KENFOX is not only able to stop counterfeit sales - we dismantle counterfeit operations, including their commercial identity, market channels, and ability to re-enter the market.

- **We convert invisible e-commerce violations into physical enforcement:** Many infringers hide behind online storefronts and vague logistics details. We tracked a digital-only seller to its real-world location and delivered actionable intelligence that enabled Market Surveillance and police to raid immediately. When others hit a “no address, no raid” dead-end, we push through.
- **We don't just seize goods - we destroy counterfeit business models:** Seizing nearly 8,500 infringing units was only the beginning. We forced scrutiny not only of product packaging but of the infringer's *company name, branding system, and market identity*. Fake stock can be destroyed — but dismantling the fake brand structure stops recurrence.
- **We execute hybrid legal strategy, not single-track enforcement:** Trademark violation was only one angle. We simultaneously pursued:
 - ✓ Administrative enforcement and raid actions
 - ✓ VIPRI expert opinions on product branding
 - ✓ VIPRI opinion on infringing company name
 - ✓ E-commerce enforcement sanctions

This layered approach produced immediate disruption plus long-term brand protection.

- **We turn enforcement into measurable commercial outcomes:** The infringer's loss wasn't symbolic - it was financial and operational:
 - ✓ ~8,500 units seized
 - ✓ ~USD 88,800 in immediate financial consequences
 - ✓ brand usage and corporate identity attacked at the root

This capability matters to global brands: we protect revenue, not just trademarks.

- **We are comfortable leading raids - not just writing memos:** We worked on-site with enforcement officers and police to ensure flawless execution. Many firms hand files to authorities and step back. We stay until the operation is complete. That's the difference between *paper enforcement* and *real enforcement*.
- **We reinforce brand integrity in regulated sectors:** [Pharmaceutical trademarks](#) require rapid, high-stakes protection. This case confirms KENFOX can act quickly and decisively when consumer health, trust, and product safety are at risk.

In short, KENFOX does not simply enforce trademark rights - we find hidden infringers, take down their operations, break their commercial identity, and secure market space for the rightful brand owner in Vietnam.

By QUAN, Nguyen Vu | Partner, IP Attorney
 PHAN, Do Thi | Special Counsel
 HONG, Hoang Thi Tuyet | Senior Trademark Attorney

Contact

KENFOX IP & Law Office

Building No. 6, Lane 12/93, Chinh Kinh Street, Nhan Chinh Ward, Thanh Xuan District, Hanoi, Vietnam

Tel: +84 24 3724 5656

Email: info@kenfoxlaw.com / kenfox@kenfoxlaw.com