

**\* Theme: Roman Letters**

**[Distinctiveness]**

Trademark consisting of one or two Roman letters are regarded as non-distinctive for registration because they are used for goods indicating part numbers, model numbers, model number and code numbers to sort goods.

When they are combined with other words by a hyphen like "AB-○○○", such Roman letters "AB" are usually also disregarded under similarity examinations. However, they may be registered as a whole at the TTAB. Please see "Hyphen, Slash and Center Dot" in the Board Decisions at TTAB in Japan in our Web-site.

**[Similarity]**

Roman letters such as "B" and "P" will not cause confusion in ordinary business engagements. However, if they are in trademarks like "LFB" and "LFP", they may be decided as similar by the JPO.

The JPO conducts examinations on the phonetic similarity of trademarks in terms of Katakana sounds like "e-ru-e-fu-bi-i" and "e-ru-e-fu-pi-i". Thus, the difference between the two sounds is the fifth sounds "bi" and "pi" while all the other sounds are identical and the two trademarks are judged as phonetically similar as a whole. You will see many trial decisions regarding the phonetic similarity of Roman letters in the following list.

However, the JPO has recently issued opposite decisions on the Roman letter similarity to the decisions issued in the past while the first stage examinations seem no change.

**(1) Similarity of One Roman Letter Difference**

Similarity (= : Similar, X : Dissimilar)

	Similarity		Mark	Similarity	Mark	Class	Case No.
A	X	E	ETE	X	ETA	14	2004-90260
	=	E	SAH	=	SEH	Old 6	1983-9143
	X	I	ACT	X	ICT	Old 11	1983-23107
	X	I	ACI	X	I.C.I.	Old 1	1986-1610
	X	M	I·B·A	X	IBM	Old 26	1989-19081
B	X	D	JBL	X	JDL	Old 11	1983-25048
	X	D	HLB	X	H.L.D.	Old 4	1984-12879
	X	G	SBS	X	SGS	42	2001-90453
	X	G	JPB	X	JPG	Old 22	1983-24618
	X	P	NBB	X	NBP	18	2007-12569
	X	P	EMB	X	E.M.P	7	2007-202
	X	P	IBIC	X	I.P.I.C.	9	2006-26041
	=	P	LFB	=	LFP	9	2006-37334
	=	P	PBA	=	PPA	5	2005-15362
	X	P	OFB	X	OFF	10	2005-15728
	X	V	BOB	X	VOB	35	2007-6716
	=	V	B-PAS	=	VPAS	9	2002-23930
	C	X	G	SCS	X	SGS	3
X		G	P.C.M.	X	PGM	30	2006-11317
=		G	KTC	=	KTG	Old 10	1990-11485
D	X	G	BDMG	X	BGMD	7	2003-19077
	X	T	GDS	X	GTS	5	2008-5971
	X	T	LBD	X	LTB	25	2007-650039
	X	T	D CUT	X	T CUT	16	2006-21646
	=	T	BKD	=	BKT	25	2003-17871
E	X	F	SKE	X	SKF	12	2008-900138
	X	I	e-WING	X	i-wing	39	2005-20895
	X	P	P.S.E.	X	PSP	Old 4	1983-9841
F	X	L	MFH	X	MLH	Old 11	1980-22909
	=	L	TAF-μ	=	TAL	Old 11	1980-21799
	X	M	OIF	X	OIM	Old 1	1990-3571
	X	M	LFT	X	LMT	Old 9	1990-16141
	X	S	HKF	X	HKS	7	2005-90262
	X	S	SKF	X	SKS	12	2004-90396
	=	S	CUF	=	CUS	Old 10	1989-963
G	X	J	GPC	X	JPC	Old 1	1984-9805
H	X	U	OHP	X	OUP	Old 25	1986-9266

I	X	Y	ISL	X	YSL	3	2004-90578
	=	Y	IMI	=	Imy	3	2003-3527
	=	Y	GIX	=	Z·Y·X	18	2002-3669
K	=	T	R.P.K	=	R·P·T	Old 18	1983-3008
L	=	M	APSL	=	APSM	Old 9	1991-741
	X	M	VSL	X	VSM	Old 10	1988-346
	X	N	LUK	X	NUK	12	2004-90749
	=	N	C&L	=	C&N	Old 21	1988-10663
M	=	N	A.N.L	=	ANN	Old 11	1984-23223
	X	N	MSJ	X	NSJ	9	2007-3511
	X	N	MHL	X	NHL	9	2006-90512
	=	N	MZONE	=	NZONE	41	2006-11801
	=	N	MCL	=	NCL	9	2006-7844
P	X	N	TMS	X	TNS	35	2006-65014
	X	T	P·R·X	X	TRX	Old 17	1986-1620
	X	T	AQP SERIES	X	AQT	Old 9	1932-10686
	X	V	PIP	X	VIP	Old 26	1981-19360

## (2) Similarity by Presence of One Roman One Letter

Similarity (= : Similar, X : Dissimilar)

Trademark	Similarity	Cited mark	Class	Case No.	Memo
e. BALANCE	=	BALANCE	29	2001-90685	
F·VIENTO	=	VIENTO	25	2000-21054	
iSimplify!	=	Simplify	9	2002-65032	
A. Gallotex	X	GARO	17	1983-6048	
C media	X	Media	35	2002-10909	
Cvision	X	VISION	10	2001-462	
eMST	X	MST	42	2007-685004	
eVALUE	X	VALUE	9	2004-9047	
HOW·F	X	HOW	25	1999-8496	
i SMART	X	SMART	9	2003-11651	
i message	X	MESSAGE	9	2001-16421	
J·URBAN COURT	X	URBAN-COURT	36	2006-18031	
J.CREW	X	CREW	Old 24	1998-90060	
K Laboratory	X	LABORATORY	9	2001-19852	
WONDER K	X	WONDER	5	2000-6456	
L style	X	STYLE	9	2002-4830	
L. Madlon	X	MADLON	Old 30	1983-19061	
M·SURF	X	SURF	9	2003-8298	

S million	X	MILLION	9	2005-2765	
V. SMILE	X	SMILE	9	2006-22069	
V APRI	X	APRI	9	2004-18477	
SECTAW	X	SECTAR	Old 11	1984-14163	
HYPER X	X	HYPER	28	2008-20471	The letter "X" is not only the 24th alphabetical letter, but also it means "a sign of the unknown" and further "unknown things".
Z MAP	X	MAP	9	2004-17443	

### (3) Similarity by Presence of Two Roman Letters

Similarity (= : Similar, X : Dissimilar)

Trademark	Similarity	Cited mark	Class	Case No.	Memo
DB Signature	=	MK SIGNATURE	6	2004-65094	
L.L. Bean Club	=	BEANS CLUB	25	2002-13113	
EZ ARMOR	=	ARMOR	9	2002-18557	
DP ASSIST	=	ASSIST	9	2000-4791	
TM POWDER	X	CM POWDER	19	2007-22998	
EZ ESPRIT	X	Esprit	3	2007-900065	
PC WALKER	X	WALKER	16	2007-2834	
WD SCORPIO	X	SCORPIO	9	2006-22346	
AB LOUNGE	X	LOUNGE	28	2006-18685	
HX HOT	X	HOT	28	2006-65017	
T.C.TERMINAL	X	TERMINAL	25	2005-21914	
QA STATION	X	STATION	9	2005-11928	

### (4) Similarity by Presence of Three Roman Letters

Similarity (= : Similar, X : Dissimilar)

Trademark	Similarity	Cited mark	Class	Case No.	Memo
M' Natura SMJ	=	SMJ	36	2005-15921	
IDS OptiFIB	=	IDS	9	2002-23343	
EPOCH MTC	=	MDC	Old 11	1989-10931	
P.D.Q.NETWORK	=	NETWORK	Old 30	1986-5593	

JoyschedulerCRP	X	CRP	9	2008-14061	
DHC SUNCUT	X	SUNCUT	3	2007-890178	
FUNctionalWGN	X	WGN	12	2006-11100	
CRL. MEDINET	X	MEDI+NET	42	2006-16815	
QTL BIOSENSOR	X	BIOSENSOR	1	2006-2067	
JDL Benny	X	BENNY	19	2006-12279	
ICP BREATHE	X	ICP LINER	19	2006-12279	
MU MST30X	X	MST	7	2005-25454	
JSR MES	X	MES	1	2005-2938	
MightyEMR	X	MITY	9	2004-26414	