

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA
WEST PALM BEACH DIVISION**

**ADT LLC and THE ADT SECURITY
CORPORATION,**

Plaintiffs,

vs.

Case No. 9:21-cv-80762

RING LLC,

Defendant.

COMPLAINT

Plaintiffs ADT LLC and The ADT Security Corporation (together “ADT”) bring this action against Defendant Ring LLC (“Ring”), and in support allege as follows:

ADT’S LONG HISTORY OF INNOVATION

1. ADT is the largest and best-known provider of home security and automation technology and services in the United States. For decades, ADT’s Famous Blue Octagon—an iconic trademark recognizable virtually anywhere in the United States—has been a symbol of ADT’s dedication to its customers. ADT’s more than 6 million customers proudly display ADT’s Famous Blue Octagon to let others know that ADT is always there to help protect and connect what matters most to them. Visible on a lawn sign or a sticker in a street-facing window, ADT’s Famous Blue Octagon makes customers feel safer, communicating to all who pass ADT’s reputation for trust, vigilance, and reliability.

2. From ADT’s creation of the first security monitoring and response service in 1874, to its pioneering of automated burglar alarm systems in the mid-twentieth century, to becoming a

leading provider of security and smart home solutions today, ADT has been a leader in innovation for over 145 years—patenting hundreds of security industry firsts during that span.

3. As part of ADT’s commitment to innovation, ADT often works with industry startups, such as Ring. Founded in 2013 as “Doorbot,” Ring was discovered through the TV show *Shark Tank*, and was later acquired by Amazon.com, Inc. (“Amazon”). Ring manufactures various smart home products, such as the Ring Video Doorbell. The startup is known less for security services than for smart home convenience and connectivity features that its parent company Amazon helped to popularize.

4. Unfortunately, while ADT has had a storied history of partnering to innovate on behalf of its customers, Ring has had a history of misappropriating ADT’s intellectual property.

RING’S PRIOR MISAPPROPRIATION OF ADT’S TECHNOLOGY

5. In early 2017, only a few years into its existence, Ring sought to accelerate its nascent security capabilities by misappropriating a software platform that ADT had spent several years developing.

6. ADT first began working with Ring in 2015—showcasing use of the Ring Video Doorbell with ADT’s home security and automation platform at the 2016 Consumer Electronics Show, along with other new smart home products. In July of 2016, ADT began to offer the Ring Video Doorbell to ADT customers for use with their ADT system.

7. By early 2017, however, Ring had decided to launch its own home security and automation platform in competition with ADT. Without ADT’s knowledge, Ring misappropriated an unauthorized copy of the source code and documentation for a new home security and automation platform that ADT was developing with another young company, Zonoff, so that Ring could significantly shorten the time and cost for bringing its own competing security system to

market.

8. ADT discovered the misappropriation and immediately reached out to Ring to resolve the matter. However, Ring refused to cease use of ADT's intellectual property, and ADT was forced to file suit for misappropriation of ADT trade secrets in the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware. ADT successfully obtained a preliminary injunction that enjoined Ring from using all of the software, source code, specifications, and related trade secrets for the platform that it had taken, and Ring settled with ADT. *ADT Holdings, Inc. and ADT LLC v. Michael Harris and Bot Home Automation, Inc., d/b/a Ring.com*, Case No. 2017-0328 (Del. Ch.).

9. In April of 2018, Ring was sold to Amazon.

ADT'S RELATIONSHIP WITH AMAZON

10. As part of ADT's commitment to innovate on behalf of its customers, ADT also has a separate relationship with Amazon.

11. ADT had spent substantial time and resources developing the technology that would allow functional pairing of devices to its home security platforms, to further enhance the customer experience in using its products.

12. In January of 2017, ADT first showcased the integration of its home security and automation system with Amazon's Echo and Echo Dot products to its ecosystem at the 2017 Consumer Electronics Show.

13. In September of 2018, Amazon announced ADT as its Professional Installation and Monitoring Solution for Alexa Guard.

14. Not surprisingly, ADT no longer actively promotes the Ring Video Doorbell. However, ADT still purchases the Ring Video Doorbell to support ADT's customers who desire to use them with their ADT systems.

RING'S MISAPPROPRIATION OF ADT'S FAMOUS BLUE OCTAGON

15. Even before its rebuke for misappropriating ADT's software, Ring was attempting another open theft—the theft of ADT's Famous Blue Octagon—seeking to tout a reputation for trust to potential customers that it has not earned.

16. Because of potential for confusion between ADT and Ring's respective offerings, the Master Sales Agreement dated February 1, 2016 for the Ring Video Doorbell ("ADT-Ring MSA") provides that Ring shall "(i) not use or acquiesce in the use of any trademarks or trade names which are likely to be confusingly similar to the trademarks or trade names encompassed by ADT Intellectual Property; (ii) not knowingly unite, join or combine ADT Intellectual Property with any other symbols, names, or trademarks, except for marketing activities as contemplated by this Agreement"

17. Notwithstanding this express obligation, only a few months later Ring began offering a lighted yard sign that was confusingly similar to ADT's Famous Blue Octagon:



18. ADT is not aware of Ring using any octagon logo, much less a blue octagon, prior to the launch of its lighted yard sign.

19. Concerned by Ring's actions, ADT reached out to Ring in August 2016 for Ring to take appropriate steps to avoid infringing ADT's Famous Blue Octagon and minimize the risk of confusion by the public.

20. Ring changed the coloring of its yard sign to remove the majority of the color blue:



21. With the understanding that Ring would also take affirmative steps to avoid confusion as part of the relationship between the parties, ADT took no further action at that time. ADT did not waive any of its rights to take subsequent action against Ring.

22. In November of 2020, Amazon notified ADT of its intent to terminate the ADT-Ring MSA, and ADT agreed to add purchases of the Ring Video Doorbell to the Authorized Amazon Reseller Sales Agreement between ADT and Amazon dated April 11, 2017 ("ADT-Amazon RSA").

23. In February of 2021, the ADT-Ring MSA was terminated, with ADT now purchasing the Ring Video Doorbell under the ADT-Amazon RSA, under which Amazon, for itself and its designated Affiliate, Ring, also agreed not to misappropriate ADT's trademarks, including ADT's Famous Blue Octagon, and not to use language or pictures which could reasonably imply any endorsement by or agency relationship with ADT.

24. In late March 2021, ADT was surprised to learn that Ring had adopted a blue octagon mark ("the Infringing Mark") that is virtually indistinguishable from ADT's Famous Blue

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