Samsung embarrassingly partners with “counterfeit” version of Supreme

reader comments

124 with 68 posters participating

Share this story

Samsung had a product launch in China earlier this week, where it seemingly announced a partnership in China with the skateboard fashion brand Supreme. Branding partnerships are usually pretty boring, but this one has some spice to it. Supreme’s CEO came up on stage at Samsung’s event, and he talked about a nebulous partnership with Samsung and an expansion into the Chinese market with a flagship store in Beijing. He then announced a runway show at the Mercedes-Benz Cultural Center in Shanghai. Then Supreme put out this statement after the event:

“Supreme is not working with Samsung, opening a flagship location in Beijing or participating in a Mercedes-Benz runway show. These claims are blatantly false and propagated by a counterfeit organization.”

Wait, what?

Apparently, as fashion site Hypebeast reports, Samsung partnered with a fake version of Supreme.

There are actually two versions of Supreme out there. The real, original Supreme brand started in New York, so it often

gets the moniker of “Supreme New York.” Supreme neglected to protect its trademark worldwide, though, which gave rise to the phenomenon of “legal fake” versions of Supreme outside the US. In Italy, a company called “International Brand Firm” trademarked Supreme’s brand and logo, creating “Supreme Italia.” Earlier this year, Supreme New York actually lost a lawsuit against Supreme Italia in the EU and was denied the ability to trademark its brand in the region.

This brings us to Samsung. The company didn’t so much as partner with a fashion brand as it joined up with a brand that rips off a fashion brand, albeit legally. So far, Samsung of China seems to be OK with this, with Leo Lau, Samsung China’s digital marketing manager, clarifying on social media (via translation), “We are collaborating with Supreme Italia, not Supreme NYC. Supreme NYC has no sales and marketing authorization in China, but Supreme Italia has obtained product sales and market authorizations in the Asia Pacific region (except Japan).”

The post has since been deleted, though, so maybe Samsung is reconsidering. It’s not a great look for Samsung, a company that has had its own issues with originality.

https://arstechnica.com/?p=1426267