

Buc-ee's enforcement strategy may be “pushing the limits of trademark law”, expert warns

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- **Buc-ee's has expanded enforcement efforts beyond beaver mascot to challenge businesses using other cartoon animals**
- **Expert warns some claims may test limits of trademark law and risk public backlash**
- **Brands pursuing aggressive enforcement told to “pick your battles” to avoid over-extending rights**

US gas and convenience store brand Buc-ee's has significantly expanded its trademark enforcement efforts in recent years, targeting a wider range of businesses and logos as it grows beyond Texas. However, some cases may be “pushing the limits of trademark law” and risk both public backlash and invalidation claims, according to one litigation expert.

Buc-ee's has historically focused enforcement on businesses using branding that it says is similar to its famous beaver logo. But recently it has extended claims to

target those using other cartoon animal mascots across a broader range of sectors, including pet-themed ventures and apparel companies.

According to [Docket Navigator data](#) analysed by WTR, Buc-ee's has brought 51 US lawsuits, opposition or cancellation proceedings since 2008, 12 of which have been filed this year.

Activity was particularly high last year, when the company initiated 19 actions – up from only two the previous year.

Enforcement beyond the beaver mascot

Buc-ee's owns two US federal registrations for the word mark BEAVER'S, [the first](#) in Class 4 for motor fuel, and [the second](#) in Class 35 for retail store services featuring convenience store items and gasoline.

It has also registered multiple variants of [its beaver logo](#), in different colours and for different uses.

While the brand has consistently enforced its beaver logo, more recent lawsuits show that it has expanded efforts to try to block other cartoon animals.

In November 2024, Buc-ee's sued Missouri liquor retailer Duckees, alleging that its duck logo adopted core elements of the Buc-ee's brand – namely, a smiling cartoon animal in a yellow circle. The case settled in April 2025.

In January 2025, Buc-ee's sued North Texas gas station operator Super Fuels, alleging that its logo, which featured a smiling cartoon dog in a red cape, was confusingly similar to the Buc-ee's mascot.

Buc-ee's also brought a federal lawsuit against Teddy's Market in Georgia in May 2026, over its use of a cartoon bear to promote convenience stores and fuel services, following a TTAB opposition the year prior.

Some cases have generated criticism, though.

Buc-ee's received considerable backlash when it sued Ohio convenience-store chain Mickey's, claiming that its rebrand, which adopted a smiling cartoon moose, infringed its trademark rights.

It was similarly criticised for a Missouri lawsuit in 2025, which challenged roadside attraction stop Barc-ee's over its name, cartoon dog mascot, yellow-and-red branding and use of a circular logo.

Barc-ee's [reportedly](#) removed the signage, planned a rebrand and later ceased operations.

Most recently, Buc-ee's made headlines for suing Beaver's Mini Mart, a family-owned convenience store in Beavercreek, Ohio, claiming that its use of the name BEAVER'S, smiling cartoon beaver logo, and prominent red branding infringed its trademark rights and created a likelihood of confusion among consumers.

The lawsuit sparked local fundraising campaigns for the Mini Mart, criticism from community leaders and national media coverage. The beaver has now been made the [official town mascot](#), in direct response to the lawsuit.

WTR contacted Buc-ee's about its enforcement strategy but has not yet received a response.

“Pushing the limits” of trademark law

Buc-ee's has every right to enforce its trademarks, especially as it expands beyond Texas. Consistent enforcement helps to prevent consumer confusion, protects brand value and goodwill, and avoids weakening the distinctiveness of rights over time.

However, [Darius Gambino](#), partner at Saul Ewing, warns that while Buc-ee's has brought legitimate claims, other cases raise more difficult questions.

“The strategy of going after every cartoon animal that is the logo for a convenience store is aggressive,” Gambino states. While he acknowledges the commercial logic – after all, if successful, the campaign could discourage competitors from adopting cartoon animal branding altogether – he questions whether trademark law is intended to be used in this way.

“They're forcing people further and further away from their brand [but] the question is, ‘is what they're doing a legitimate extension of trademark law?’”, he asks.

The Beaver's Mini Mart case in particular “is interesting to a lot of people because it is pushing the limits of trademark law”, he claims, expanding that Buc-ee's may be asserting rights where there is no overlap in commerce.

In particular, Gambino questions whether Buc-ee's is enforcing its beaver marks beyond fuel sales.

Enforcing rights so forcefully that any competitor in the convenience store space may be “afraid” to use cartoon animal branding is not “what trademark law intended”, Gambino argues.

Buc-ee's is acting within the scope of its nationwide rights by enforcing its marks in Ohio, he acknowledges, but the question becomes “is there a reasonable likelihood of confusion?”

That is where Buc-ee's may be "starting to push the boundaries", Gambino suggests, by asserting rights in cases where there may be no reasonable likelihood of confusion.

Risk of over-extension

Gambino also cautions that an aggressive enforcement strategy can put trademarks at risk by potentially over-extending the remit of their protection.

"You are putting your trademarks up to be invalidated by asserting rights that are potentially broader than what you actually have," he poses.

In the Beaver's Mini Mart dispute, he argues that Buc-ee's registrations may be narrower than the claims being advanced.

The BEAVER'S word mark registrations are "very limited" to fuel, Gambino says. "If you're trying to assert those against people that aren't providing fuel, you're potentially putting your registration up to be contested," he warns.

If the dispute ultimately centres on whether consumers are likely to confuse two businesses using a beaver image, Gambino believes that Buc-ee's faces a more difficult argument.

That "could be considered a stretch of their trademark rights", Gambino argues.

"Pick your battles"

The key to a successful, aggressive enforcement strategy that doesn't cross the line into over-extension is knowing when to "pick your battles", Gambino urges.

"You have to strike a balance between encouraging your fans to interact with your brand and protecting your trademark rights, and it's not always easy to determine where that line is," he adds.

"It's a balancing act for every brand... but I do think it's a little but harder in this [convenience store] space."

In the convenience store sector, branding often revolves around a "character" on a logo, Gambino explains, and consumers can be devoted "fans" of both a store and its mascot.

"There are only so many ways that you can express those different characters," he continues.

For example, many fried chicken franchises in the United States incorporate a chicken as part of their logo. While there are numerous ways to represent the animal without infringing trademark rights, doing so requires creativity.

“It just takes a little bit more creativity in the creation of your brand, which is always a good idea to have a brand that's different than everyone else's,” Gambino poses.

This brand and character recognition becomes even more important when expanding the business. Consumers often seek out a familiar, trusted store when travelling in a new state, so being “a little bit more protective” of the brand is important, Gambino notes, but becoming “hyper aggressive” can create risks.

For now, Buc-ee’s can afford to take a more aggressive approach, because it “may not drive away their biggest fans”, Gambino believes.

“But I wouldn't push it too far because now... you’re starting to see some of the backlash.”



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