



AMERICAN PHILATELIC SOCIETY

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22 September 2023

Mr. John Hegeman
Vice President and Head of Monetization
Meta
1 Hacker Way
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Dear Mr. Hegeman,

I was recently alerted to a paid advertisement on Facebook for Flowers Postage Stamps (enclosed). The ad uses an image from a first day of issue ceremony for the Life Magnified Forever stamps held at the Great American Stamp Show in Cleveland, Ohio.

The photograph includes Mr. Kenneth P. Martin, Director of Expertizing, and me. We did not permit Flowers Postage Stamps to use our likenesses in its advertising and demand Meta remove its use and punish this user under its guidelines.

The actual harm in using our likenesses is that Flowers Postage Stamps is advertising counterfeit U.S. stamps and using Facebook to promote this illicit trade. Flowers Postage Stamps is just one example of a myriad of fly-by-night businesses using Meta platforms to advertise the sale of counterfeit U.S. stamps under the guise of substantially discounted postage.

The average consumer cannot differentiate between genuine and counterfeit modern U.S. postage without training and special equipment. Instead, they hope and trust that platforms like Facebook or Instagram properly vet their advertisers to protect the consumer. Unfortunately, you do not, and we all suffer as a consequence.

The U.S. Postal Service estimates it seized \$7.8 billion in counterfeit postage in fiscal year 2022. The USPS has also undertaken additional methods to reduce the number of counterfeit stamps submitted for delivery substantially. However, we believe eCommerce platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, can make a significant difference in the proliferation of these stamps into the marketplace.

A simple review of Flowers Postage Stamps' Facebook business page raises some red flags. For instance, the business address is a local USPS post office in Arlington, VA. The page owner posted three successive posts and then did nothing else. While

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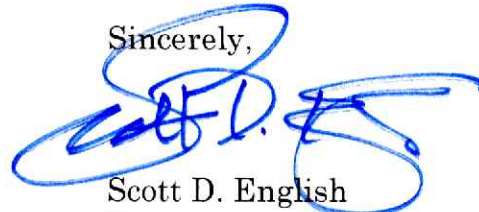
I don't know what is required to advertise through Meta, I hope it's more than just a handful of Facebook posts and a bogus address.

Millions of users rely on your products to connect, and thousands of real small businesses use your platforms to communicate with consumers. Each bogus business affects not only the consumer but also the legitimate business owners earnestly growing their customer base.

We urge Meta to lead by example and aggressively combat counterfeit U.S. postage sold through paid advertising on your platforms. The American Philatelic Society can and will work with you or any other eCommerce platform to better serve the marketplace.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter, and we hope you will join us in this mission to better protect stamp buyers everywhere.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Scott D. English", with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Scott D. English
Executive Director

Enclosure



Flowers Postage Stamps

Sponsored · 🌐



🌸 September Flash Sale 🌸 - Forever stamps on sale. ❤️🤩 Don't miss it

