

Brands, Political Brands and Donald Trump

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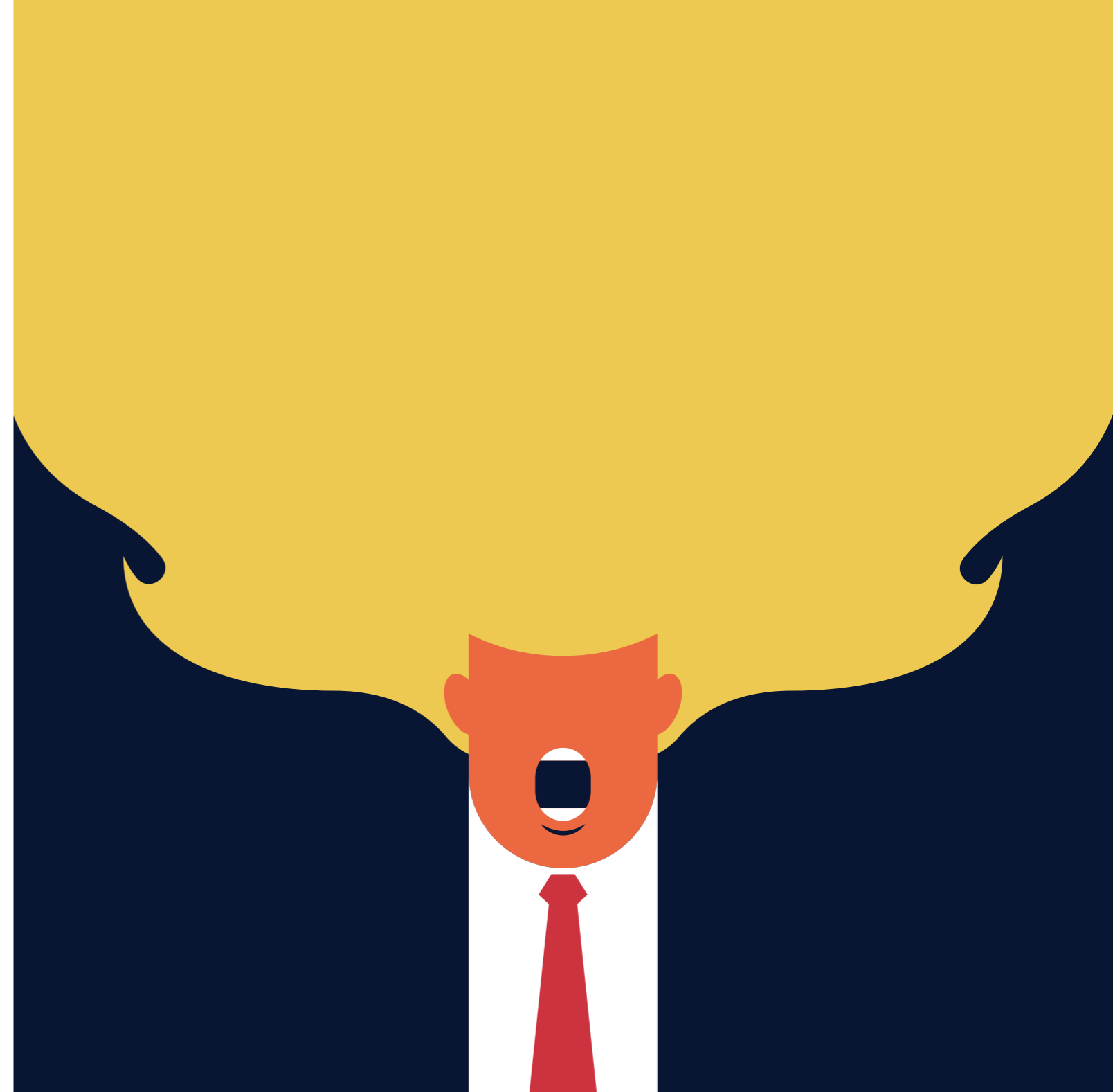
'Brands, Political Brands and Donald Trump' is, in my view, a good read for trade mark practitioners. It comprises a number of short articles which were published in Forbes magazine, and each chapter is concerned with a particular political brand, or a point relating to branding and trade marks. I found some of the points raised were quite thought provoking, particularly for someone interested in branding and trade mark reputation.

The author is an IP attorney who has his own practice in Upstate New York, Collen IP, and

who has been in practice now for over thirty-five years. Jess often lectures on trade mark issues.

A number of the chapters deal with well-known brands in the US political field, such as Kennedy, Bush, Clinton and then Trump, particularly where there is a family dynasty known under that particular name. I had not really equated the family name of a politician with a trade mark until I read this book, but can quite see that the philosophy behind trade marks, such as the reputation of a name, and the 'same again' principle of

quality, would relate in the same way as it would to products. Obviously, things moved on somewhat with the Trump brand, which has been used and is still being used, in connection with a number of other fields, such as hotels and golf courses, wines, and, even at one stage, with an educational establishment. There are now a very large number of Trump trade mark registrations in the US, some owned by Donald Trump, or his companies, his wife, or even Ivanka Trump. Clearly a family name with a 'good reputation' would help further candidates



from that family standing for political election, but it could be said that not such a good reputation could be a hindrance for others coming along later. In addition, I have heard it said that too many people moving into politics with the same family name can lead to almost a concern or a suspicion that it is not so much the skills of those politicians, or hopeful politicians, than the reputation of the family legacy name which is more important.

There are some chapters in this book which are interesting to trade mark practitioners

by way of background, such as those relating to marks like Facebook or Jack Daniels, or even trade marks owned by the Vatican (something I had not realised). There is a chapter on rebranding, such as Kraft becoming Mondelez, and the thinking behind that change, and the change of e.g. Tesla Motors to Tesla (because of diversification of interests). What about when the name of a politician becomes the name of a particular initiative, such as Obamacare? The success or not of that initiative can impact on the family name reputation later on.

Finally we come to some discussions on the Trump name. I think there is no doubt that the reputation of that name is, at present, being discussed constantly and it remains to be seen what the long-term impact will be on how that name is remembered – a successful brand or not?

I would recommend this as a thought provoking read for members of our profession!«