

Delhi High Court Rejects Volkswagen's Opposition to "TRANSFORMOTION" Mark

In *Volkswagen AG v. The Registrar of Trade Marks & Anr.* (2026:DHC:2029), the Delhi High Court upheld the decision of the Registrar of Trade Marks dismissing Volkswagen's opposition to Maruti Suzuki's trademark application for "TRANSFORMOTION", finding no likelihood of confusion with Volkswagen's "4MOTION" mark.

Volkswagen opposed the mark on the ground of deceptive similarity, asserting that "TRANSFORMOTION" infringed its registered trademark "4MOTION." However, the Court found that the rival marks were visually, phonetically, and conceptually distinct. It noted that Volkswagen's mark begins with the numeral "4," whereas Maruti's mark incorporates the prefix "TRANS," resulting in a markedly different structure, pronunciation, and overall impression.

The Court also accepted Maruti's submission that the term "MOTION" is common to the automobile industry, and that "TRANSFORMOTION" is a wordplay on "transformation," further distinguishing it from Volkswagen's mark, which is associated with its four-wheel drive technology.

Importantly, the Court emphasised that automobiles are high value products purchased after careful consideration, thereby reducing the



likelihood of consumer confusion. It also noted that both parties enjoy substantial and independent goodwill in the market.

Accordingly, the Court held that there was no deceptive similarity between the marks and declined to interfere with the registration of “TRANSFORMATION”.

Key takeaway: Trademark protection does not extend to common or industry descriptive elements. Courts assess marks holistically, and in markets involving informed consumers, minor similarities are unlikely to establish confusion.



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