



Media Contact:

Andrew Africk
Braithwaite Communications
215-564-3200 x 120
aafrick@gobraithwaite.com

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Nothing Like the Real Thing: 1 in 5 Americans Believe The Quality of Counterfeit Products Is Often the Same as Real Products

*Golf Anti-Counterfeiting Group's Survey Identifies Key Gaps
In the Public's Perception of Counterfeits*

PHILADELPHIA, PA – November 1, 2016 – An alarming 1 in 5 Americans (22 percent) said they believe the quality of counterfeit products is often the same as the quality of the real products, according to a recent survey conducted online by Harris Poll on behalf of The U.S. Golf Manufacturers Anti-Counterfeiting Working Group (The Golf Group). This despite the fact that there is no way to verify the quality of the process or materials used to make counterfeit products. Made up of four of the world's largest golf manufacturers, The Golf Group works to mitigate the risk of counterfeit golf products to consumers by stopping the spread of counterfeits throughout the world. The survey highlighted several key gaps in Americans' perception of counterfeit products in the golf world and beyond.

The gaps were magnified among younger Americans and in the golf industry. Twenty-nine percent of Millennials (ages 18-34) and 26 percent of those aged 35-44 said that counterfeits are often the same quality as the real products. Furthermore, only 58 percent of Americans said they believe golf products are counterfeited frequently – compared to 86 percent that said they believe fashion products are counterfeited frequently.

“A lot of people feel like they're saving money or getting a high-quality product at a discount when they buy a counterfeit, but counterfeit products that have a utility simply don't perform at the same level or for the same amount of time as the real products,” said Rawleigh Grove, Vice President and General Counsel for PING. “Real golf clubs, in particular, are built to last. Counterfeits, on the other hand, aren't manufactured under the same quality control standards. We've heard many stories of counterfeit clubs breaking after one round. There's not much savings in that scenario.”

The Office for Economic Co-operation and Development estimates that counterfeit products across all industries cost the world approximately \$250 billion each year¹. Within the golf industry, millions of counterfeit golf clubs, balls, bags, hats, etc. are produced each year.

“We're thrilled about the growing awareness of golf's counterfeiting problem, but we know that there's room for improvement and the group is working hard to get there,” said Brian Lynch, Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary for

Callaway Golf. “We will continue to devote resources to help close the gap in the public’s knowledge of counterfeit products. As people become more aware of the problem, they will know how to spot the telltale signs of these illegal operations and consequently stop buying counterfeit products.”

In the September 2016 survey of 2,080 Americans, The Golf Group found several concerning developments about the opinions of Americans toward counterfeit products:

- **Money Matters More** – While the vast majority of Americans (77 percent) said that they believe buying known counterfeits is unethical, almost 1 in 3 (29 percent) said they would consider purchasing counterfeit products if it saves them money.
- **Millennials Miss the Message** – Millennials are more likely than those aged 45 and older to admit they would consider purchasing counterfeit products if it saves them money – 39 percent of Millennials say they would consider it, compared to 22 percent of those 45 and older
- **Looks Make an Impression** – About one quarter of Americans (24%) said they don’t care if a product they purchased is counterfeit as long as it looks like the real thing.

To further help consumers bridge the awareness gap about counterfeit products and their inherent risks, The Golf Group will publish and distribute the “Golf Anti-Counterfeiting Primer” at the 2017 PGA Merchandise Show in January. The primer will contain information and unique graphics to help inform golf club pros and golfers about the risks associated with buying counterfeit products, or buying from unauthorized retailers. Those materials will also be found at www.keepgolfreal.com.

Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Poll on behalf of The U.S. Golf Manufacturers Anti-Counterfeiting Working Group from September 13-15, 2016 among 2,080 adults ages 18 and older. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. For complete survey methodology, including weighting variables, please contact aafrick@gobraithwaite.com.

About The U.S. Golf Manufacturers Anti-Counterfeiting Working Group

The Golf Anti-Counterfeiting Group consists of four of the most well-known golf companies in the world—Acushnet Company, whose brands are Titleist, FootJoy and Scotty Cameron; Callaway-Odyssey; Srixon, Cleveland Golf and XXIO; and PING. Formed in 2004, the Golf Anti-Counterfeiting Group has supported the efforts of international law enforcement and government agencies to conduct raids and investigations of counterfeit operations, as well as raise public awareness of the issue. Since its inception, the Golf Group’s efforts led to the shutdown of more than 1,500 websites and authorities have seized nearly two million counterfeit golf products – highlighted by a clustering campaign initiative resulting in the arrest of more than 40 suspects from raids of 21 different locations.



U.S. GOLF MANUFACTURERS
ANTI-COUNTERFEITING WORKING GROUP

ⁱ OECD, Magnitude of Counterfeiting and Piracy of Tangible Products: An Update (2009). <http://www.oecd.org/industry/ind/44088872.pdf>