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MAR 30 2011

John A. Clarke, Executive Officer/Clerk

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – CENTRAL DISTRICT

BRAND SENSE PARTNERS, LLC, a California limited liability company,

Plaintiff.

BRITNEY SPEARS, an individual; BRITNEY BRANDS, INC., a Louisiana corporation; JAMIE SPEARS, an individual; and DOES, through 50,

Defendants.

CASE NO.

BC458461

COMPLAINT FOR:

- (1) BREACH OF CONTRACT;
- (2) FRAUD AND DECEIT;
- (3) RESCISSION:
- (4) DECLARATORY RELIEF; AND
- (5) COMPENSATORY AND PUNITIVE DAMAGES.

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Filing Date:

Trial Date:

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This case arises out of Defendants' blatant circumvention and violation of their 1. contractual obligations, and their fraudulent, deceitful and dishonest representations and course of conduct.

2. In 2003, Plaintiff Brand Sense Partners, LLC, then known as Brand Sense Marketing, LLC, ("Brand Sense") and Defendant Britney Brands, Inc. ("Britney") entered into an agreement, pursuant to which Brand Sense develops brand licensing opportunities for musical artist Britney Spears in exchange for a commission on the revenues for Britney Spears-branded "licensed products."

In 2004, Brand Sense identified and implemented a lucrative brand licensing deal for 3. Britney with the cosmetics manufacturer Elizabeth Arden, Inc. ("Elizabeth Arden"). That deal provides for the sale of Britney Spears-branded licensed products, including fragrance.

Per the terms of the parties' agreement, Brand Sense is contractually entitled to a 35% commission on any Britney Spears-branded fragrance sold by Elizabeth Arden.

In 2005, following the Elizabeth Arden agreement, Brand Sense and Britney executed an addendum to their initial agreement, which amended the initial agreement's definition of "Licensed Products" and expressly confirmed Brand Sense's right to receive commissions on "any and all products produced under [the Elizabeth Arden Agreement] including, without limitation, fragrance and related ancillary products . . . , "

By agreeing to a new definition of Licensed Products referring specifically to 6. products under the Elizabeth Arden agreement, Brand Sense gave up substantial rights to royalties for various other categories of products included in the initial agreement's definition of Licensed Products. The original definition more broadly covered categories such as apparel, collectibles, consumer electronics, gifts and novelties, headwear, housewares, publishing, stationery, toys and games and other categories to be further defined. ///

COMPLAINT

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- 7. Thereafter, Britney and Brand Sense earned substantial revenues from the sale of Britney-branded fragrance. But in early 2010, Defendants sought to renege on their agreement and evade their contractual obligations.
- 8. In or about early 2010, Britney contacted Elizabeth Arden, unbeknownst to Brand Sense, and instructed Elizabeth Arden to send all royalties directly to Britney. This was in breach of the parties' agreement, which provides that Brand Sense is to receive all royalties from Elizabeth Arden directly, deduct its commission and then forward the balance to Britney.
- Upon learning of this, Brand Sense contacted Britney and demanded that it immediately cure the breach. Caught red-handed, Defendant Jamie Spears, acting on behalf of Ms. Spears and Britney, acknowledged Britney's agreement with Brand Sense and that Brand Sense had a contractual right to a 35% commission on any Britney Spears-branded fragrance sold by Elizabeth Arden. But Mr. Spears complained that the commission was too high and said that Britney did not want to pay it.
- In a discussion with representatives of Brand Sense, Jamie Spears asked that the agreement be modified so that Elizabeth Arden would remit Britney's share of the royalties directly to Britney (instead of remitting all sums to Brand Sense, who would then remit Britney its remaining 65% share, per the terms of the original agreement) and that Elizabeth Arden would remit the Brand Sense share directly to Brand Sense.
- Brand Sense agreed to this modification, which was confirmed by way of a letter from Britney's attorney dated April 28, 2010. The request for modification and the representations by Mr. Spears were a ruse and cover up for Defendants' fraudulent scheme, as set forth below.
- 12. Unbeknownst to Brand Sense, Defendants had caused Britney to enter into a "new" agreement, effective as of January 1, 2010, with Elizabeth Arden for licensing fragrance. They did this even though the Brand Sense/Britney agreement was—and is—in full force and effect and applicable to the same products—fragrance.
- 13. By their "new" agreement, Defendants circumvented and repudiated the very agreement they had affirmed and represented to Brand Sense to be in effect. Defendants' scheme was to induce Brand Sense to step out of the accounting/payment process, so they could covertly

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enter into, and get paid under, a "new" agreement with Elizabeth Arden; and Brand Sense would not know the difference.

- Brand Sense dated February 16, 2011 enclosing a revised royalty report "excluding the Radiance [fragrance] brand in compliance with the *new* license agreement effective January 1, 2010" (emphasis added). Britney knew that the Radiance brand and all future fragrance brands were and are included under the parties' agreements. Brand Sense had already been paid commissions on Radiance in 2010 up and until Britney's attempt to back out of that agreement in 2011 through its secret "New" deal with Elizabeth Arden.
- Arden, are covered by the Brand Sense/Britney agreement and addendum thereto, and are therefore subject to the commission provided therein. Accordingly, the "new" purported licensing agreement between Britney and Elizabeth Arden is of no force or effect, is null and void, and Brand Sense is entitled to its commission on all Britney-branded fragrance, etc. sold by Elizabeth Arden.
- 16. As evidenced by the "new" agreement with Elizabeth Arden, and the inclusion of Radiance therein, Britney secretly made a separate deal with Elizabeth Arden in a sneaky underhanded effort to circumvent and evade its obligations to Brand Sense. Effectively, Britney improperly and illegally cut Brand Sense out of the Elizabeth Arden deal.
- 17. The "new" contract between Britney and Elizabeth Arden was and is a violation and repudiation of the parties' agreements, which cover the sale of any fragrance by Elizabeth Arden. It is also a fraud.
- 18. Britney's affirmative misrepresentations, concealment and evasive actions are disappointing because Brand Sense has been a successful and dedicated representative for Britney throughout multiple management changes and other difficulties experienced by Ms. Spears.
- Brand Sense's efforts generated millions of dollars in revenue for Ms. Spears when she otherwise would have had little or none. Brand Sense performed under its agreements with Britney to protect the value of the Britney brands, only to be lied to and deceived by Ms. Spears and/or her representatives.

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- As a result of Defendants' breach of contract and fraudulent conduct, Brand Sense 20. has suffered consequential and incidental damages believed to be in excess of \$10 million. Plaintiff seeks recovery of these damages, as well as punitive damages based on the wanton, willful and oppressive nature of Defendants' conduct.
- Brand Sense also seeks rescission of the modification agreement between the parties, 21. pursuant to which Britney currently receives its royalties directly from Elizabeth Arden, and a judicial declaration that Britney is obliged to pay Brand Sense a 35% commission on any Britneybranded fragrance sold by Elizabeth Arden, including without limitation "Radiance."

THE PARTIES

- Plaintiff Brand Sense is a California limited liability company whose principal place 22. of business is located in Los Angeles, California.
- Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that Defendant Britney is a 23. Louisiana corporation whose principal place of business is in Los Angeles County, California.
- Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, Defendant Britney Spears is an 24. individual residing in the State of California, County of Los Angeles.
- Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, Defendant Jamie Spears is an 25. individual residing in the State of California, County of Los Angeles.
- Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that at all times relevant for 26. purposes of this Complaint, Defendant Jamie Spears was an agent acting at the instruction, on behalf and for the benefit of his principals, Britney Spears and Britney, the company she owns and controls.
- 27. The true names and capacities of the defendants sued herein as Does 1 through 50, inclusive, are not known to Plaintiff, and therefore Plaintiff sues said defendants by such fictitious names. Plaintiff will amend this Complaint to allege their true names and capacities when the same are ascertained.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

28. The Court has jurisdiction in this matter because the agreements at issue were entered into in Los Angeles County and were to be performed in Los Angeles County. The amount in controversy exceeds the jurisdictional minimum of this Court.

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29. Venue is proper in this Court because the agreement at issue in this dispute was entered into in this judicial district; and the agreement contains a choice of law/venue provision which provides that the courts of Los Angeles, California shall have exclusive jurisdiction and venue with respect to any disputes.

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

The Brand Sense/Britney Agreement

- 30. Brand Sense is in the business of acquiring and developing brands. Brand Sense serves and assists a wide range of chents, including some of the most prominent names in the entertainment industry, in promoting and realizing the value of their brands.
- 31. Britney Spears is one of the most popular singers and performers of her generation and the owner of Britney Brands. Ms. Spears and her father, Jamie Spears, who is the conservator of Ms. Spears' financial affairs, understood that Brand Sense could help Britney capitalize on the popularity and appeal of the Britney Spears brand.
- 32. On September 19, 2003, Ms. Spears, signing on behalf of Britney which she owns and controls, entered into a licensing development agreement with Brand Sense, pursuant to which Brand Sense would develop and implement a licensing strategy for Britney. See Term Sheet for Licensing Representation between Britney and Brand Sense (hereinafter the "Brand Sense/Britney Agreement"), a true and correct copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A.
- 33. Under the Brand Sense/Britney Agreement, Brand Sense has the right to "manage, invoice and collect all third party licensing proceeds" from any licensing contract entered into between Britney Brands and any third party. (Id. at 1.) Brand Sense is entitled to keep 25-35% of licensing proceeds (depending on the type of product) and remit the remainder to Britney. (Id.)
- 34. The term "Licensed Products" under the Brand Sense/Britney Agreement was broadly defined to include the following categories: "Accessories, Apparel, Collectibles, Consumer Electronics, Gifts/Novelties, Headwear, Health/Beauty, Housewares, Publishing, Stationery/Gifts, Toys/Games, or other categories of products to be further defined (Id. at 3.)
- 35. The Brand Sense/Britney Agreement includes a "Survival Rights" clause, which provides that except for termination attributed to Brand Sense's breach, Brand Sense shall continue

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to receive its Fees for any sub-license initiated under the Brand Sense/Britney Agreement and "such rights shall survive termination or expiration of this Agreement." (Id. at 4.)

The Elizabeth Arden Agreement

- 36. Brand Sense performed diligently for Britney and formulated and implemented a licensing strategy. Among other things, it established a relationship with the cosmetics, skincare and fragrance manufacturer and distributor Elizabeth Arden, who was interested in licensing the Britney brand for its products.
- 37. On February 3, 2004, Britney entered into a licensing contract with Elizabeth Arden wherein Elizabeth Arden obtained the exclusive right to manufacture and sell fragrance, cosmetics and skin treatments under the Britney Spears brand.
- 38. The agreement with Elizabeth Arden was drafted on the letterhead of Brand Sense.

 See Term Sheet between Britney and Elizabeth Arden (hereinafter the "Elizabeth Arden

 Agreement"), a true and correct copy of which is attached as Exhibit B, at 1. It is referred to by the contractual parties as the "Brand Sense Marketing Term Sheet,"
- 39. Brand Sense was responsible for establishing this relationship between Elizabeth Arden and Britney. Brand Sense spent substantial time and effort working on the development of Britney's products pursuant to the Elizabeth Arden Agreement.
- 40. The Elizabeth Arden Agreement is highly lucrative for Ms. Spears and provides for a royalty and minimum guarantee of over \$15 million. (Id. at 4).
- 41. Per the terms of the Brand Sense/Britney Agreement, Brand Sense obtained the right to receive all payments due under the Elizabeth Arden Agreement, including a 35% commission on the sale of fragrance.

The Brand Sense/Britney Addendum

42. In light of the Elizabeth Arden Agreement, in May 2005 the parties executed an addendum to the Brand Sense/Britney Agreement. See "First Addendum to the Term Sheet for Licensing and Representation" (hereinafter the "Brand Sense/Britney Addendum"), a true and correct copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit C.

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- 43. The Brand Sense/Britney Addendum defines Brand Sense's right to receive commissions on "Licensed Products," amended to include "any and all products produced under [the Elizabeth Arden Agreement] including, without limitation, fragrance and related ancillary products; hair, face, skin and body care; bath; and cosmetics." (Id. at 1.)
- This new definition of Licensed Product is more restrictive than that of the initial 44. agreement. By agreeing to a new definition of Licensed Products referring only to fragrance and other related products under the Elizabeth Arden agreement, Brand Sense gave up valuable rights to royalties for various other categories of products included in the initial agreement's definition of "Licensed Products."
- The Brand Sense/Britney Addendum further states: "For avoidance of doubt, [Brand 45. Sense's] management, invoicing, collection and reporting of third party licensing proceeds from the Elizabeth Arden, Inc. agreement shall survive expiration or termination of the [Brand Sense/Britney Agreement] and shall continue for the duration of that license agreement, including renewed extensions, additions or modifications." (Id.)
- Thus, Brand Sense has the right to receive all payments due under the Elizabeth 46. Arden Agreement for as long as any Licensed Products—defined to include fragrance—are sold. Defendants' Initial Breach
- In early 2010, Brand Sense learned that Britney Brands' representatives had contacted 47. Elizabeth Arden and instructed Elizabeth Arden to stop sending payments and product approvals to Brand Sense. This was a breach and repudiation of the Brand Sense/Britney Agreement.
- Upon learning of Britney Brands' instructions to Elizabeth Arden, Brand Sense 48. contacted Britney and demanded compliance with the terms of the Brand Sense/Britney Agreement. A phone call was arranged between Defendant Jamie Spears, acting on behalf of Ms. Spears and Britney Brands, and a representative of Brand Sense.
- In that phone call, Mr. Spears agreed that Britney would retract its prior instruction to 49. Elizabeth Arden and acknowledged and agreed that the Brand Sense/Britney Agreement was in effect, including the provision pursuant to which Brand Sense would receive its 35% commission on fragrance sold by Elizabeth Arden

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- 50. Mr. Spears represented that Britney would continue to abide by the terms of the Brand Sense/Britney Brands Agreement, but requested in return a change in the parties' agreement.
- Mr. Spears made these representations to induce a modification in the Brand 51. Sense/Britney Brands Agreement whereby Elizabeth Arden would send Britney's share of royalties directly to Britney, rather than to Brand Sense first, so as to remove Brand Sense from the accounting/payment function it previously had performed.
- Upon information and belief, Mr. Spears had no intention to continue honoring the 52. terms of the Brand Sense/Britney Agreement and was concealing his plan to circumvent the Brand Sense/Britney Agreement entirely. In fact, as later revealed, Britney Brands secretly entered into a separate "new" license agreement with Elizabeth Arden effective January 1, 2010, undermining the parties' agreement.
- Reasonably relying on Mr. Spears' representations, Brand Sense agreed to the 53. modification of the Brand Sense/Britney Agreement whereby Elizabeth Arden would send royalties directly to Britney (the "Modification Agreement"). A true and correct copy of a letter from Britney's attorney dated April 28, 2010 confirming the Modification Agreement is attached hereto as Exhibit D. With this modification, Brand Sense effectively ceded control over the flow of money, not knowing that Defendants would exploit this arrangement to their advantage.

Britney's Clandestine Circumvention

- In February of 2011, Brand Sense received a letter from Elizabeth Arden purporting to call Brand Sense's attention to a "clerical error" in the commission calculations for Brand Sense. Elizabeth Arden reported that Brand Sense's commission for the prior quarter had been reduced to "exclude the Radiance brand in compliance with the new license agreement effective January 1, 2010" (emphasis added).
- Brand Sense had not been informed of, and was not aware of, any "new" license 55. agreement. Britney had been concealing these arrangements from Brand Sense for months.
- The "new" license agreement is a blatant circumvention and violation of the Brand 56. Sense/Britney Agreement and Addendum. As set forth above, those agreements provide that Brand Sense is entitled to its 35% commission on the sales of any Elizabeth Arden product including,

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without limitation, fragrance; and this commission survives the expiration or termination of the Elizabeth Arden Agreement.

- 57. Britney cannot circumvent its agreement with Brand Sense by purporting to enter a new agreement directly with Elizabeth Arden that addresses a product already covered and provided for in the Brand Sense/Britney agreement. Britney's "new" agreement with Elizabeth Arden is a direct and complete repudiation of its obligations under the Brand Sense/Britney Agreements.
- As a result of Defendants' breach of their contractual duties, Brand Sense has been denied the Radiance commissions to which it is entitled, and suffered compensatory, consequential and incidental damages believed to be in excess of \$10 million. Furthermore, Defendants' misrepresentations and concealment were intentional, fraudulent and oppressive, such that a reward of punitive damages, in addition to actual damages, is justified.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

(Breach of Contract)

(Against Defendant Britney)

- 59. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates herein by reference each of the foregoing paragraphs and each of the subsequent paragraphs, and further alleges as follows:
- Sense/Britney Agreement, and a written addendum to that agreement, Brand Sense/Britney
 Addendum (together, the "Agreements"). Pursuant to the Agreements, Brand Sense was given the exclusive, worldwide right to use, exploit, or otherwise publish Britney Brands' Licensed Materials, including the Britney Spears name and logo, for the purpose of soliciting third-party licenses.
- 61. Also under the Agreements, Plaintiff was and is entitled to receive a 25-35% commission on the net revenues of any third-party license initiated by Plaintiff, including a 35% commission on the sale of any fragrance by a third-party license initiated by Plaintiff..
- 62. Plaintiff initiated and implemented a third-party license with Elizabeth Arden to sell fragrance, cosmetics and skin treatments under the Britney Spears name. Under the terms of the Agreements, Britney Brands was and is obliged to pay Plaintiff a 35% commission on the net revenues of any fragrance sold by Elizabeth Arden.

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- Britney Brands committed a material breach of the Agreements when it entered into a 63. "new" licensing agreement with Elizabeth Arden for the fragrance "Radiance" and instructed Elizabeth Arden to cease paying commissions to Plaintiff on the sales of "Radiance." Britney's "new" license agreement with and instructions to Elizabeth Arden are a repudiation of Britney's obligations under its pre-existing agreements with Brand Sense.
- Plaintiff has performed its obligations pursuant to the Agreements, except those 64. otherwise excused by Britney's material breach of contract.
- As a direct and proximate result of Britney's breach, Brand Sense has not received 65. the benefit of its bargain and has suffered damages, and will continue to suffer damages, in excess of \$10 million or according to proof at trial.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION

(Fraud and Deceit)

(Against Defendants Jamie and Britney Spears)

- Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates herein by reference each of the foregoing 66. paragraphs and each of the subsequent paragraphs, and further alleges as follows:
- In or about April 2010, Plaintiff and Defendants entered into an agreement whereby the Brand Sense/Britney Brands Agreement was modified to allow Elizabeth Arden to send payments directly to Britney, rather than to and through Brand Sense, as provided under the terms of the Brand Sense/Britney Brands Agreement.
- To induce the modification, Defendant Britney Spears, acting by and through her 68. representative Jamie Spears, represented that Defendants would abide by the terms of the Brand Sense/Britney Brands Agreement, including its terms requiring payment of a 35% commission to Plaintiff on any sales of licensed products under the Elizabeth Arden Agreement.
- 69. When Defendants, and each of them, made these representations, they knew them to be false. Defendants made such misrepresentations and failed to disclose material facts with the intent to deceive Plaintiff and induce it into entering into the modification.

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- 70. At the time of these representations, Plaintiff was ignorant of their falsity and believed them to be true. In justifiable reliance thereon, Plaintiff was induced to, and did, enter into the modification.
- As a direct and proximate result of the malicious, deceitful, deliberate, willful and fraudulent conduct of Defendants, and each of them, as herein alleged, Plaintiff has incurred, and will incur further general, consequential and incidental damages, the exact amount of which is unknown at the present time, but is believed to be in excess of \$10 million.
- 72. The conduct of Defendants alleged above was undertaken with the intent to injure Plaintiff, or with a willful and conscious disregard of Plaintiff's rights, and constitutes clear and convincing evidence of outrageous, oppressive, malicious, and fraudulent conduct that entitles Plaintiff to an award of punitive damages against Defendants, and each of them, in an amount sufficient to deter Defendants and other similarly situated from similar wrongful conduct in the future.

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

(Rescission)

(Against Defendant Britney)

- 73. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates herein by reference each of the foregoing paragraphs and each of the subsequent paragraphs, and further alleges as follows:
- 74. Pursuant to section 1689 of the Civil Code, a contract may be rescinded "[i]f the consent of the party rescinding, or of any party jointly contracting with him, was . . . obtained through duress, menace, fraud or undue influence" Civ. Code § 1689, subd. (b)(1).
- 75. At the time Plaintiff entered into the modification, it relied on Defendants' representations that they intended to and would perform their duties and obligations under the Agreements. At the time Defendants entered into the modification, they never intended to fully perform their duties and obligations under the Agreements.
- 76. Had Plaintiff known that Defendants never intended to fully perform under the Agreements, it would not have entered into the modification. Plaintiff will suffer substantial harm and injury if the modification is not rescinded.

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- 77: Plaintiff intends service of this Complaint in this action to serve as notice of the rescission of the modification and hereby demands that Defendants instruct Elizabeth Arden to direct royalty payments directly to Plaintiff, per the original terms of the Brand Sense/Britney Brands Agreement.
- 78. Plaintiff seeks a judicial declaration that the modification is rescinded and all royalties from Elizabeth Arden are to be sent first directly to Brand Sense, per the terms of the original Brand Sense/Britney Agreement.

FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Declaratory Relief)

(Against Defendant Britney Brands)

- 79. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates herein by reference each of the foregoing paragraphs and each of the subsequent paragraphs, and further alleges as follows:
- 80. An actual controversy has arisen and now exists between Plaintiff and the Defendants over the right to future payments under the Agreements.
- Plaintiff contends that under the Agreements, Britney was and is obliged to pay Plaintiff a 35% commission on any fragrance sold by Elizabeth Arden, including "Radiance," as provided therein. Plaintiff is informed and believes that Britney disputes this contention.
- 82. A judicial declaration is necessary and appropriate at this time to the effect that Brand Sense has the right to receive the aforementioned commission due under the Agreements; and further, that the "new" agreement between Defendants, or any of them, and Elizabeth Arden is null and void.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays that this Court enter a judgment against Defendants as follows:

- 1. For compensatory damages in an amount to be proven at trial, but believed to be in excess of \$10 million;
- For punitive damages in an amount sufficient to deter Defendants' wrongful conduct and that of others similarly situated;

12 COMPLAINT

For a judicial declaration that the modification is rescinded and that all royalties from Elizabeth Arden are to be sent first directly to Brand Sense, per the terms of the original Brand

For a judicial declaration that Brand Sense is entitled to a 35% commission on the net

For a judicial declaration that the "new" agreement between Defendants, or any of them, is illegal and of no force or effect, and is null and void;

For pre-judgment and post-judgment interest at the maximum legal rate against all

For attorneys' fees and costs in connection with this litigation; and

For such other and further relief as this Court may deem just and proper.

MILLER BARONDESS, LLP

Louis R. Miller

Attorneys for Plaintiff

Brand Sense Partners, LLC

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DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Plaintiff hereby demands trial by jurye

DATED: March 30, 2011

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