



Mar 16, 2016 16:23 GMT

Northumbria design alumni in copyright battle

A Northumbria University graduate has lost a Supreme Court copyright case over his design for the Trunki – the world's biggest selling suitcase for children.

Rob Law MBE, who studied Design for Industry, 2000, is founder and director of Magmatic, which sells the suitcase in more than 1,564 stores across 62 countries worldwide.

Following an appearance on BBC's *Dragon's Den* programme where he first

introduced his creatively designed suitcase, Rob went onto international sales success and was later appointed Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for his services to business.

When a rival company, PMS International, launched the Kiddee Case, Rob's company Magmatic claimed it had been 'ripped off' and originally won a high court judgement in 2013. However, this was overturned in favour of PMS by the court of appeal, first in 2014 and then again earlier this month.

Speaking to Sky News, Rob said: "We created an original product in Trunki and protected it by computer generated registered design – a process used to protect a third of designs across Europe.

"In my honest opinion, the Trunki was wilfully ripped off.

"We stood up to this behaviour, held it to account and took our case all the way to the highest court in the land – only for the judges to rule that we are not protected against the copy.

"They're effectively sending knights into battle without armour," he added.

Following the court appeal, Rob has now launched his 'Protect Your Design' campaign, which has been backed by a number of leading designers and entrepreneurs from across the UK. This campaign has called for tougher legal protection for the 350,000 designers who contribute £33.5 billion to the British economy each year.

Rob added: "I urge the Supreme Court to re-examine this muddled judgement and do the right thing – not only for Trunki but for the hundreds and thousands of creative British companies that make the UK a thriving economy."

To find out more about Rob Law's campaign, you can use the #ProtectYourDesign hashtag on Twitter.

Northumbria offers a range of courses through its award-winning School of Design. For more information go to: www.northumbria.ac.uk/design

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focused, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

If you have a media enquiry please contact our Media and Communications team at media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk or call [0191 227 4571](tel:01912274571).

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