

NEWS

They're Gen3M — and have nothing to do with the Maplewood maker of Post-its



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Don't confuse 3M with Gen3M.

One is the Maplewood-based \$32-billion-a-year maker of products sold worldwide. The other is a business that seeks to represent the generation of the third millennium — get it? Members of Gen3M were born after 2000.

3M is worried about the name Gen3M because it doesn't want anyone to think that one has anything to do with the other. A spokeswoman for the corporate giant said this week that no legal action has been taken, but that 3M will be watching Gen3M's activities.

Kym Derriman, a principal of Gen3M LLC, started the group about five years ago.

"I asked a group of kids what they wanted to call their generation, and they said Gen3M," he said. "I was aware of the 3M company, but I did not see a conflict."

Derriman said that if 3M tried to enforce the trademark in court, it would probably lose. "I think they will have a battle ahead of them," said Derriman.

He said that like Baby Boomers and generations X and Y, the new generation needs a name — and predicted that the public would eventually regard Gen3M as that name, even at the expense of the 3M Co.

According to the [Gen3M website](#), the company offers consulting services for financial and advertising businesses. It also sells clothing with the Gen3M logo.

A charitable arm of Gen3M, said Derriman, operates a website intended to serve as a forum for the generation.

It is currently organizing concerts to raise money to help "disadvantaged children." The website cited the "17 Florida school shooting victims" killed last February as a particular concern.

"This is about kids helping other kids," said Derriman.

In a prepared statement, 3M spokeswoman Fanna Haile-Selassie emailed on Monday: "We reached out to Gen3M in an effort to work out an agreement to prevent any risk of confusion with the products they are planning to sell.

"We are not planning to pursue the opposition in this instance, but we will continue to monitor the use of the organization's trademark to make sure it isn't confused with 3M."

Meanwhile, Gen3M is pursuing another bit of trademark confusion, involving the makers of an accessory bracket for certain types of rifles.

The name? "Folding Stock Adapter Gen 3-M."

