3M – South African trademarks

Updated 8 November 2026

3M is an American science and manufacturing company. Its brands include Post-it, Scotch, Scotch-Brite and Command, alongside safety, health care and industrial products.

How 3M has built and protected its brands in South Africa – its trademark portfolio, where it expanded, how quickly its marks are registered, and who it competes with.

#130
largest trademark owner in South Africa (of 121,626)

421
trademarks filed

3
different logos published since 2020

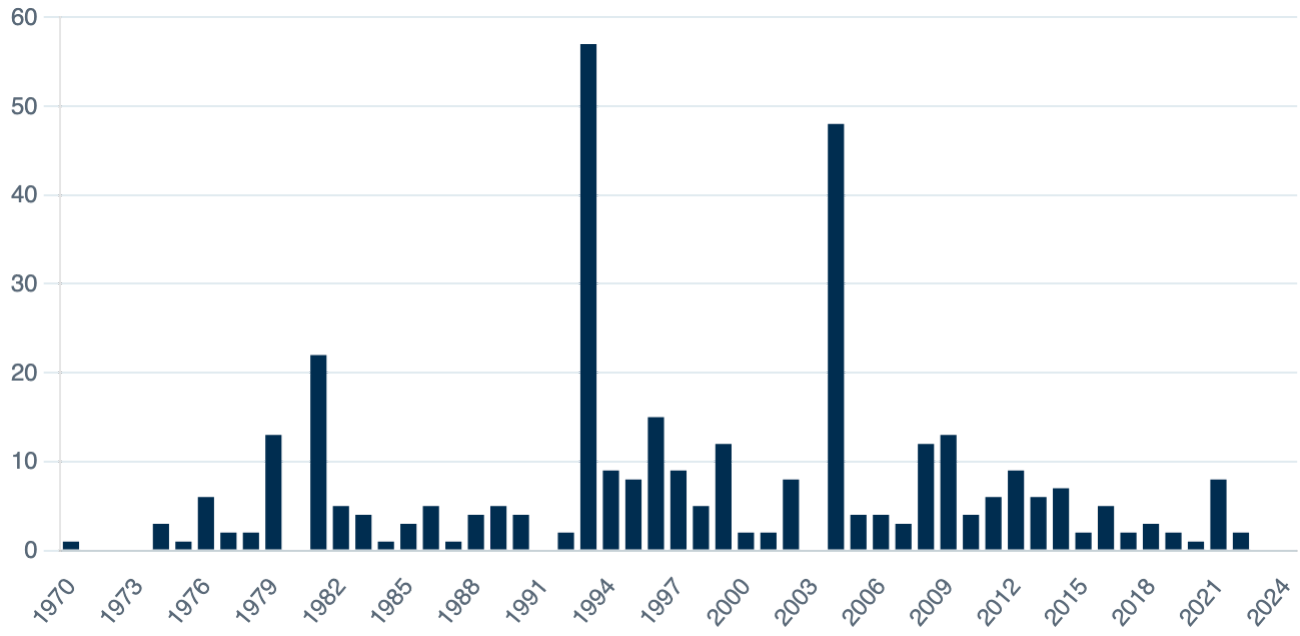
45
of 45 classes used

1945
first trademark filed

23
filed in the last 10 years

A portfolio built over time

3M filed its first South African trademark in 1945 and has filed 421 since; its busiest year was 1993, with 57 new filings. The chart shows its filings per year from 1970.



Trademarks by filing year, up to 2024; applications still pending are not included.

The names behind the portfolio

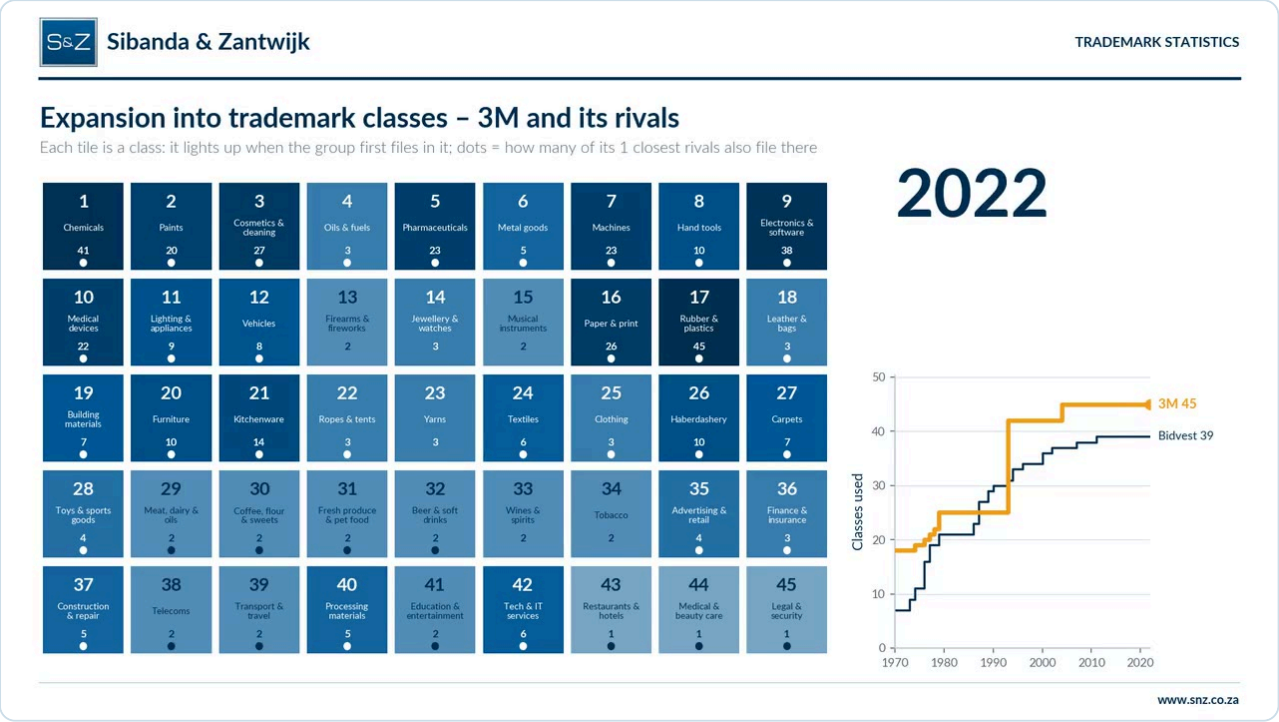
Over the years the group has filed under several names – earlier company names, holding companies and subsidiaries. We count them together.

NAME	MARKS	FILING YEARS
3M	492	1945–2022

Where 3M expanded its business

Trademark classes show what a business sells. 3M's portfolio is concentrated in rubber & plastics (class 17), chemicals (class 1), electronics & software (class 9). Its most recent moves were into legal & security (2004), medical & beauty care (2004), restaurants & hotels (2004).

3M trademarks: expansion into trademark classes, 1970–2022



Watch the video on its own page, with transcript – https://snz.co.za/trademark-country-selection-direct/3m-south-african-trademarks/class-expansion-video.html

Each tile is a class; it lights up when the group first files in it and darkens with more filings; the dots show how many of its closest rivals also file in that class. The chart compares the number of classes used with its rivals. The video runs from 1970; classes entered earlier are lit from the start.

CLASS	MARKS	SHARE	SINCE
17 Rubber & plastics	45	10.7%	1945
1 Chemicals	41	9.7%	1948
9 Electronics & software	38	9.0%	1949
3 Cosmetics & cleaning	27	6.4%	1948
16 Paper & print	26	6.2%	1948
5 Pharmaceuticals	23	5.5%	1950
7 Machines	23	5.5%	1951
10 Medical devices	22	5.2%	1962

The brands 3M protects most

The word marks and logo names 3M has filed most often – the same brand filed in more classes, in more versions or again over the years.

#	BRAND	TRADEMARKS	CLASSES	FILED
1	3M	127	45	1963–2008
2	SCOTCHGARD	12	9	1958–2013
3	COMMAND	10	6	1995–2014
4	SCOTCH-BRITE	9	6	1959–2021
5	NEXCARE	6	4	1996–2015
6	SCOTCH	5	5	1995–2009
7	PPS	5	1	2004–2018
8	SCOTCHCAL	4	4	1953–1953
9	ZARIS	4	3	1999–2004
10	POST-IT	4	2	1979–2021
11	3 M	3	3	1961–1969
12	3M COMPANY	3	3	1951–1951
13	ACE	3	3	1982–1982
14	BONDO	3	3	2008–2008
15	CONTROLTAC	3	3	1981–1981

Logos filed most often (since 2020)

1 filing · 1 class

1 filing · 1 class

1 filing · 1 class

3M's logos

The 3 different logos 3M has had published since 2020 – each logo shown once, however many classes or versions it was filed in. Logos protected in more classes come first.

1 class

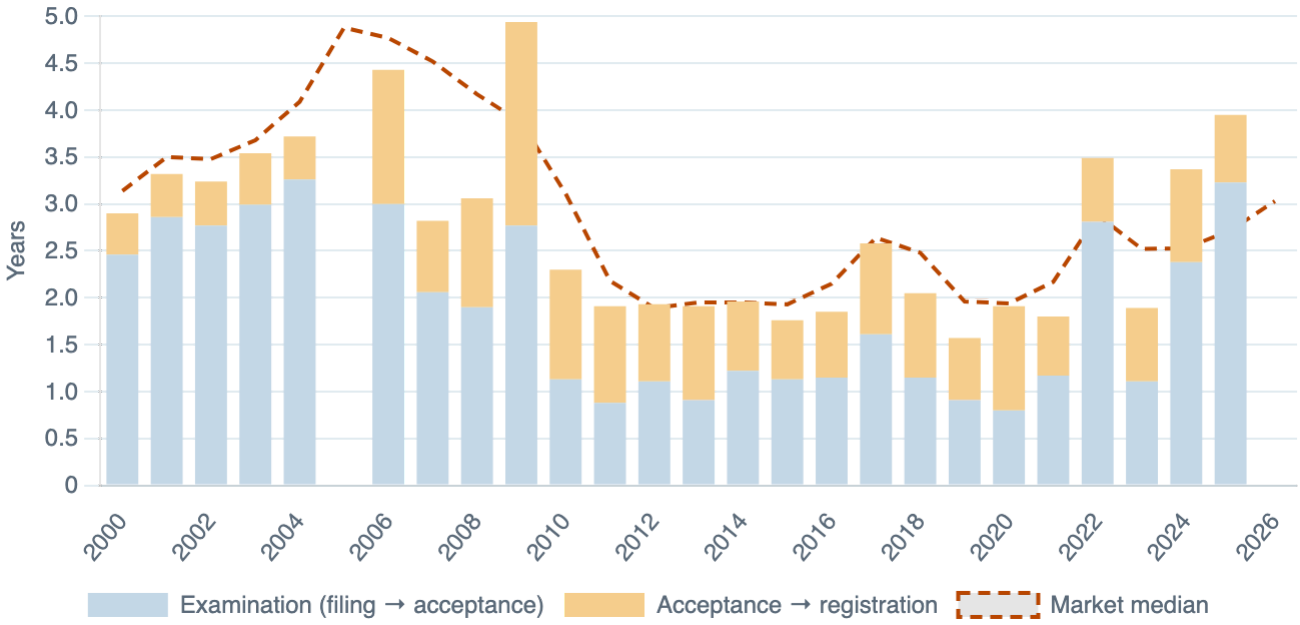
1 class

1 class

Full logo list on the online version of this page.

How quickly its trademarks are registered

Over the last five years, 3M's marks took a median of **2.0 years** from filing to registration, faster than the market's 2.7 years. Most of that time is examination: 1.2 years from filing to acceptance (market: 1.9). Registration itself follows about half a year after acceptance.

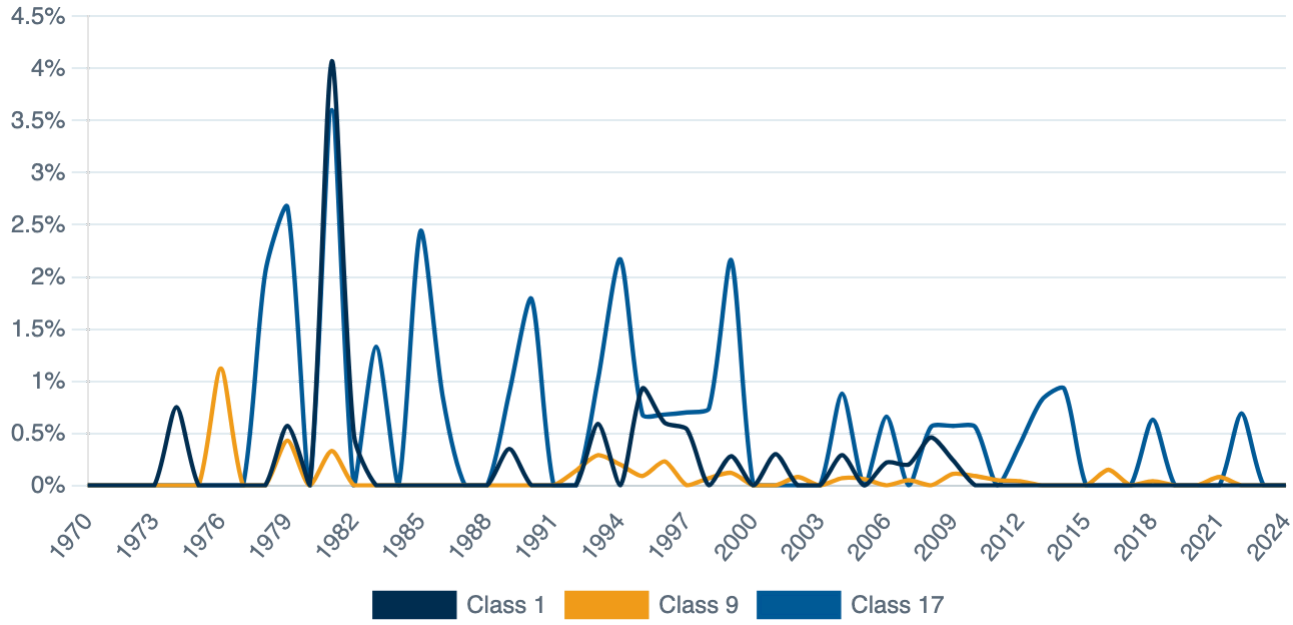


Median years from filing to registration per registration year, split into examination (filing → acceptance) and acceptance → registration; the dashed line is the market median. A high recent value means older applications came through that year.

Who files the most in 3M's classes

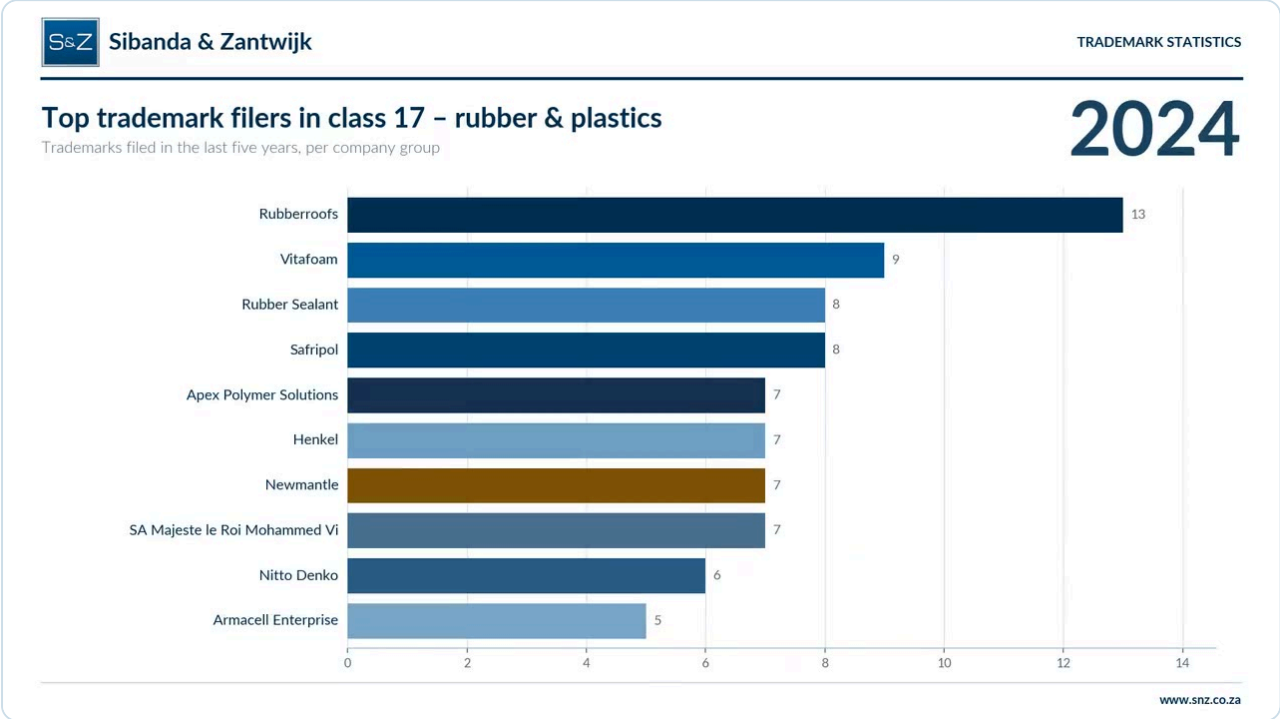
> Ranked by **number of trademarks filed in 3M's main classes** – any company that files there, whatever else it does (including retailers' own brands). This shows 3M's market position, not who is most like it.

In the last five years, 3M was **#218** of 377 filers in class 17 (rubber & plastics), with 1 of 595 trademarks; **#1780** of 4,926 filers in class 9 (electronics & software), with 2 of 10,252 trademarks.



3M's share of all trademarks filed in each of its main classes, per filing year.

Top trademark filers in class 17 (rubber & plastics), South Africa 1975–2024: 3M



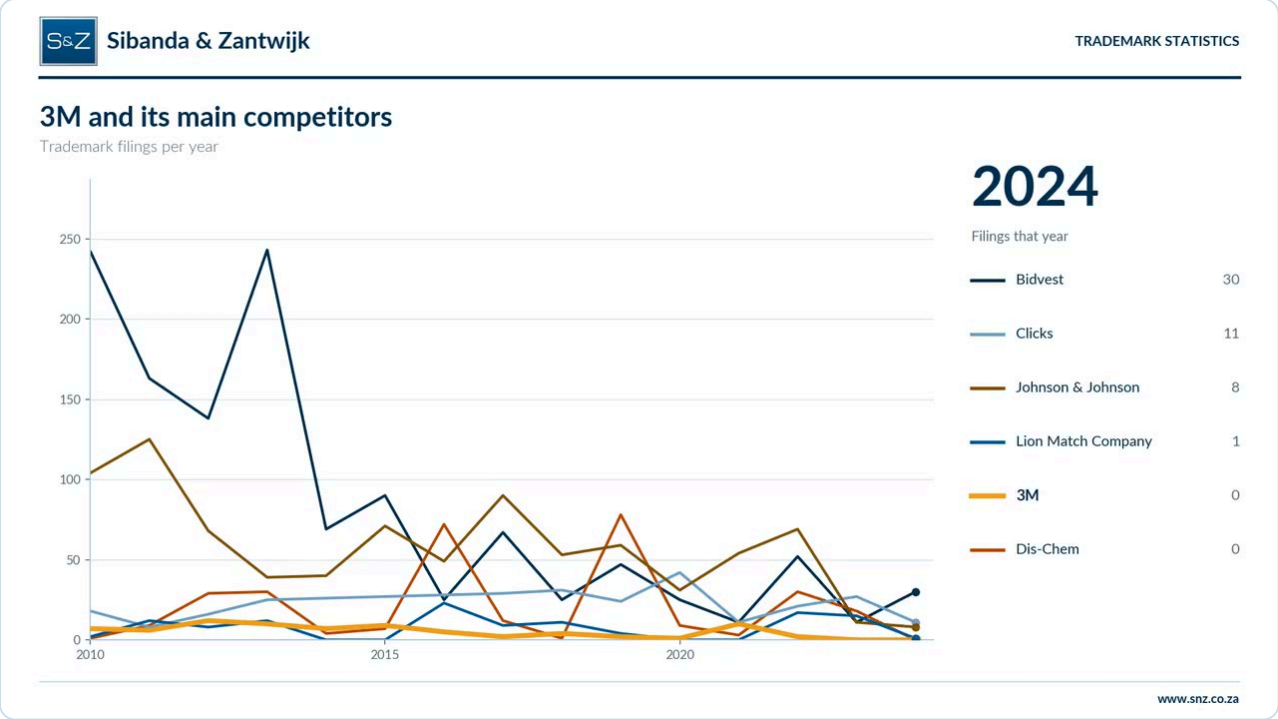
Watch the video on its own page, with transcript – https://snz.co.za/trademark-country-selection-direct/3m-south-african-trademarks/class-17-race-video.html

Main competitors – the companies most like 3M

> Ranked by **how similar their whole trademark portfolio is to 3M's** – the same mix of classes and the same words in their marks – **not by size**. Large filers in its classes that do something different rank lower here.

3M's closest competitors in South Africa are Bidvest.

3M trademarks vs competitors: filings per year, 2010–2024



Watch the video on its own page, with transcript – https://snz.co.za/trademark-country-selection-direct/3m-south-african-trademarks/competitors-video.html

Trademark filings per year: 3M (orange) and its five closest competitors.

#	COMPANY	RELATIONSHIP	SIMILARITY
1	Bidvest	Direct competitor	60%
2	Dis-Chem	Retailer's own brands	79%
3	Clicks	Retailer's own brands	64%
4	Johnson & Johnson	Other field	82%
5	Lion Match Company	Other field	68%
6	Procter & Gamble	Other field	66%
7	Amazon	Other field	62%
8	Samsung	Other field	62%
9	Ahlstrom Munksjo	Other field	61%
10	Merck	Other field	60%

Similarity of trademark activity since 2015 (classes and words used in marks). Retailers appear where their own brands compete on the shelf.

3M – relevant export countries

South Africa exported **US$4.9 billion** of the goods 3M's main classes cover in the last year – plastic film (class 17); chemicals; fertilizers; chemical preparations (class 1); computer software; computer hardware; downloadable; parts and fittings (class 9); cosmetics; essential oils; perfumes (class 3); pens; paper; stationery; notebooks (class 16). Combining where these goods are exported, imported, growing and made (and copied), and what protection costs, these are the markets where 3M's trademarks matter most.

Worldwide

#	MARKET	SCORE	SA EXPORTS	IMPORT GROWTH / YR	ROUTE	COST, 5 CLASSES
1	European Union	80	US$571 m	-2%	National	US$2,388
2	United States of America	74	US$302 m	+2%	National	US$3,425
3	United Kingdom	67	US$93 m	-4%	National	US$1,371
4	India	64	US$36 m	+3%	National	US$1,295
5	Namibia	62	US$472 m	+20%	ARIPO	US$450
6	Zimbabwe	62	US$461 m	+19%	ARIPO	US$450
7	Canada	61	US$45 m	-4%	National	US$2,192
8	Türkiye	60	US$19 m	+3%	National	US$1,258
9	Hong Kong SAR	60	US$21 m	-0%	National	US$1,715
10	Australia	60	US$71 m	-1%	National	US$2,380

Africa

#	MARKET	SCORE	SA EXPORTS	IMPORT GROWTH / YR	ROUTE	COST, 5 CLASSES
1	Namibia	62	US$472 m	+20%	ARIPO	US$450 S&Z
2	Zimbabwe	62	US$461 m	+19%	ARIPO	US$450 S&Z
3	Botswana	58	US$430 m	-7%	ARIPO	US$450 S&Z
4	Zambia	57	US$636 m	+11%	National	US$2,610
5	Nigeria	56	US$60 m	-14%	National	US$1,015 S&Z
6	Lesotho	56	US$143 m	+9%	National	US$326
7	Malawi	55	US$78 m	+52%	ARIPO	US$450 S&Z
8	Eswatini	55	US$191 m	-5%	National	US$446
9	OAPI (17 states)	54	US$79 m	+6%	National	US$1,563 S&Z
10	Mozambique	54	US$228 m	-12%	ARIPO	US$450 S&Z

SA exports = South Africa's exports of these goods to the market in the last year. Ranked with the default weightings. Score 0–100 from South Africa's exports of the goods to the market, net imports, import growth, foreign trademark filings, where the goods are made, market size and the cost of protection. Costs are total fees (official and professional) to file in 5 classes; ARIPO costs are per country, plus US$301 once per ARIPO application; S&Z = S&Z's own all-in price. Goods are taken from the classes and specifications, so the ranking is indicative.

Trade data: CEPII BACI (version 202601, trade flows 2022–2024), Licence Etalab 2.0; aggregated and combined with other data by S&Z.

Protecting its top brands in Nigeria and OAPI with S&Z

BRAND	CLASSES	NIGERIA	OAPI (17 STATES)
3M	45	US$9,135	US$8,950
SCOTCHGARD	9	US$1,827	US$2,302
COMMAND	6	US$1,218	US$1,748
SCOTCH-BRITE	6	US$1,218	US$1,748
NEXCARE	4	US$812	US$1,378

S&Z all-in prices per brand in its number of classes, filing to registration.

Rank the countries for your own goods and get the quotes.

Word marks you may have considered opposing

> For 3M's five most-filed brands: word marks of **other companies** (not 3M's own group) that our similar word mark search, SimTM, found in the brand's own classes, and that we consider **confusingly similar** – from the earliest match found to today.

Similar to SCOTCHGARD (classes 1, 3, 17; searched 2022-11-30 to 2026-11-08)

No confusingly similar marks of other companies found in this period.

Similar to COMMAND (classes 1, 6, 16, 20, 21, 26; searched 2019-03-27 to 2026-11-08)

No confusingly similar marks of other companies found in this period.

Similar to SCOTCH-BRITE (classes 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 21; searched 2018-02-28 to 2026-11-08)

No confusingly similar marks of other companies found in this period.

Similar to NEXCARE (classes 3, 5, 9, 10; searched 2018-01-31 to 2026-11-08)

No confusingly similar marks of other companies found in this period.

Similar to SCOTCH (classes 1, 8, 9, 16, 17; searched 2023-06-28 to 2026-11-08)

No confusingly similar marks of other companies found in this period.

Similarity of the words only. Whether a mark could have been opposed depends on the goods and services, the reputation of the brand and the facts – S&Z can advise. New marks like these are what SimTM watch reports as they are published.

How S&Z can help you

> S&Z does not just file trademarks. We are a **technology-first firm that manages trademarks** – analysing your data, monitoring competitors and making sure your trademark assets remain protected.

We manage your trademarks – not just file them

Analysing your data, monitoring competitors and making sure your trademark assets remain protected:

Renewal management
Every renewal date in your portfolio tracked and paid online.

Competitor watch
Get real-time competitor analysis.

Similar-mark watch
New word marks that come close to yours, found as they are published using SimTM.

Expansion into Africa
Lowest-cost trademark expansion into Africa - Nigeria, OAPI.

Filing and renewal at fixed, all-inclusive prices

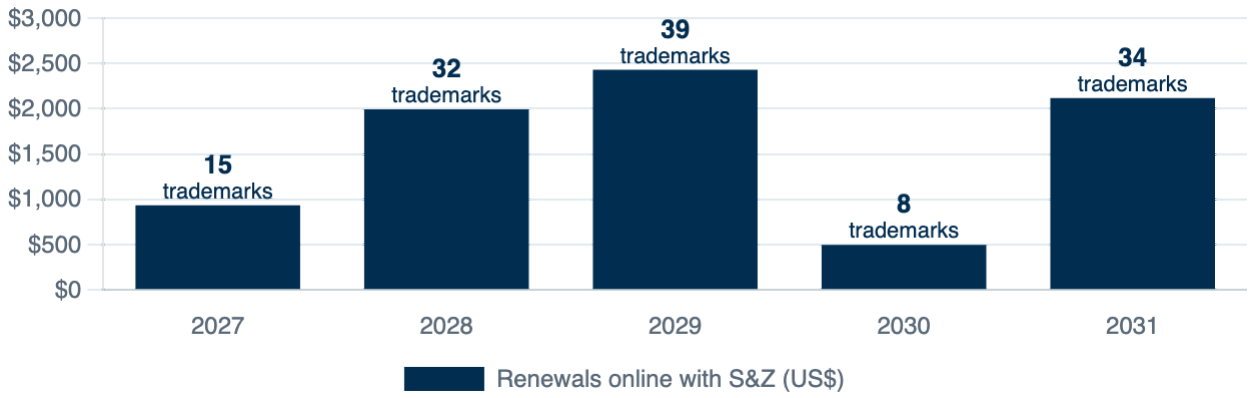
S&Z prices – South African trademarks

Filing, first class – incl. official fee, examination report, routine office action, acceptance, publication, registration and e-certificate	US$240
Each additional class of the same mark, filed at the same time	US$225
Renewal online, per class (every 10 years from filing)	R1,027 ≈ US$62.29

Renewal in rand; US$ at R16.49 per US$.

3M's next five years of renewals

128 of 3M's registered marks reach their ten-year renewal date in 2027–2031. Renewed online with S&Z, that costs about US$7,972 over the five years.



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