MTN – South African trademarks

Updated 8 November 2026

MTN is a South African multinational mobile operator listed on the JSE. It provides mobile voice, data and fintech services in South Africa and across Africa and the Middle East.

How MTN 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.

#60
largest trademark owner in South Africa (of 121,626)

853
trademarks filed

14
different logos published since 2020

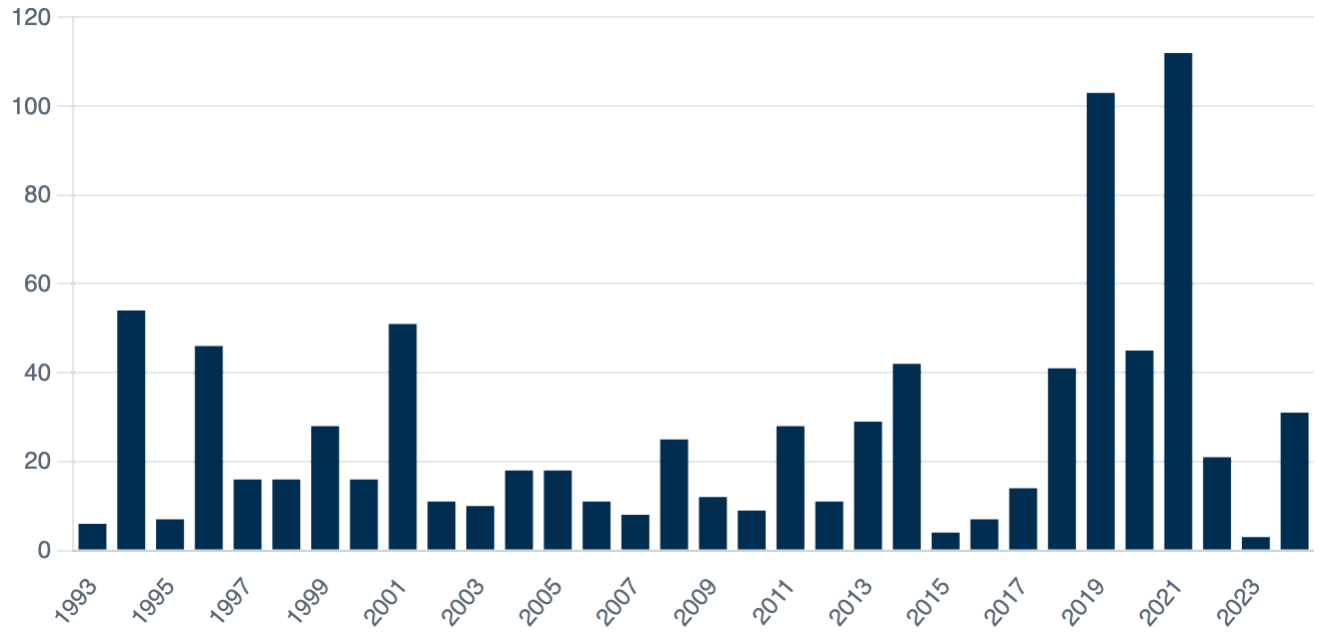
15
of 45 classes used

1993
first trademark filed

377
filed in the last 10 years

A portfolio built over time

MTN filed its first South African trademark in 1993 and has filed 853 since; its busiest year was 2021, with 112 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

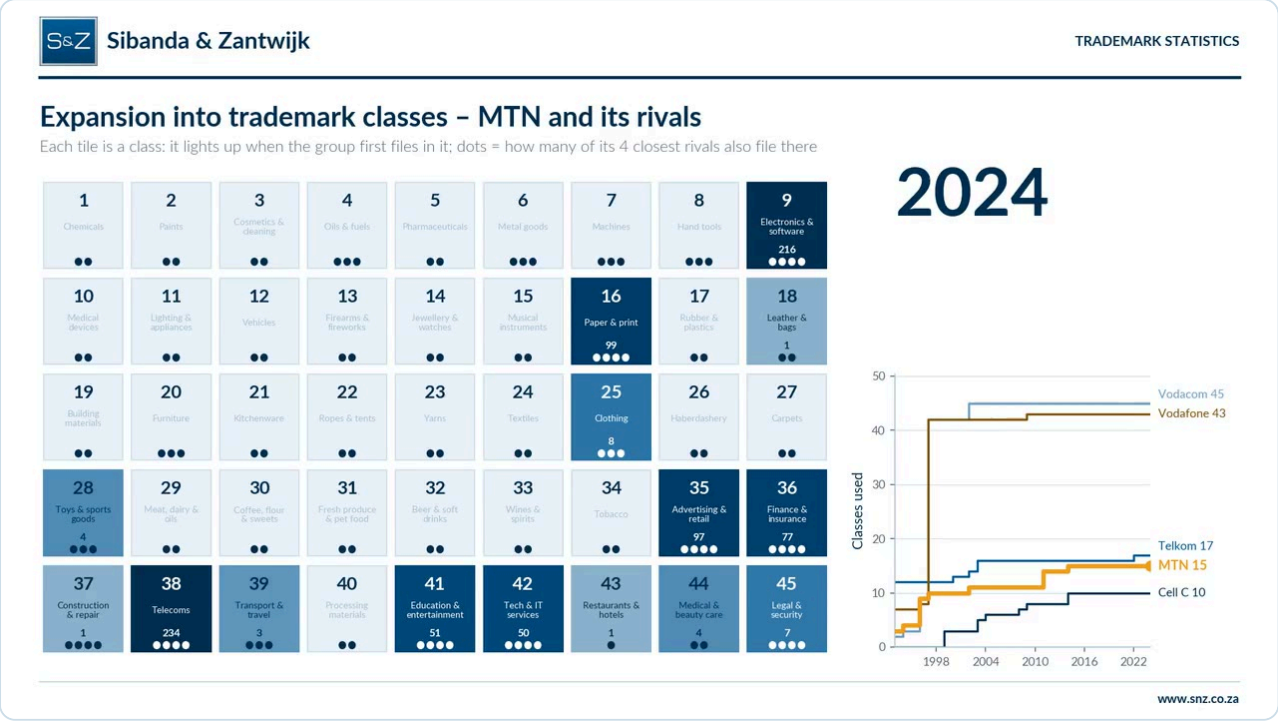
Over the years the group has filed under several names – earlier company names, holding companies and subsidiaries. We count them together.

NAME	MARKS	FILING YEARS
MTN	871	1993–2024
MTN Group Fintech	7	2022–2022
Altius Trading 437	6	2011–2011
MTN Group	3	1995–1995

Where MTN expanded its business

Trademark classes show what a business sells. MTN's portfolio is concentrated in telecoms (class 38), electronics & software (class 9), paper & print (class 16). Its most recent moves were into construction & repair (2014), legal & security (2011), medical & beauty care (2011).

MTN trademarks: expansion into trademark classes, 1970–2024



Watch the video on its own page, with transcript – https://snz.co.za/trademark-country-selection-direct/mtn-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
38	Telecoms	234	27.4%	1993
9	Electronics & software	216	25.3%	1993
16	Paper & print	99	11.6%	1993
35	Advertising & retail	97	11.4%	1996
36	Finance & insurance	77	9.0%	1997
41	Education & entertainment	51	6.0%	1994
42	Tech & IT services	50	5.9%	1996
25	Clothing	8	0.9%	1996

The brands MTN protects most

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

#	BRAND	TRADEMARKS	CLASSES	FILED
1	IT'S GO TIME	35	7	2021–2021
2	MTN	24	8	1993–2022
3	MTN PULSE	24	7	2014–2021
4	THE GO SHOW	21	7	2021–2021
5	Y'ELLO	16	8	2003–2021
6	BOZZA	10	7	2011–2019
7	WAVE & WIN	8	4	2018–2018
8	#WEGOTU	8	4	2018–2018
9	AIRBORN	7	7	2001–2002
10	BOZZATALK	7	7	2021–2021
11	EVERYWHERE YOU GO	7	7	2004–2019
12	GOOD TOGETHER	7	7	2021–2021
13	MY MTN REWARDS	7	7	2020–2020
14	WE'RE GOOD TOGETHER	7	7	2019–2019
15	YOUR PULSE. YOUR WAY.	7	7	2021–2021

Logos filed most often (since 2020)



38 filings · 8 classes



28 filings · 7 classes



14 filings · 7 classes



12 filings · 6 classes



7 filings · 6 classes



5 filings · 5 classes



5 filings · 5 classes



4 filings · 4 classes



4 filings · 2 classes



3 filings · 3 classes

MTN's logos

The 14 different logos MTN 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.



8 classes



7 classes



7 classes



6 classes



6 classes



5 classes



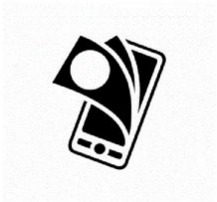
5 classes



4 classes



3 classes



3 classes



3 classes



3 classes



3 classes

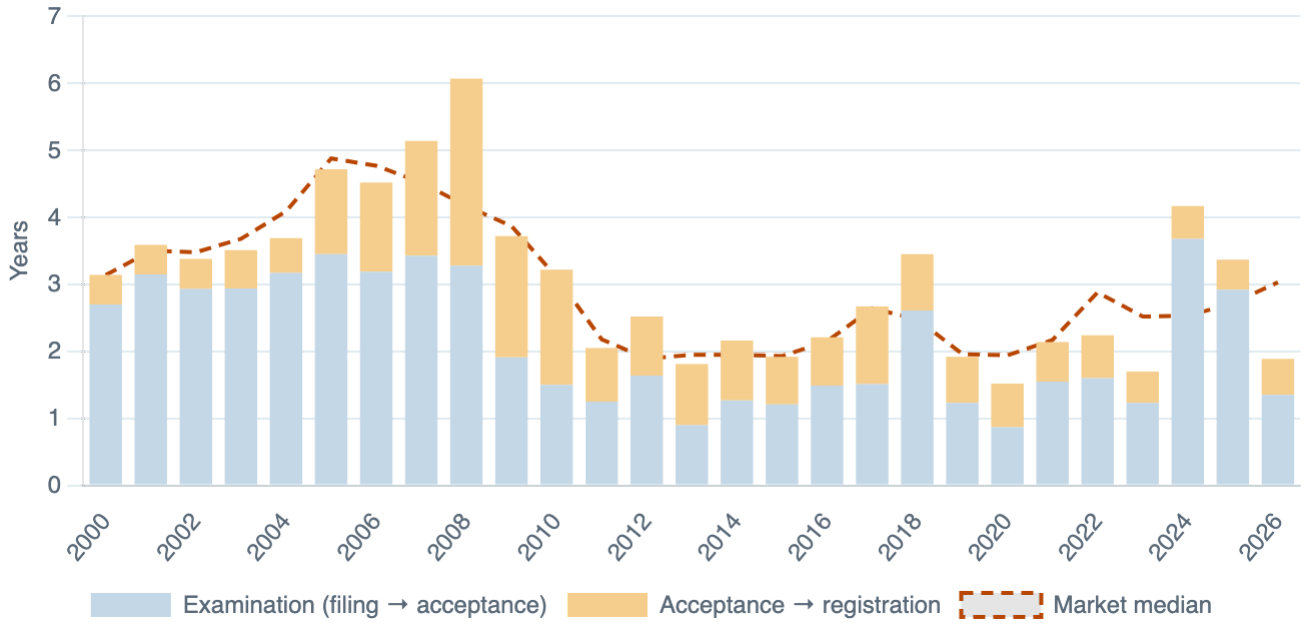


2 classes

Full logo list on the online version of this page.

How quickly its trademarks are registered

Over the last five years, MTN's marks took a median of **2.5 years** from filing to registration, faster than the market's 2.7 years. Most of that time is examination: 1.6 years from filing to acceptance (market: 1.9). Registration itself follows about half a year after acceptance.

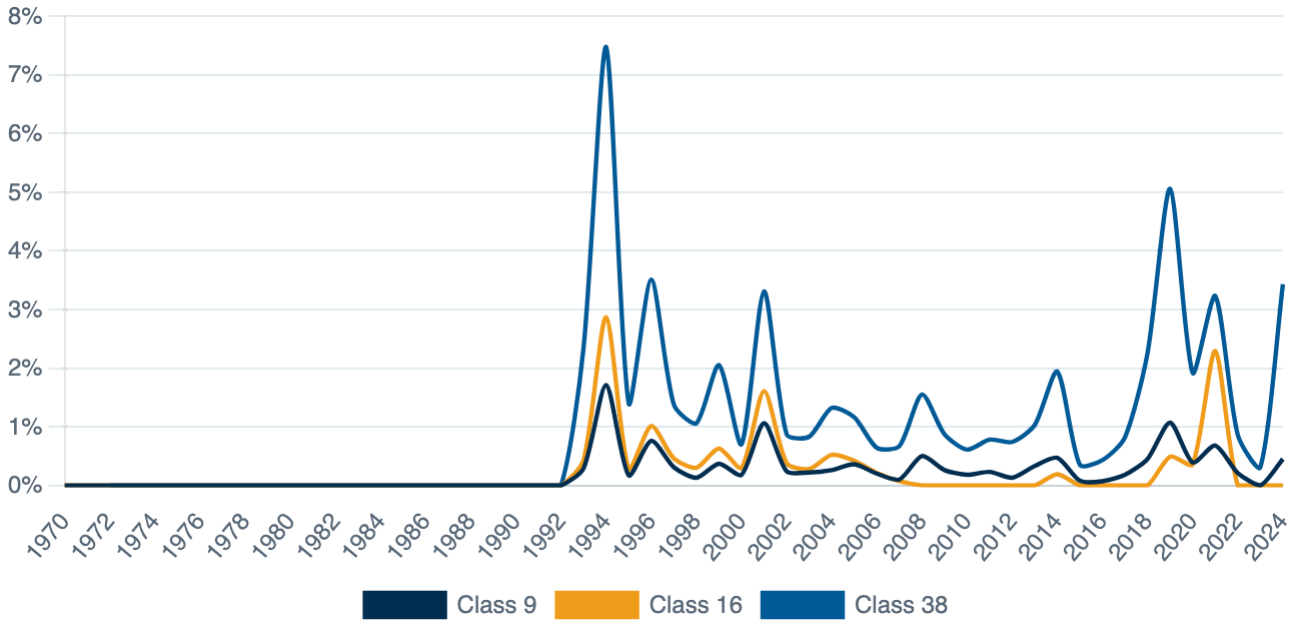


Median years from filing to registration per registration year, split into examination (filing → acceptance) and acceptance → registration; the dashed line is the market median. A high recent value means older applications came through that year.

Who files the most in MTN's classes

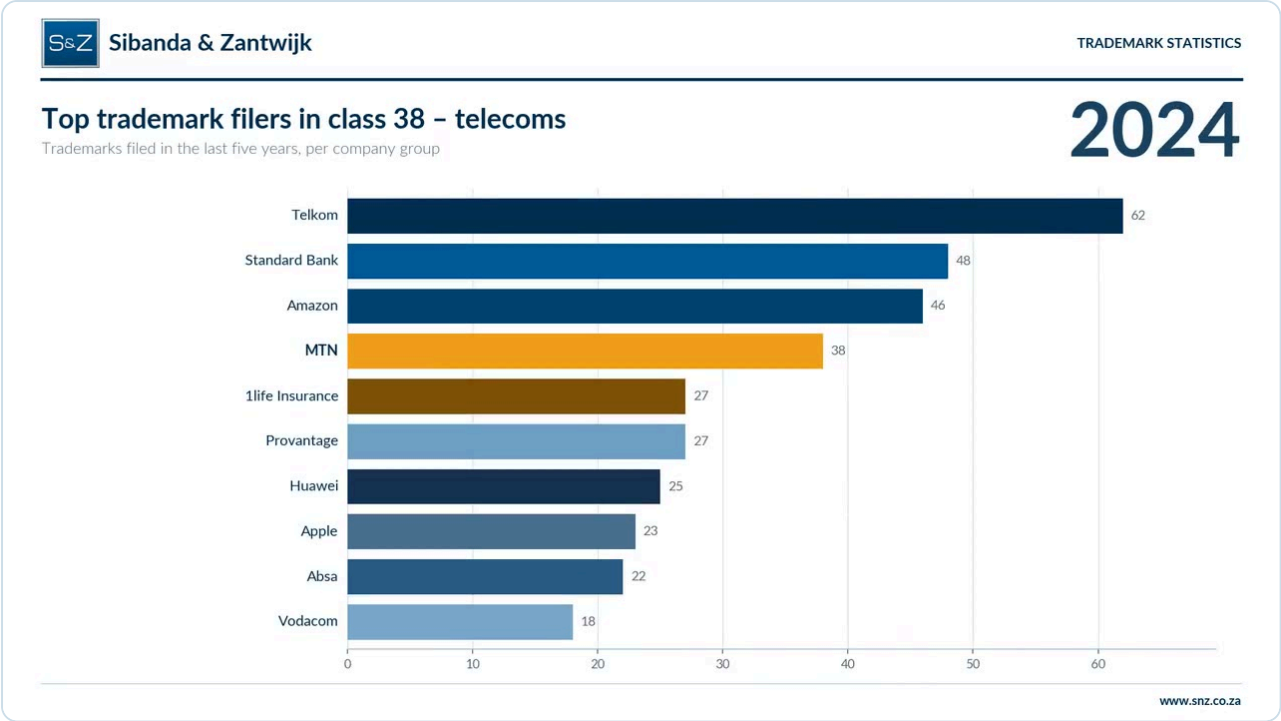
> Ranked by **number of trademarks filed in MTN's main classes** – any company that files there, whatever else it does (including retailers' own brands). This shows MTN's market position, not who is most like it.

In the last five years, MTN was **#4** of 893 filers in class 38 (telecoms), with 38 of 1,971 trademarks; **#12** of 4,926 filers in class 9 (electronics & software), with 37 of 10,252 trademarks; **#8** of 1,191 filers in class 16 (paper & print), with 15 of 2,264 trademarks.



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

Top trademark filers in class 38 (telecoms), South Africa 1975–2024: MTN



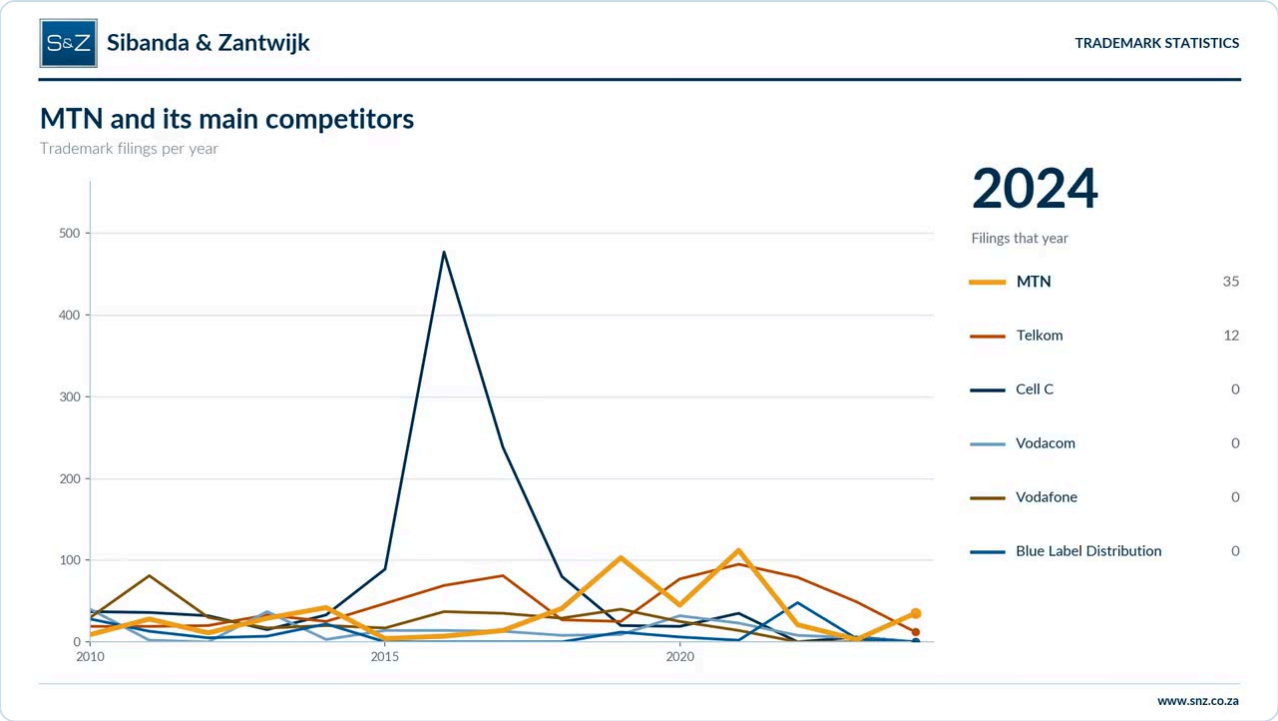
Watch the video on its own page, with transcript – https://snz.co.za/trademark-country-selection-direct/mtn-south-african-trademarks/class-38-race-video.html

Main competitors – the companies most like MTN

> Ranked by **how similar their whole trademark portfolio is to MTN'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.

MTN's closest competitors in South Africa are Cell C, Telkom, Vodacom and Vodafone.

MTN 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/mtn-south-african-trademarks/competitors-video.html

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

#	COMPANY	RELATIONSHIP	SIMILARITY
1	Cell C	Direct competitor	91%
2	Telkom	Direct competitor	86%
3	Vodacom	Direct competitor	83%
4	Vodafone	Direct competitor	83%
5	Blue Label Distribution	Direct competitor	75%
6	SABC	Related field	78%
7	Teraco Data Environments	Related field	76%
8	MultiChoice	Related field	75%
9	Tracker Connect	Related field	74%
10	Pattern Matched Technologies	Related field	73%

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

MTN – relevant export countries

Worldwide

#	MARKET	SCORE	SA EXPORTS	IMPORT GROWTH / YR	ROUTE	COST, 3 CLASSES
1	European Union	81	US$335 m	-1%	National	US$1,859
2	United States of America	76	US$179 m	+2%	National	US$2,075
3	United Kingdom	69	US$57 m	-4%	National	US$1,012
4	India	67	US$29 m	+9%	National	US$807
5	Namibia	65	US$384 m	+13%	ARIPO	US$343
6	Hong Kong SAR	63	US$21 m	-0%	National	US$1,110
7	Canada	63	US$35 m	-4%	National	US$1,623
8	Botswana	63	US$360 m	-5%	ARIPO	US$343
9	Japan	62	US$7.2 m	-5%	National	US$1,187
10	Zimbabwe	62	US$288 m	+11%	ARIPO	US$343

Africa

#	MARKET	SCORE	SA EXPORTS	IMPORT GROWTH / YR	ROUTE	COST, 3 CLASSES
1	Namibia	65	US$384 m	+13%	ARIPO	US$343 S&Z
2	Botswana	63	US$360 m	-5%	ARIPO	US$343 S&Z
3	Zimbabwe	62	US$288 m	+11%	ARIPO	US$343 S&Z
4	Nigeria	57	US$47 m	-12%	National	US$609 S&Z
5	Eswatini	57	US$145 m	-1%	ARIPO	US$343 S&Z
6	Mozambique	57	US$194 m	+1%	ARIPO	US$343 S&Z
7	Lesotho	57	US$123 m	+10%	National	US$314
8	Malawi	55	US$62 m	+23%	ARIPO	US$343 S&Z
9	Tanzania	55	US$55 m	+5%	ARIPO	US$343 S&Z
10	OAPI (17 states)	54	US$73 m	+7%	National	US$1,194 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 3 classes; ARIPO costs are per country, plus US$280 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)
IT'S GO TIME	7	US$1,421	US$1,932
MTN	8	US$1,624	US$2,117
MTN PULSE	7	US$1,421	US$1,932
THE GO SHOW	7	US$1,421	US$1,932
Y'ELLO	8	US$1,624	US$2,117

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 MTN's five most-filed brands: word marks of **other companies** (not MTN'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 IT'S GO TIME (classes 9, 16, 35, 36, 38, 41, 42; searched 2018-04-25 to 2026-11-07)

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

Similar to MTN (classes 9, 16, 18, 25, 35, 36, 38, 42; searched 2018-04-25 to 2026-11-07)

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

Similar to MTN PULSE (classes 9, 16, 35, 36, 38, 41, 42; searched 2018-01-31 to 2026-11-07)

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

Similar to THE GO SHOW (classes 9, 16, 35, 36, 38, 41, 42; searched 2018-01-31 to 2026-11-07)

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

Similar to Y'ELLO (classes 9, 16, 35, 36, 38, 41, 42, 45; searched 2019-08-28 to 2026-11-07)

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

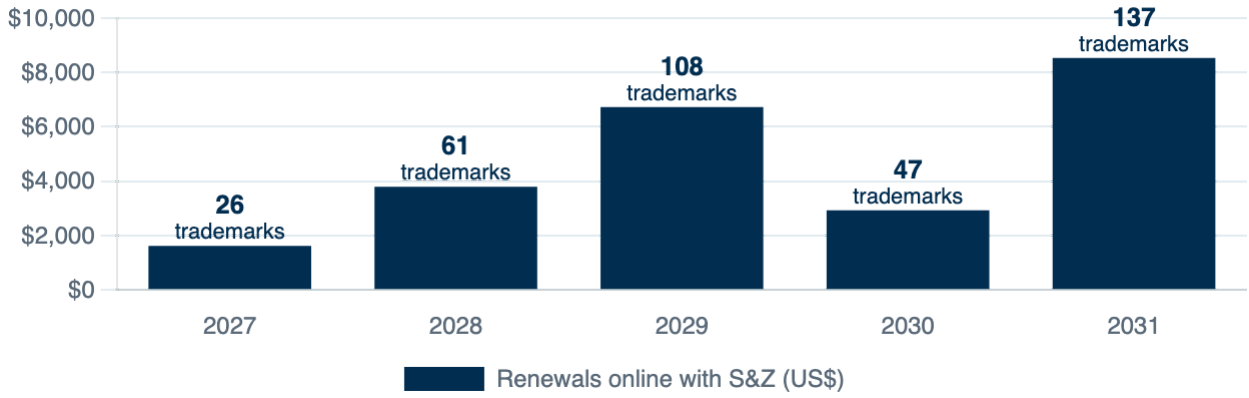
S&Z prices – South African trademarks

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$.

MTN's next five years of renewals

379 of MTN's registered marks reach their ten-year renewal date in 2027–2031. Renewed online with S&Z, that costs about **US$23,609** over the five years.



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