

Trader Joe's Suit Against DEX of Same Name Might Be More Hassle Than It's Worth

Media Mentions

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Bracewell's **Jonathon Hance** spoke with *DL News* about supermarket giant Trader Joe's suing decentralized crypto exchange Trader Joe, along with an individual believed to be its founder, for trademark infringement.

"These are decentralized crypto operators. They use aliases, they don't necessarily have a corporate headquarters, some of them are not even clear on who their employees or founders are, and they certainly don't like to tell you where they keep their assets," said Hance. "So, enforcement for Trader Joe's, if they're able to secure a judgement, will be a challenge."

Trader Joe's the supermarket alleges that Trader Joe the exchange and a Chinese national, Cheng Chiu Liu, who the lawyers believe to be the DEX's co-founder, intentionally copied the Trader Joe's name, and has been leveraging its brand identity on its web interface, in its advertising and across social media.

Assuming that it wins the case, Hance said, the supermarket chain must then have a plan to collect whatever damages are awarded. And that's complicated when dealing with entities based outside the US. One obvious route for Trader Joe's would be to focus on ties the defendant might have in the US. For example, if they used a US bank, that could be one pressure point to ensure enforcement, Hance added.

The defendants have three weeks to respond to the lawsuit. Considering that Liu never responded to any of the cease-and-desist letters, what happens next will be a test, said Hance.

"That will be the first interesting juncture. If they don't respond, then you know that Trader Joe's is going to have an impossible time collecting. If they do respond and actually show up to court, then the chances of Trader Joe's doing something against them will become much better," explained Hance.

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