

Knauf Wins Brand Piracy Case

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A Moscow court awarded 5 million rubles, or \$160,000, in damages to Knauf in a case against a counterfeiter, the German building materials manufacturer said Wednesday.

For nearly a year, Vladimir Potekhin ran two pirate factories that made and packaged plaster, cement and other products of market leaders, including Knauf, Unis and Vetonit, the statement said.

Potekhin bought special equipment for manufacturing, used packaging with fake trademarks, and distributed the goods to retailers and wholesalers in Moscow and the Moscow region, the court found, according to the Knauf statement.

This is the largest amount Knauf CIS said it has won in court against a counterfeiter, though it has been working on the problem for many years.

"Knauf has been battling with counterfeit products for nearly 10 years on our own," said Gerd Lenga, general manager of Knauf CIS. "We spend millions of euros every year on this effort in

Russia."

Potekhin was also sentenced to 1 1/2 years in prison on charges of trying to bribe a representative of a private security firm, which was involved in uncovering his operation, and illegal possession of firearms, Knauf said.

Knauf uses private security firms to help expose illegal manufacturing and shut down retailers who deal in fake goods, said Leonid Los, director of public relations at Knauf CIS.

"Neither the government nor society itself takes the problem of counterfeiting seriously," Nikolai Piksin, the lawyer who worked on this case for Knauf, was quoted as saying in the statement. "As paradoxical as it may seem, both the poor and the rich are ready to buy fake products."

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