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To Philippe and Mr. Chow, a name isn't just a name

The tension between soon-to-be neighbor restaurants **Philippe** and **Mr. Chow** has ramped up since the filing of a lawsuit filed by **Michael "Mr. Chow" Chow** last week. The suit, filed Thursday in federal court by **Alan Kluger** of Miami-based law firm Kluger Kaplan, contends that South Beach restaurant Philippe, owned by **Philippe Chow**, is ripping off Mr. Chow's menus and trademarked name.

Michael Chow has been furious with **Chak Yam Chau** ever since the former "food chopper" at Mr. Chow resigned in 2005, changed his name to Philippe Chow and opened restaurants in New York, according to the trademark-infringement suit. Kluger says the final straw came last year, when Philippe opened a Miami outpost at the Gansevoort Hotel, 100 yards from a long-planned Mr. Chow location opening next month at the W Hotel.

Said Kluger in an e-mail, "When Philippe resigned from his job as a food chopper . . . he signed his resignation as **Phillip Chau**. He now goes by the new name Philippe Chow. Furthermore, Philippe has purchased sponsored links on Google for 'Mr. Chow' so that when the real Mr. Chow is searched for, Philippe's name and link comes up."

Stratis Morfogen, partner in Philippe, responded via e-mail, saying, "Their complaint is that we're confusing the customer. There are one million people in the world named Chow! . . . Fact of the matter is Philippe is a very respected brand. We treat our customers right, they come back and enjoy the experience we offer them."