

HUSCH BLACKWELL

Entertainment & Media

Whether negotiating a recording contract for a multi-platinum artist, working with a TV station on a libel-sensitive investigative report, drafting a complex film exhibition agreement for a small independent film company, or helping a museum navigate the murky legal waters surrounding the purchase of an Old World antiquity, our entertainment and media attorneys focus on the tough issues that confront our clients.

Our Entertainment & Media practice covers the music, film, publishing, theatre, and television and radio broadcasting industries. We have significant experience in these industries and we understand the issues that confront our clients. Indeed, several of our attorneys have worked in these industries, which means we understand both the business and legal aspects of our client's operations from the inside. For example, one of our attorneys is an award-winning author of eight suspense novels. Another is a graphic artist whose work includes the design of the mascot for the St. Louis University Billikens. Our professionals also include former television reporters, political speechwriters and professional musicians. We regularly have articles published in local, national and trade publications, and our attorneys are asked to serve as speakers about entertainment and media law issues at industry and legal conferences around the world. Several members of our Entertainment & Media team also serve as adjunct professors of law and teach intellectual property topics, including entertainment and media law.

We take a holistic approach to our clients' business, which means making sure they have access to other areas of expertise at our firm, such as Advertising & Marketing, Intellectual Property, Trusts & Estates, Commercial Transactions, Venture Capital, Real Estate, Labor & Employment and Litigation. We also have a solid grasp on where our clients' industries are going. Indeed, we are conversant with the legal issues surrounding new technology and business models, such as music-downloading, digital delivery systems, and Internet privacy concerns.

Music

Our music attorneys represent top recording artists, songwriters, producers and personal managers. We are counsel to music publishing, recording and production companies, digital distributors of music, talent agencies and promoters.

Our attorneys are adept at forming record labels, publishing companies and production companies, as well as artist loan-out companies and intra-group agreements. We also utilize significant resources to ensure that our client's copyrights, trademarks and other proprietary rights are protected and enforced.

Film & TV

Our attorneys handle all aspects of film and television production, financing and distribution. We are legal counsel to movie exhibition and distribution companies, independent film companies and production companies with respect to negotiating development/production agreements and option/acquisition agreements, creating production entities, engaging writers, directors and producers, drafting investment and financing agreements and coordinating with distributors, banks, financiers and completion guarantors on both a picture-by-picture and multi-picture basis.

We also represent the legal, business and personal interests of numerous producers, performers, writers, directors, managers and other talent and entrepreneurs in both film and television. In conjunction with our Intellectual Property group, we counsel our clients in all aspects of copyright and trademark law, advising as to the protection, acquisition and licensing of their copyrights, trademarks and other proprietary rights.

Publishing

We have significant experience in publishing and counsel clients in all aspects of trade, academic, professional and commercial publishing. We also represent, among others, children's authors, novelists and non-fiction writers in negotiation and contractual matters.

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Theatre

Whether for a community theatre production or Tony Award winners on Broadway, our attorneys represent actors, producers, playwrights, composers, theatre owners and investors, draft and negotiate touring, performance and venue agreements, license rights, and act as general counsel to a number of local and regional theatres. Our services encompass all aspects of theatrical productions, such as production, copyright and other proprietary rights issues and financing.

Merchandising & Special Events

Our attorneys have negotiated merchandising licenses for a variety of entertainment and sports-related properties, including sports action figure toys for all four major sports leagues and players associations, toy deals based on motion pictures and television shows, endorsement and sponsorship deals, branded media and sponsor-funded productions, clothing companies and marketing campaigns. We also represent performers, producers, promoters and associated recording, broadcasting and merchandising companies for the production of fairs, festivals, concerts, sporting, charitable fund raising and other special events.

Media

Our media attorneys advise a variety of media outlets including traditional and Web-based newspapers, magazines, and television, cable, radio, and satellite broadcasters.

Our expertise includes:

- Pre-publication review and libel clearance to publishers and broadcasters
- Defense of local and national publishers and broadcasters in defamation, libel, slander, privacy and First Amendment lawsuits
- Guidance in commercial and political advertising, game shows, contests and lotteries
- Drafting, review and negotiation of publishing, broadcasting and on-air talent agreements
- Counsel regarding copyright and trademark infringement and intellectual property protections
- Assisting publishing and broadcast clients with special issues, including reporter's privilege and related subpoena defense, FCC regulation compliance, and access to meetings, information and evidence pursuant to Sunshine, Open Meetings and Open Records Laws and Freedom of Information Act