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TOP INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAWYERS



**Dennis
Wilson**

Dennis Wilson is the trademarks expert who guided Facebook in its journey to become Meta. He also brought the important trademark case between Jack Daniels and a satiric dog toy company to the U.S. Supreme Court.

He can't talk about his work for Meta or his defense of the social media giant in lawsuits filed by smaller companies with similar names, such as *Meta Capital Management v. Meta Platforms Inc.*, 1:22-cv-07615 (S.D. N.Y., filed Sept. 7, 2022).

Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP LOS ANGELES

It has been publicly reported that his firm assisted Facebook with the acquisitions and registrations necessary to become Meta, including filing “stealth” trademark applications in a way that wouldn't be noticed prior to the announcement of the name change.

But in general, Wilson said, “it's really a complex enterprise to launch brands that are global.” These days, when streaming platforms announce a new title, “they're no longer launching in just one region.”

That is an aspect of trademark practice that has changed dramatically in the last few years. “Clearing names and selecting new marks has gotten so much more complicated because every business is online and essentially global,” Wilson said. As a result, businesses and law firms need “a more sophisticated global clearance practice.”

He and his team “work closely with a network of local counsel in regions all over the world.” Kilpatrick has more than 120 lawyers handling trademark and copyright matters, so Wilson can spend much of his time developing “global strategies about how to address a new business concern” for clients. About 60% of his work is counseling, he said.

The other 40% is litigation. For instance, he represented Snap in defending its Camera Kit Portal for camera software developers in a suit filed by a company that trademarked its CameraKit developer tools for Android. After the judge found Wilson's arguments for Snap “compelling,” the case quickly settled. *WonderKiln Inc. v. Snap Inc.*, 2:22-cv-03311 (C.D. Cal., May 16, 2022).

In the dog toy case, he represented the toy maker in the district court and the 9th Circuit and filed the initial briefing at the Supreme Court. *Jack Daniel's Properties Inc. v. VIP Products LLC.*, 143 S. Ct. 1578 (dec'd June 8, 2023).

Beyond his trademark work, Wilson handles copyright and right of publicity matters.

He also is known for mentoring nearly 200 people over his career. He is especially proud that “no lawyer that I've been part of hiring has ever left and gone to another firm.” Some associates have moved in-house, “but almost all of them have then hired us.”

— DON DEBENEDICTIS