

3 Firms Dominate In IP Litigation, GCs Say

Jones Day, Kirkland & Ellis LLP and Morrison & Foerster LLP are the top three firms picked by corporate counsel as their go-to firms for intellectual property matters, thanks to their fierce and aggressive approach to high-stakes litigation, according to a new survey.

Largely because of their expansive resources, tailored legal strategies and high success rates in high-profile IP litigation, Jones Day, Kirkland & Ellis and Morrison & Foerster were selected as the IP litigation “powerhouses” by about 300 corporate counsel interviewed by The BTI Consulting Group Inc., based in Wellesley, Mass., for its BTI Litigation Outlook 2014 report.

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The three IP litigation powerhouses all fill their IP attorney rosters with trial-savvy, technologically adept and knowledge-driven trial attorneys, patent prosecutors and litigators. Those are key components of an IP litigation heavyweight most valued by corporate counsel seeking to prosecute or defend patents, copyrights and trademarks as well as pursue licensing, trade secrets or other IP matters, according to the survey.

“It’s experience-based,” BTI Consulting President Michael Rynowecer told *Law360* of the firms’ successes in IP litigation. “Where you have such high-risk, high-stakes litigation such as IP, it brings velocity to the matter. That’s why you see active IP litigation and larger, high-profile cases.”

Kirkland & Ellis

Kirkland & Ellis, yet another BTI “fearsome foursome,” maintains a diverse IP practice with 270 IP attorneys — out of a total of 1,600 attorneys firmwide — spread across offices in New York, Chicago, London, Los Angeles, Palo Alto, San Francisco and Washington, D.C.

Greg Arovas, co-head of Kirkland’s IP practice group, told *Law360* that the firm maintains an active and diverse trial practice, taking on large-scale plaintiff and defense IP cases as well as cases before the International Trade Commission, among others.

“Certainly, one of the defining characteristics of the group is that we have a trial-focused approach to cases,” he said. “We have an assumption with most cases that they are going to go to trial.”

Arovas said Kirkland’s skilled IP attorneys all tackle litigation as a way of furthering or getting rid of obstacles to the bigger business objectives of the client.

“Trying to understand the business objectives of the client is important because often, IP litigation is part of the bigger business strategy of the client,” Arovas said. “So trying to not just look at the legal problems, but to keep in mind the business perspective to make the litigation serve the bigger goal as opposed to looking at litigation as an entity by itself.”

LITIGATION POWERHOUSES