

2022 RISING STAR

Akshay Deoras



Akshay Deoras of Kirkland & Ellis LLP has helped Motorola Solutions secure numerous victories in its legal battle against a Chinese rival over mobile radio technology, including a \$34.2 million attorney fee award, earning him a spot among the intellectual property attorneys under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

His biggest case:

Motorola Solutions in October won \$34.2 million in attorney fees and costs, on top of a \$760 million win in Illinois federal court against China-based Hytera Communications Corp., which the Chicago-headquartered company accused of making and selling two-way radios using its intellectual property.

Deoras, who is part of the Kirkland team representing Motorola, also handled the related investigation before the U.S. International Trade Commission, which in 2018 issued an exclusion order barring the Chinese

rival's radio systems from being imported into the U.S.

This was a "very complex litigation with global disputes," according to Deoras, who pointed out that there are several pending and complete cases in the U.S., as well as related cases in Germany, Australia, China and the U.K. All of those cases had their own issues with various complexities, which "needed to be addressed quickly and in a way that was accurate with everything we were dealing with," he said.

"It was extremely challenging, but also very rewarding," Deoras said. "It was

a great way to interact with lawyers across the world and to really get to know the engineers of Motorola that were developing the technology."

His proudest moment:

Deoras said that his proudest moment came recently when a California jury awarded Comet Technologies \$40 million in damages after finding that rival XP Power misappropriated trade secrets on equipment used in the manufacturing of semiconductor chips.

The victory was extremely rewarding, Deoras said, especially because of

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the close relationship he'd developed with Comet's engineers, where he was able to see the work they put into developing the technology at issue.

"To see the work they put in and to have the jury come back and agree that that was a protectable trade secret and there was misappropriation was a really key moment for me," Deoras said.

As a former engineering major, Deoras said that he enjoys learning about the technology at issue and

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working with experts in the field — from clients to witnesses — to understand what their technology is about and why it matters.

Why he's an IP litigator:

When there's a patent or trade secrets case, lawyers can sometimes "get lost in the minutiae," Deoras said. But these cases often involve people who've dedicated their lives to developing technology that can make a huge difference, and lawyers can help to tell that story to a judge or jury — and "on its own, it's very self-motivating," he said.

"That's the thing that wants me to keep doing this job, day in and day out — I'm helping to make a difference for these people who really care about this technology personally," Deoras said.

As a Kirkland attorney from the start, Deoras added that being at the firm, with "so many fantastic trial lawyers" that he works with daily, makes him want to be a better trial lawyer.

How his practice will change in 10 years:

Deoras said that he believes that juries are becoming "more and more tech-savvy," and that trial lawyers will need to learn how to tell the story of how the technology was developed in a way that doesn't make them feel like they're being talked down to.

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