



# Kristin J. Achterhof

Partner and Co-Chair, Advertising and Brand Litigation

Intellectual Property

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Kristin Achterhof is the national co-chair of Katten's Advertising and Brand Litigation practice and serves as Katten's national hiring partner. Kristin has represented some of the world's most recognizable companies and is often the first phone call that leading technology, manufacturing, consumer goods, entertainment and fashion-industry clients make on difficult trademark, copyright and other intellectual property issues. As a first-chair trial attorney, she handles intellectual property and all manner of complex business disputes in court. As an adviser on transactions, she maximizes her clients' rights and revenues. Both in and out of the courtroom, she is an advocate and adviser, with an eye to helping clients optimize and protect their tangible and intangible property rights and assets.

## Litigator and counselor on the frontier of IP law and commercial business disputes

Household names in the technology and entertainment sectors and famous brands in all areas of consumer products and services rely on Kristin as an advocate and trusted advisor on IP, general advertising and competition issues. She has counseled multinational clients in multiple high-profile disputes involving novel ecommerce issues. She also gives strategic advice to clients on exploiting their copyrights and trademarks over social media, and on how to best protect their IP rights in software and emerging technologies.

Kristin acts as a first-chair trial attorney in disputes in federal court, state court and before the US Patent & Trademark Office (USPTO) Trademark Trial and Appeal Board. In addition to her extensive litigation experience, she represents clients in IP-related transactions that range from licenses to distribution agreements to vendor contracts.

For many clients, Kristin is something more than an experienced first chair litigator. For them, she is a strategic counselor and partner, who takes the time to truly understand their business and what matters most when their brands are under attack, their IP is being exploited or when they simply need an effective advocate in their corner. Clients also benefit from her

## Practices

- Advertising and Brand Litigation
- Artificial Intelligence
- Intellectual Property
- Intellectual Property Litigation
- Litigation
- Patent Litigation and Patents
- Trademark Licensing and Strategy
- Trademarks and Trademark Litigation

## Industries

- Entertainment and Media
- Entertainment and Media Litigation
- Private Client Services
- Technology

## Education

- JD, Northwestern University School of Law, *with honors*
- BA, Macalester College, *magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa*

## Bar Admissions

- Illinois

## Court Admissions

- US District Court, District of Colorado
- US Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit
- US District Court, Eastern District of Michigan
- US District Court, Northern District of Illinois

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extensive knowledge and experience as a counselor and advocate in disputes involving their advertising, marketing and promotions practices. All of her abilities combine to make her a trusted advisor, a passionate and practical advocate, and, for her clients, the first phone call.

Kristin is a frequent speaker and panel member for business, legal practice and educational groups across the country, and she is frequently quoted in national and international publications. She also is a skilled mediator and a member of the Panel of Neutrals for the Alternative Dispute Resolution Program, sponsored jointly by the International Trademark Association and the International Institute for Conflict Prevention and Resolution.

## Recognitions

*Recognized or listed in the following:*

- *Best Lawyers in America*
  - Trademark Law, 2019–2026
  - Litigation - Intellectual Property, 2023–2026
  - Litigation - Patent, 2026
  - Patent Law, 2026
  - Lawyer of the Year
    - Trademark Law, Chicago, 2020
- *Chambers USA*
  - Intellectual Property: Trademark, Copyright & Trade Secrets, 2021–2025
- *Crain's Chicago Business*
  - Notable Women in Law, 2026
- *Global IP Star*
  - 2018
- *Managing Intellectual Property*
  - Litigator of the Year, Illinois – Finalist, 2025
  - IP Star – Trademark, 2013–2025
  - Top 250 Women in IP, 2013–2014, 2023
- *Super Lawyers*
  - Illinois, 2009, 2012–2026
  - Top 50: Women Illinois Super Lawyers, 2022, 2025

## Professional & Community Involvement

- American Bar Association
- International Trademark Association
- Northwestern University School of Law Alumni Board of Directors
- The Chicago Bar Association
- Lawyers for the Creative Arts, Board of Directors

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***"She listens carefully, she's practical and a great lawyer."  
"If we have sticky issues we go to her; she is very creative and easy to work with."***

***Chambers USA 2022  
(Illinois, Intellectual Property: Trademark, Copyright & Trade Secrets) survey response***

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- *The Legal 500 United States*
  - Leading Partner, 2025
  - Recommended Attorney, 2014, 2016–2022, 2024–2025
- *World Trademark Review 1000*
  - Illinois, 2015–2023, 2025–2026

## News

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- Katten Partners Named Notable Women in Law in Chicago (March 2, 2026)
- Katten IP Practice Ranked by *World Trademark Review 1000* (January 28, 2026)
- Katten Attorneys Named to 2026 Illinois Super Lawyers, Rising Stars Lists (January 21, 2026)
- Katten Celebrates 101 Attorneys Honored by *Best Lawyers®* (August 21, 2025)
- Katten Receives High Marks in the Legal 500 US 2025 Guide (June 11, 2025)
- *Managing Intellectual Property* Honors Katten and Multiple IP Stars in 2025 Rankings (June 5, 2025)
- *Chambers USA 2025* Ranks Katten as Leading Law Firm (June 5, 2025)
- *Managing Intellectual Property* 2025 Americas Awards Honor Katten and Karen Artz Ash (April 25, 2025)
- Katten IP Practice Receives Acclaim in *World Trademark Review 1000*, 2025 (February 3, 2025)
- Katten Attorneys Selected for 2025 Illinois Super Lawyers, Rising Stars Lists (January 31, 2025)
- Katten Attorneys Recognized as *Best Lawyers®* and *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch®* Award Recipients (August 15, 2024)
- *Managing Intellectual Property* Recognizes 2024 Katten IP Stars (July 3, 2024)
- Kristin Achterhof Quoted by *Managing Intellectual Property* on Aftermath of *Jack Daniel's v. VIP Products* (June 20, 2024)
- Katten Highly Ranked in Legal 500 United States 2024 (June 12, 2024)

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- Katten Receives High Marks in *Chambers USA* Guide 2024 (June 6, 2024)
- Katten Attorneys Named to 2024 Illinois Super Lawyers, Rising Stars Lists (January 25, 2024)
- Katten Named 2024 'Law Firm of the Year' for Trademark Law by Best Law Firms® (November 2, 2023)
- Katten Attorneys Distinguished by *Best Lawyers*® (August 17, 2023)
- *Managing Intellectual Property* Recognizes Katten IP Stars (June 29, 2023)
- Katten Boosts Rankings in *Chambers USA Guide 2023* (June 1, 2023)
- Kristin Achterhof Recognized Among *Managing Intellectual Property's* 'Top 250 Women in IP' (April 28, 2023)
- Katten Attorneys Selected to 2023 Illinois Super Lawyers, Rising Stars Lists (January 24, 2023)
- Katten Attorneys Recognized by *Best Lawyers*® (August 18, 2022)
- Katten Awarded Top Ranking in Structured Finance: Securitization in The Legal 500 United States 2022 (June 8, 2022)
- Katten Ranked Leading Law Firm by *Chambers USA 2022* (June 1, 2022)
- *Managing Intellectual Property* Recognizes Seven Katten Attorneys as 2022 IP Stars (May 27, 2022)
- Katten IP Partners Receive Accolades in *World Trademark Review 1000* (May 23, 2022)
- Katten Attorneys Named to 2022 Illinois Super Lawyers, Rising Stars Lists (January 28, 2022)
- Katten Attorneys Listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*® (August 19, 2021)
- Katten Ranked Best in Intellectual Property by Managing IP Stars 2021 (July 7, 2021)
- Katten Receives High Marks in Derivatives, M&A and Securitization in The Legal 500 United States 2021 Guide (June 10, 2021)
- Katten Boosts Rankings in *Chambers USA 2021* (May 20, 2021)
- Katten IP Practice Honored by *World Trademark Review 1000* (February 24, 2021)
- Katten Attorneys Chosen for 2021 Illinois Super Lawyers, Rising Stars Lists (January 29, 2021)

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- Katten Attorneys Distinguished as Top Legal Talent in the 2021 *Best Lawyers in America* and *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch* Lists (August 20, 2020)
- Katten Ranked Best in Intellectual Property by Managing IP Stars 2020 (May 1, 2020)
- *World Trademark Review* Spotlights "Exceptional" Katten IP Partners (March 5, 2020)
- Katten Attorneys Selected to 2020 Illinois Super Lawyers, Rising Stars Lists (January 29, 2020)
- Katten Attorneys Honored for Outstanding Volunteer Legal Services (June 21, 2019)
- Katten Praised in The Legal 500 United States 2019 Guide (June 11, 2019)
- Katten Praised by *World Trademark Review* (March 27, 2019)
- Super Lawyers Lists Honor More Than 50 Katten Attorneys in Illinois (January 24, 2019)
- Katten Distinguished by *The Legal 500 United States* (June 14, 2018)
- Katten Prized as Top IP Firm by World Trademark Review (February 8, 2018)
- Katten Attorneys Recognized in 2018 Illinois Super Lawyers, Rising Stars Lists (January 25, 2018)
- Katten Distinguished by *The Legal 500 United States 2017* (May 31, 2017)
- Katten Recognized as Top IP Firm by *World Trademark Review* (January 20, 2017)
- Katten Attorneys Recognized in 2017 Illinois *Super Lawyers*, Rising Stars Lists (January 13, 2017)
- Eighteen Katten Practices and 70 Attorneys Recognized by *The Legal 500 United States 2016* (June 17, 2016)
- Katten Recognized by *World Trademark Review 1000* for Exceptional Work in Trade Identity Protection (January 27, 2016)
- Forty-Seven Katten Attorneys Recognized in 2016 Illinois *Super Lawyers* List (January 8, 2016)
- Katten Attorneys Receive High Marks From *World Trademark Review 1000* (January 28, 2015)

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- Fifty-Three Katten Attorneys Recognized in 2015 Illinois *Super Lawyers* List (January 12, 2015)
- Katten Attorneys Meredith Martin Addy, Karen Artz Ash and Kristin Achterhof Named to *Managing Intellectual Property's* "IP Stars - Top 250 Women in IP" (September 1, 2014)
- Eight Katten Practices and Forty-Two Attorneys Recognized by *The Legal 500 United States* 2014 (July 3, 2014)
- 2014 *Managing Intellectual Property* IP Handbook Recognizes Intellectual Property Attorneys and Practice (May 13, 2014)
- Fifty-Four Katten Attorneys Recognized in 2014 Illinois *Super Lawyers* List (January 13, 2014)
- Katten Attorneys Karen Artz Ash and Kristin Achterhof Named to *Managing Intellectual Property's* "IP Stars - Top 250 Women in IP" (October 13, 2013)
- Katten's Intellectual Property Practice and Attorneys Recognized in *Managing Intellectual Property's* 2013 IP Handbook (May 15, 2013)
- Sixty-Nine Katten Attorneys Included on 2013 Illinois *Super Lawyers* List (January 4, 2013)
- Katten Attorneys Quoted in *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* Article on RumChata Trademark Suit (January 2, 2013)
- Katten Attorneys Mentioned in *Crain's* Story on Angelina Jolie Copyright Dispute (June 28, 2012)
- Eighty-Six Katten Attorneys Named 2012 Illinois Super Lawyers (February 28, 2012)
- Partner Kristin Achterhof Interviewed by FOX News Chicago on Juggling Career and Family (September 19, 2011)
- Katten Named Among World's Top Trademark Firms in *WTR 1000* (April 26, 2011)
- Partner Kristin Achterhof Earns Client's Recognition in *MarketWatch* (February 3, 2009)
- Katten Attorneys Get Class Action Lawsuit Against Zango Dismissed, With Prejudice (September 7, 2006)
- Universal Wins Movie Parody Trademark Case (May 22, 2006)

## Publications

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- *The Katten Kattwalk/Kattison Avenue* | Issue 5 (Winter 2026)
- *Kattison Avenue* | Issue 15 (Fall 2025)

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- *ESG Guidepost* | Issue 21 (January 2025)
- Websites Under Attack — Defenses to ADA Claims for Retailers and Online Businesses (Winter 2025)
- *The Katten Kattwalk/Kattison Avenue* | Issue 4 (Winter 2025)
- *Kattison Avenue* | Issue 12 (Spring 2024)
- Privacy, Data and Cybersecurity *Quick Clicks* | Issue 16 (April 18, 2024)
- Privacy, Data and Cybersecurity *Quick Clicks* | Issue 7 (July 2023)
- Federal Trade Commission Updates Endorsement Guides and Proposes New Rule on Consumer Reviews (July 5, 2023)
- FTC Warns Massive List of US Companies Not to Deceive Consumers With False Endorsements and Reviews (October 15, 2021)
- A Hail Mary to the U.S. Supreme Court? Owner of REDSKINS Marks Petitions for Hearing on Constitutionality of Section 2(a) of the Lanham Act (May 5, 2016)
- Apple-Samsung Trade Dress Case Demonstrates Potential Value of Design Patents (May 20, 2015)
- 2009 Year-End Intellectual Property Issues Advisory (December 2009)

## Presentations and Events

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- ANA Advertising Law 1-Day Conference (April 23, 2026)
- ANA Masters of Advertising Law Conference (November 3–5, 2025) | *Presenter* | *Litigation Trends: Is There Any Safe Campaign?*
- ANA Advertising Law 1-Day Conference (March 26, 2025) | *Presenter* | *Recent Developments in Advertising Law: Trends and Key Decisions*
- 2024 ANA Masters of Advertising Law Conference (November 11–13, 2024) | *Panelist* | *Basics of IP Issues in Advertising, Including Copyright & Trademark*
- A Survey of Recent Decisions on Survey Evidence – Where Are We Now? (October 9, 2024) | *Speaker*
- ANA Advertising Law 1-Day Conference (March 20, 2024) | *Co-Presenter* | *The Latest on AI*
- Brand Activation Legal Committee Meeting (November 17, 2022)

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- The Realities of Virtual Litigation (January 27–February 17, 2021) | *Speaker | Depositions from a Distance — Going Virtual*
- 2020 ANA/BAA Marketing Law Conference (November 10–12, 2020)
- 62nd Annual Intellectual Property Law Conference (November 2, 2018) | *Panelist*
- 2017 ANA/BAA Marketing Law Conference (November 13–15, 2017) | *Presenter | Transformative Trademarks & Other Key Issues*
- BAA Government & Legal Affairs Update: June 2016 (June 23, 2016) | *Moderator*
- 2015 ABA Annual Meeting: IPCENTRAL (July 30, 2015) | *Speaker | Four Lanham Act Gold Records in 12 Months by the Supremes: You Keep Us Hanging On*
- International Trademark Association Annual Meeting (May 2–6, 2015) | *Panelist | Secrets for Success in Mediating Lanham Act Cases*
- The Challenge of Copyright in the Digital Age (January 10, 2007) | *Guest Lecturer*
- Spencer Grimes Appellate Judges Summit (November 9–11, 2006) | *Presenter | Trademark Infringement and Dilution Under the Lanham Act and State Common Law*