



Carolyn M. Passen

Counsel

Intellectual Property

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Carolyn Passen focuses her practice on intellectual property litigation and counseling, with an emphasis on trademarks, copyrights and trade secrets. She also litigates claims involving false advertising, unfair competition and defamation.

A thoughtful and practical approach to intellectual property

Carolyn regularly advises clients on how to best protect and defend their intellectual property and avoid infringement disputes. Her clients include Fortune 100 companies and other well-known brands in the fashion, technology, pharmaceutical and hospitality industries. She also defends major media corporations against claims of defamation stemming from statements made during public broadcasts or in the press.

Clients value Carolyn's judgment and practical approach to trademark clearance, prosecution, risk mitigation and enforcement strategies. She has represented clients in federal district courts and appellate courts throughout the country, as well as before the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board and US International Trade Commission. Many of her cases have been cited as precedent and discussed in professional journals due to the high profile and cutting-edge nature of the litigation involved. In addition, Carolyn often negotiates highly sensitive and confidential trademark acquisitions on behalf of clients.

Carolyn has helped a variety of artists, nonprofits, and start-up companies protect their brands as a volunteer for Lawyers for the Creative Arts, and through the firm's pro bono program.

While in law school, Carolyn served as an editor of the *Law Review*. She also externed with the Office of the Illinois Attorney General. Carolyn has been a member of the firm's Intellectual Property department since joining the firm as a summer associate.

Recognitions

Recognized or listed in the following:

- Chambers USA

Practices

- Intellectual Property
- Intellectual Property Litigation
- Litigation
- Trademarks and Trademark Litigation

Industries

- Entertainment and Media
- Fashion, Retail, Luxury and Beauty
- Hospitality
- Technology

Education

- JD, DePaul University College of Law, *cum laude*
- BA, Miami University, *cum laude*

Bar Admissions

- Illinois

Court Admissions

- US Court of Appeals, Federal Circuit
- US Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit
- US District Court, Northern District of Illinois

Community Involvements

- American Bar Association
- The Chicago Bar Association

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- Intellectual Property: Trademark, Copyright & Trade Secrets, 2022–2025
- *Best Lawyers in America*
 - Trademark Law, 2023–2026
- *Super Lawyers Rising Stars*
 - Illinois, 2009–2010, 2014
- *World Trademark Review 1000*
 - Illinois, 2025–2026

News

- Katten IP Practice Ranked by *World Trademark Review 1000* (January 28, 2026)
- Katten Celebrates 101 Attorneys Honored by *Best Lawyers*® (August 21, 2025)
- *Chambers USA* 2025 Ranks Katten as Leading Law Firm (June 5, 2025)
- Katten Named to *The Fashion Law* 2025 List of Top US Law Firms for Retail Companies (March 12, 2025)
- Katten IP Practice Receives Acclaim in *World Trademark Review 1000*, 2025 (February 3, 2025)
- Katten Attorneys Recognized as *Best Lawyers*® and *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch*® Award Recipients (August 15, 2024)
- Katten Receives High Marks in *Chambers USA* Guide 2024 (June 6, 2024)
- Katten Scores Dismissal of Patent Docketing Contractor From Lawsuit Regarding Missed IP Deadline (April 16, 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)
- Katten Boosts Rankings in *Chambers USA* Guide 2023 (June 1, 2023)
- Katten Attorneys Recognized by *Best Lawyers*® (August 18, 2022)
- Katten Ranked Leading Law Firm by *Chambers USA* 2022 (June 1, 2022)
- Katten Secures Motion to Dismiss for YCharts in California District Court Case (May 19, 2015)

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- Katten Successfully Represents Cumulus Media in Illinois Appellate Court Defamation Case (April 21, 2015)
- Katten Obtains Dismissal for Cumulus Broadcasting in Defamation Suit (July 21, 2014)
- Fifty-Four Katten Attorneys Recognized in 2014 Illinois *Super Lawyers* List (January 13, 2014)
- Katten's Representation of Agave Loco Highlighted in Law360 Article (October 2, 2013)
- Katten's Representation of Bausch & Lomb in District Court Noted in Law360 (September 5, 2013)
- Katten Obtains Favorable Decision for Bausch & Lomb in Trademark Infringement Suit (July 29, 2013)
- Katten Representation of Bausch & Lomb in Trademark Infringement Suit Noted in Law360 (April 9, 2013)
- Eighty-Six Katten Attorneys Named 2012 Illinois Super Lawyers (February 28, 2012)
- Katten Secures Federal Circuit Reversal in Lucky Litter IP Matter (October 11, 2010)
- Katten Attorneys Win Federal Appeals Case on Behalf of Entrepreneur (October 8, 2010)

Publications

- 2009 Year-End Intellectual Property Issues Advisory (December 2009)