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IP ISSUES IN MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

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Key IP Issues in Mergers & Acquisitions

- I. IP due diligence: scope, validity, ownership, chain of title of IP, rights of use, infringement
- II. IP considerations in structuring the transaction
- III. IP issues in documenting the transaction
- IV. Following through on post-closing implementation and integration
- V. Issues following failed transactions

Importance of a Tailored Plan

1. Nature of transaction
 - a) Acquisition: share vs. asset; public vs. private
 - b) Equity investment
 - c) Collaboration: in-license; out-license; partnering

2. Focus early on business objectives and value
 - a) Importance of IP to business objectives
 - b) Relative importance of specific categories of IP
 - c) Determination of useful life of assets involved in deal

Importance of a Tailored Plan (Cont.)

3. Time/budget constraints
 - a) Competitive auction vs. exclusive negotiations
 - b) Role of in-house counsel

4. Acquiring less than entire business or contemplating post-acquisition divestitures?
 - a) Focus early on whether IP can feasibly be split
 - b) Determine interplay of IP and antitrust strategies for divestitures

Importance of a Tailored Plan (Cont.)

5. Information available on public vs. private company
 - a) SEC and other public filings
 - b) Industry-specific filings/correspondence (e.g., FDA)
 - c) Discussion with and reliance on target's IP counsel and technical personnel

6. Privilege issues
 - a) IP opinions
 - b) Buyer (investor syndicates)

I. IP Due Diligence

1. Scope, validity, and ownership/chain of title of IP (patent, trademark, copyright, trade secret and other proprietary information, validity of patent(s) related to directly competing products)
2. Right to use and prevent others from using
 - Infringement analysis — by target or by third party with respect to target's IP
 - Obligations to others (open source, use of government funds)

IP Rights Owned by the Target and Right to Sell Products/Services

1. “Registered” IP (patent, trademark, design rights, domain names, copyrights) versus “unregistered” IP (trade secret, confidential information, unregistered trademark)
2. Role of database searches for “registered” IP due diligence
3. Different approach to “unregistered” rights
4. Software, databases, open source, privacy issues

IP Rights Owned by the Target and Right to Sell Products/Services (Cont.)

4. Identifying issues affecting value
 - a) Ownership/chain of title: ensuring proper IP is transferred or transferable
 - b) Scope
 - c) Validity: IP owned by target and third parties
 - d) Right to use and prevent others from using
 - e) Review of measures taken to protect trade secrets and confidential proprietary information

Agreements/Licenses Relating to IP Rights

1. Review of IP licenses and other IP-relevant agreements
2. Identify issues affecting value
 - a) Scope and transferability of IP licenses
 - b) Sufficiency of IP licenses for future operations
 - c) Impact of existing encumbrances on IP
 - d) Quality control in trademark licenses
 - e) Lurking franchises
 - f) Registered user filings
 - g) Intercompany licenses
 - h) Enterprise agreements

Existing Litigation/Latent Litigation

1. Identification and assessment of infringement risks (including pending litigation)
2. Pending litigation, claims, disputes
3. Past litigation, claims, disputes
4. Challenges in identifying potential claims

II. IP Considerations in Structuring the Transaction

A. IP Ownership

1. Evaluate options for ownership of IP (e.g., joint ownership, assignments, licenses)

Transfer of IP

1. Interplay of IP, corporate and tax analysis
 - a) Ensure appropriate assets are transferred and liabilities are left behind
 - b) Ensure entities acquiring IP will exercise appropriate management/control
 - c) Minimize IP transfer costs, invalidity concerns
 - d) Minimize tax issues

Sharing/Splitting IP

1. IP licenses between competitors
 - a) Interplay of IP and antitrust analysis: balancing need for quality control versus potential collusion concerns
 - b) Interplay of IP and bankruptcy analysis (e.g., valuation of license of IP versus outright ownership)
1. Splitting of IP rights along geography, fields of use, indication, lines of business, or other aspects?
 - a) Consider potential effect on IP value
 - b) Analysis depends on geography and level of relatedness of goods/services

III. Addressing IP Issues in Documenting the Transaction

- A. Definitions of Transferred IP and Retained IP in Acquisitions
- B. Indemnification, Special Escrows, and Allocation of IP Risk

Addressing IP Issues in Documenting the Transaction (Cont.)

C. Licenses and Assignments

1. Ensure appropriate IP is transferred
2. Determine IP exclusivity related to transaction
3. Determine IP with broader application than transaction
4. Avoid faulty assignments
5. Minimize transfer delays/burden/costs
6. Determine interplay with non-compete language

Addressing IP Issues in Documenting the Transaction (Cont.)

D. Representations and Warranties

1. Ownership
2. Validity
3. Infringement
4. Reasonable measures to protect trade secrets and confidential/proprietary information
5. Sufficiency of IP to conduct business as it is being operated

Addressing IP Issues in Documenting the Transaction (Cont.)

E. Further Assurances

1. Take full actions of effect/chain of title/ownership of assets

F. Transition Licenses; Transition Service Agreements

1. Balancing key legal principles (including quality control for IP licenses) with practical business concerns

Addressing IP Issues in Documenting the Transaction (Cont.)

- G. Planning for Integration of Acquired IP into Existing IP Portfolio
 1. Ensure appropriate documentation is transferred (e.g., official IP office documentation; pertinent files; counsel contact information)
 2. Relative rights for prosecution, maintenance and enforcement/defense of infringement actions

IV. Post-Closing Implementation and Integration

- A. Compliance with Licenses and Agreements
 1. Phase-out of transition services (manufacturing, distribution, etc.)
 2. Phase-out of marks/names by seller
 3. Post-closing quality control in any trademark licenses

Assignment Recordal

1. Know requirements for assignments and recordal in each jurisdiction
2. Minimize cost and time of obtaining assignments and recordals
3. Liaise with tax advisors regarding consideration

Integration of IP into Existing Portfolio

1. Aligning IP protection to business objectives
 - a) Expanding existing coverage through strategic filing programs
 - b) Contracting coverage where needed
2. Implementing arrangements for appropriate ownership, control, and use of brands to avoid invalidity and tax concerns
3. Managing patent and trademark portfolios to meet objectives (including global maintenance and enforcement strategies)

V. Issues Following Failed Transactions

1. Use of confidential information
2. Ability to continue with internal product/service development

Summary

Maximizing Value/Minimizing Deficiencies

1. Tailor approach to business objectives and value
2. Factor IP issues into transaction structure
3. Address IP issues in transaction agreements
4. Execute closing and post-closing integration

QUESTIONS?

Biography



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Louis W. Beardell Jr. focuses his practice on intellectual property (IP) matters in connection with patent strategies, IP due diligence, litigation, and transactions. He assists clients in developing and implementing programs that protect products and inventions including trade secrets, particularly in the life sciences, technology, and financial services fields. For US and international clients, Louis negotiates and prepares the IP aspects of licensing and purchase agreements, as well as agreements relating to product and service supply, collaboration, research, consulting, patent litigation settlement, and material transfer.



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Jay Carrigan maintains a general corporate and commercial practice, concentrating on emerging and established companies in the information technology and life sciences, including biotechnology and medical devices, industries. He assists clients with technology development, technology acquisition, and licensing arrangements; strategic alliances; marketing and distribution arrangements; outsourcing and supply arrangements; and a diverse array of commercial matters. Many of his transactions involve cross-border activities and arrangements. Jay also advises private companies and investors with respect to formation and fund raising matters.

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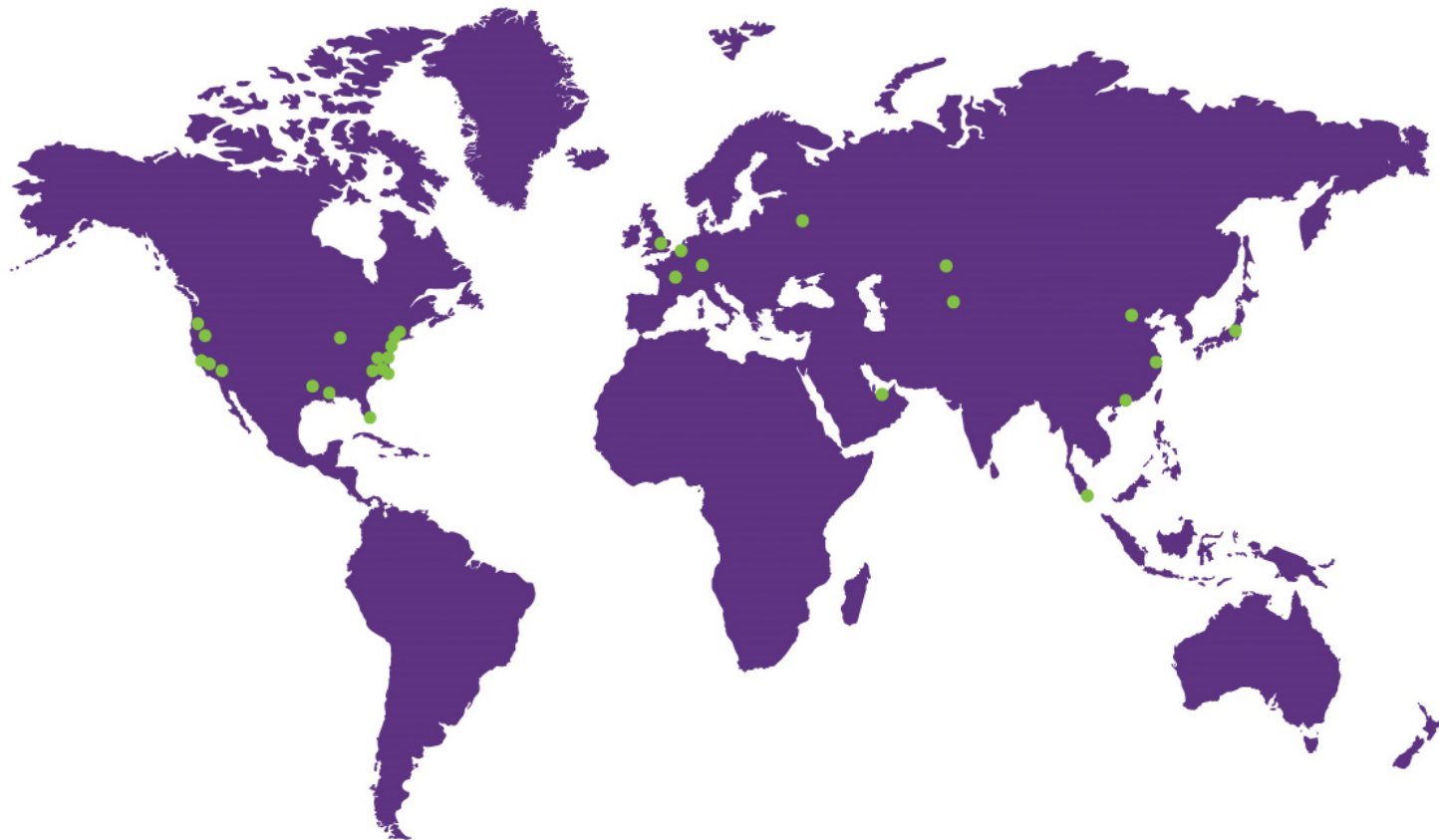
Rachelle Dubow's practice focuses on counseling, protection, and licensing of intellectual property rights, with an emphasis on trademark prosecution and global brand management. Rachelle assists domestic and multinational companies in the selection, clearance, registration, and enforcement of trademarks, the licensing of trademark rights, and the related manufacturing and distribution of licensed products and services. In addition, Rachelle assists with general IP diligence in both M&A and investment-related transactions.

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