

IP Hires: Covington, Polsinelli, Michael Best

By **Steven Trader**

Law360 (April 27, 2018, 4:58 PM EDT) -- In this week's round of intellectual property attorney moves, Covington & Burling LLP bolstered its technology transactions practice with a seasoned partner who's advised on IP matters in several billion-dollar transactions, while Polsinelli PC landed a veteran IP litigator who was instrumental in bringing a U.S. Patent & Trademark Office to Denver, and Michael Best & Friedrich LLP hired a new managing partner with more than two decades worth of intellectual property experience. Here are the details on these and other notable hires.

Armstrong Teasdale Adds IP Litigator From Senniger Powers

Armstrong Teasdale LLP announced that Marc W. Vander Tuig, an intellectual property litigator who specializes in patent proceedings, was joining the firm's St. Louis office.

Previously at Senniger Powers LLP, Vander Tuig will focus his practice on representing clients in complex patent cases in district courts throughout the United States, according to Armstrong Teasdale's April 2 announcement of the hire. He will also take on commercial disputes in other intellectual property areas, including trademarks, trade secrets and trade dress.

Vander Tuig previously headed Senniger Powers' proceedings before the Patent Trial and Appeal Board, where he took on inter partes reviews, covered business method reviews and interference proceedings for clients, according to Armstrong Teasdale.

The attorney also works to provide clients with counseling on their patents, due diligence and licensing, according to the firm. Vander Tuig has experience with industries such as chemicals, electronics, motors, pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, software and telecommunications, according to the firm.

"Armstrong Teasdale has one of the largest IP practices in the region," Vander Tuig told Law360. "This existing platform presented an attractive opportunity for me to grow my practice, as did the energy and resources that [the firm] invests in IP litigation."

Cole Schotz Adds Patent Pro From Greenberg Traurig

IP pro Marcella Bodner has left Greenberg Traurig LLP to serve as special counsel at Cole Schotz PC in Hackensack, New Jersey.



Marc Vander Tuig

Bodner advises companies through the patent life cycle, including figuring out if a new invention is patentable, preparing patent applications, appealing any rejections — both in the U.S. and Europe — working on inter partes reviews and enforcing those patents. The patents she works with include those for pharmaceuticals and medical devices.

Before joining Greenberg Traurig, Bodner worked as patent counsel at Dow Chemical for more than a decade.

Covington Hires Ex-Wilson Sonsini Tech Deals Pro

The technology transactions practice in Covington & Burling LLP's Silicon Valley office received a boost this week with the hire of longtime Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati PC partner Suzanne Y. Bell.

Bell has focused her practice on cutting-edge tech issues involving artificial intelligence, big data, blockchain, financial technology, digital health, autonomous vehicles and the internet of things — where devices are linked up to the same network. She also specializes in advising clients on IP issues that arise in mergers and acquisitions, capital markets, and venture capital transactions, the firm said.



Suzanne Bell

In her nearly 30 years at Wilson Sonsini, Bell advised a variety of companies in emerging areas of technology on intellectual property, licensing and contract issues, according to the firm. Bell said she is excited to join Covington and looks forward to helping it build its tech practice and advise clients on incorporating new technologies into their businesses.

“The firm’s collaborative approach will allow me to work hand-in-hand with lawyers across the firm’s various offices and practices,” Bell said in the release.

Some of the big-ticket deals Bell has worked on include counseling marketing software company Marketo Inc. in Vista Equity Partners’ \$1.79 billion, all-cash acquisition and helping a team that advised videoconferencing equipment maker Polycom Inc. in its \$2 billion sale to private equity firm Siris Capital Group LLC. Her past clients have also included Salesforce.com Inc., video game giant Electronic Arts Inc., data networking solutions provider Aruba Networks Inc. and information technology company Riverbed Technology Inc.

Dunlap Bennett & Ludwig Opens 1st Florida Office

Leading corporate and intellectual property law firm Dunlap Bennett & Ludwig is expanding into Florida, bringing on two lawyers in a new Tampa office, the Virginia-based firm recently announced.

Gus M. Centrone and Brian L. Shrader, who most recently ran general practice firm Centrone & Shrader LLC, will oversee the new office. They will focus on criminal defense, consumer protection, commercial litigation and class action work, according to DBL.

Centrone brings with him more than 10 years of experience, having worked on a variety of consumer protection matters, including alleged violations of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, Telephone Consumer Protection Act, Credit Repair Organizations Act and Florida Deceptive and Unfair Trade

Practices Act. Shrader, meanwhile, has taken part in more than 200 trials in state and federal court, including bankruptcy adversarial cases, according to DBL.

Michael Best Adds Managing Partner From Coats & Bennett

Michael Best & Friedrich LLP announced this week it had hired Anthony Biller, an intellectual property attorney with experience handling patent, trademark, copyright and trade secrets disputes, as the new managing partner for its Raleigh, North Carolina, office.

Biller has spent the last two decades representing Tar Heel State clients on a wide array of intellectual property matters in trial and appellate courts and made the leap to Michael Best with fellow Coats & Bennett IP attorney Emily Haas, who's joining as senior counsel, the firm said.

Biller's work has included persuading the Federal Circuit in 2016 to revive an inventor's case against ticket seller Fandango LLC in the wake of the appeals court's high-profile en banc decision in Akamai, which made it easier to prove infringement when multiple parties perform the steps of the patent.

"Anthony's proven leadership abilities, coupled with Emily's exceptional litigation reputation, will reinforce the firm's footprint in a strategic market and set the stage for continued expansion and valued client service," firmwide managing partner David Krutz said in a statement.

Former Michael Best attorney Shane Brunner, who spent the last decade at Merchant & Gould PC focusing on IP disputes for pharmaceutical, manufacturing, biotechnology and computer technology companies, has also rejoined Michael Best as a partner in its Madison, Wisconsin, office, the firm said.

Brunner first joined Michael Best in 2001, but left nearly eight years later to help set up Merchant & Gould's Madison office. He previously served as an associate at Jenner & Block LLP and as a certified public accountant at PricewaterhouseCoopers predecessor Coopers & Lybrand.

"We're thrilled to have Shane on board," litigation practice chair John Scheller said in a statement. "His broad range of intellectual property litigation experience and proven track record will bring great depth to our already-established group, and we're looking forward to having him on our team."

Morris Manning & Martin Adds 5 In IP & Opens Gov't Contracts Practice

Morris Manning & Martin LLP launched a Washington, D.C.-based government contracts practice group and bolstered the intellectual property practice group in its D.C. office as well with the addition of five attorneys, the firm announced this week.

Morris Manning's IP group brought back Ping Wang, who holds a medical degree from Kunming Medical College, as a partner, nearly a decade after she left the firm to join what is now Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP in 2010. Wang worked with Andrews Kurth Kenyon's IP group before that firm combined with Hunton & Williams LLP to form Hunton Andrews.

Wang brings with her from Hunton Andrews partner Michael Ye, of counsel John Murray and patent agents Peter Brunovskis, Qiang Li and F. Pierre VanderVegt, adding to Morris Manning's depth in patent litigation and prosecution; international trade commission proceedings; trademark, trade dress and unfair



Andrew Mohr

competition litigation; copyright litigation; trade secrets litigation; and cease-and-desist letters and injunctions, among other issues.

"We're continuously seeking ways to broaden our capabilities to better serve our clients," Morris Manning managing partner Louise Wells said in a statement. "We knew we wanted to build our IP practice and add government contracts. The new attorneys will help us to better serve clients not only in D.C., but nationally and internationally, and we are excited to have them join our incredible team."

Former Cohen Mohr LLP partner Andrew Mohr was brought on board to head the new government contracts practice, leading a team focused on federal, state and local procurement, administrative and contract law and clients that provide high-tech goods and services to government entities, according to an April 16 release from the firm.

Polsinelli Snags IP Atty Who Helped Bring USPTO to Denver

Polsinelli PC has landed a veteran intellectual property litigator who was so determined to convince the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to open a regional office in Denver that he logged more than 1,000 hours on the project pro bono.

John Posthumus, who joined the firm as a shareholder earlier in April from Sheridan Ross PC, was instrumental in seeing Denver selected in 2012 as one of four USPTO outposts across the country, the firm said.

When Denver was passed over for the first regional office, Posthumus worked with the Colorado Bar Association and members of Congress to draft legislation that became part of the America Invents Act and required the USPTO to open three more satellite offices. He was also heavily involved in the bidding process that took place afterward and secured Denver one of those spots.

"He worked tirelessly for years, donating his time to work closely with congressional, state and local representatives, the executive office and the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office main office," said Jennifer Evans, office managing partner for Polsinelli. "John is a true community leader and change-maker."

--Additional reporting by Dani Kass, Chuck Stanley, Kat Greene, Nathan Hale, Dorothy Atkins and Kevin Penton. Editing by John Campbell.



John Posthumus