

Sheppard Mullin Snags Davis Wright Entertainment, Tech Pro

By James Mills

Law360 (January 12, 2022, 4:51 PM EST) -- Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP has added a former Davis Wright Tremaine LLP entertainment and technology expert, who previously worked as in-house counsel at Google, Amazon and Apple, as a partner in its Southern California offices.

Marisa Brutoco has joined Sheppard Mullin in the entertainment, technology and advertising practice and as a member of the technology transactions team, which she will co-lead, the firm announced Monday. She provides legal and business advice for clients on issues related to technology, commercial transactions and intellectual property.



Marisa Brutoco

In her career, she has handled many technology and IP deals, as well as licensing deals with sports, digital media and the news industries.

"I am really enthusiastic about the great reputation that Sheppard Mullin has, especially in California," Brutoco told Law360 Pulse on Wednesday. "I'm based in California, so that was really important. I do appreciate their national and international presence since I have clients doing work in all of those markets."

"I really like that there is an integrated entertainment, technology and advertising practice that really is a good fit for my client base and practice," she added. "It's kind of unique to have it integrated like that. It shows that [Sheppard Mullin] understands about the convergence of entertainment and tech."

Jon Newby, Sheppard Mullin's vice chairman, said he believes Brutoco will be a strong addition to the firm's entertainment technology practice.

"Many of Marisa's clients are industry leaders, and she brings a wealth of in-house and outside counsel skills and experience to the group," Newby said in a statement. "We have a robust technology transactions practice and our many digital media clients are keeping the team incredibly busy."

Robb Klein, leader of Sheppard Mullin's entertainment, technology and advertising practice, said he thinks Brutoco's experience in the tech world will be invaluable to the firm.

"As new technologies evolve and distribution platforms are developed, Marisa's firsthand knowledge of those advancements is extremely valuable to our technology and digital media clients," he said in a

statement. "Her 'real world' experience is just what our clients need and want."

Before going into private practice, Brutoco spent 10 years working as in-house counsel at some of Silicon Valley's biggest companies, according to her LinkedIn profile.

She was corporate counsel for iTunes for 18 months in 2009 and 2010, then moved to Google LLC where she was corporate counsel for four years for Google Play and YouTube, helping launch YouTube's livestreaming platform. Later at GoPro Inc., she was director of legal and business affairs, where she worked as lead attorney for its entertainment and content division. She also spent two years at Amazon Inc., focusing on premium content partnerships. In 2019, she joined Davis Wright as a partner.

After earning a degree in international relations and political science from Stanford University, Brutoco enrolled at Stanford Law School with an eye on a potential career in international law that saw her complete two internships in Washington, D.C.

Eventually, however, she said she realized that California's globally dominant technology and entertainment industries provided exactly the kind of opportunity she sought.

"I loved the work [in D.C.], but I also loved being in California," she said. "So, I thought, 'What is international in California?' Technology is international in California. I want to be working in a place where it is the world capital for something. California is the world capital for entertainment and technology. So, I took a ton of international IP classes and regular IP classes and entertainment and digital media classes."

Brutoco, who grew up in Orange County and will be based in Sheppard Mullin's Costa Mesa and Century City offices, said she is looking forward to working with new clients as well as the established clients she's bringing with her.

"It's fun to be able to have a diverse client base," she said. "That's what you get to do as outside counsel. When you're in-house, you can only do legal work for your one client. Here, I get to keep working with my former colleagues, just in a different capacity."

Sheppard Mullin has over 1,000 attorneys in 15 offices worldwide.

--Editing by Orlando Lorenzo.