

Copyright Litigation

Sheppard Mullin's Intellectual Property attorneys have litigated a variety of copyright matters ranging from the inception of a dispute through trial and appeal.

The successful management of a copyright ownership and/or infringement dispute requires not only a thorough understanding of the distinctiveness of federal copyright law (including the numerous defenses available to alleged copyright infringers), but also its interaction with related federal laws (such as trademark) and numerous state laws, including those governing ownership of works of expression, the creation of security interests and the protection of so called "bare" ideas or works of expression which have not yet been "fixed in a tangible medium."

Of course, Sheppard Mullin's clients also benefit from the firm's significant knowledge of, and experience in, federal court litigation, since most copyright lawsuits are filed in federal court.

The firm represents individuals and businesses, including:

- Print publishers
- Wholesalers
- Manufacturers
- Advertisers
- Motion picture distributors
- Music publishers
- Internet e-commerce businesses and websites
- Authors
- Artists
- Graphic artists
- Photographers

The matters involve such subjects as:

- Books, magazines and other traditional literary works
- Architectural designs
- Computer software programs
- Musical compositions and sound recordings
- Sporting goods designs

- Artistic and novelty sculptures
- Motion pictures
- E-commerce websites
- Business forms
- Photographs
- Drawings and other graphic arts

Copyright Registration and Counseling

Sheppard Mullin assists clients in protecting rights to their creative works. We routinely counsel clients as to whether a work qualifies for protection under the Copyright Act, and, if it does, obtain a copyright registration for that work. Once a copyright is registered, we work with clients to preserve exclusive rights under both U.S. law and international treaties.

Our attorneys also support clients in their relationships with third parties. With Sheppard Mullin's assistance, clients can avoid infringing third party copyrights and obtain licenses to use third party copyrighted works.

Because most companies own or utilize some form of copyrighted work, we are also involved in the host of corporate transactions that involve copyrights, including mergers and acquisitions and partnering and other joint ventures. Our attorneys provide the extensive due diligence and hands on expertise required to effectively close a well written transaction.

The firm obtains and maintains copyright registrations for a range of works, including:

- Computer programs and databases
- Video games
- Websites and marketing communications
- Novels, short stories and poetry
- Architectural works
- Newspaper and magazine articles
- Music and audiovisual works
- Screen plays and other scripts for television, film and radio
- Fine art and original product designs