masudafunai

Steven L. Katz

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Steven Katz is a results-oriented business counselor and litigator who represents international companies, particularly those based in Japan and their U.S. subsidiaries, on issues involving product sales and distribution, licensing and technology. In his third decade of practice, Steve advises on matters valued into the hundreds of millions of dollars. He is particularly skilled at anticipating potential outcomes and creating an advantage for his clients throughout the negotiation and dispute resolution processes.

Steve is steadfastly focused on each client's specific commercial objectives. A tenacious advocate and practical at every turn, Steve is a proven counselor who knows, from first-hand experience, what can and can't be enforced at the negotiation table. A testament to his personal commitment to clients and colleagues alike, Steve has maintained client relationships that have spanned decades, and some that began at the onset of his legal career. Because Steve continuously seeks to understand his clients' macro and micro business strategies, he often has a multi-faceted understanding of what they need in order to realize success and maximize ROI.

An effective communicator and highly responsive, Steve serves clients from many industries such as printing, semiconductor, industrial control and automation, solar power, construction equipment, outdoor power equipment, automotive parts supply, printing, food and beverage, machine tool, consumer products, software and office furniture. Regardless of the industry or market segment, Steve knows how Japanese companies function in particular, as well as how they make decisions and assess legal risk.

Steve has successfully represented manufacturers and suppliers in a wide variety of litigation, appellate and alternative

Education

Northern Illinois University College of Law, J.D., magna cum laude, 1992; Law Review, 1991-1992; National Moot Court Team

University of Michigan, B.A. English, 1989

Admissions

Illinois

U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois, including Trial Bar

U.S. Court of Appeals: 7th Circuit

U.S. Court of Appeals: 8th Circuit

U.S. District Court, District of Arizona

U.S. District Court, Southern District of Illinois, including Trial Bar

Practice Areas

Litigation

Commercial, Competition & Trade

Intellectual Property & Technology

Languages

English

dispute resolution (ADR) proceedings across the country. He has resolved complex claims for breach of contract/warranty, intellectual property infringement, antitrust and unfair trade.

Outside the courtroom, Steve negotiates sales-related contracts and licensing arrangements, including OEM and supply agreements, terms and conditions of sale and security agreements pertaining to both domestic and international supply relationships. He also advises on both transactions and disputes with vendors, customers, distributors, dealers, sales representatives and franchisees, including the termination of commercial relationships.

Additionally, Steve counsels international clients on antitrust issues, including relations and arrangements with competitors and concerning product distribution. He also provides antitrust and anti-corruption related compliance training for executives and employees. Moreover, Steve advises on intellectual property and trade secret protection, advertising and information technology issues. A frequent author and speaker on litigation, antirust and sales/distribution topics, Steve focuses on issues that impact foreign companies conducting business in the United States.

Experience

- As lead counsel, successfully defended a manufacturer of graphics arts equipment at a week-long trial in federal bankruptcy court in North Carolina against claims of breach of warranty and unfair trade practices alleging over $5 million dollars in damages.
- Successfully defended a food products franchisor against multi-million dollar claims in a two-week trial conducted before the American Arbitration Association in Los Angeles, California.
- As lead counsel, obtained a summary judgment in federal court in Chicago for a manufacturer of outdoor power equipment on a $2.8 million breach of contact claim against a former New England distributor, including dismissal of the former distributor's $50 million franchise law counterclaim; prevailed on appeal before the federal court of appeals in Chicago; case listed as "One of the Ten Key Economic Damage Cases of 2012" in Dunn on Damages, Spring 2013.
- Assisted a manufacturer of capital equipment to conclude an equipment development and supply agreement with a major Silicon Valley consumer electronics brand.
- Helped a manufacturer of construction equipment to conclude a series of worldwide distribution and license agreements with an internationally recognized OEM customer.
- Assisted a manufacturer of capital equipment to conclude an international supply agreement with a leading

semiconductor technology manufacturer.

- For a leading supplier of printing equipment and technology, negotiated multiple, multi-million dollar sales and licensing arrangements with customers located across the country.
- As lead counsel, swiftly secured dismissal with prejudice in federal court in Chicago for clients on a pro se plaintiff's billion dollar claim for infringement of a U.S. patent relating to security and mobile telephone technology.
- Represented a machine tool manufacturer and its Japan parent in obtaining a preliminary injunction against infringement of its name and trademarks before a federal court in Chicago.
- As lead counsel, settled on highly favorable terms to defendant seafood distributors, claims of patent infringement and unfair trade practices brought by patentee in federal court in Hawaii.
- Represented Japan manufacturers of semiconductor equipment and a California subsidiary in collecting on multi-million dollar unsecured claims and settling on highly favorable terms multi-million dollar preference claims asserted in federal bankruptcy court in Delaware.
- Coordinated the defense of a Tier I automotive parts supplier in federal court in Ohio from claims brought by a disgruntled industrial equipment supplier; the case was settled and dismissed without any payment to the plaintiff.
- Settled and resolved on highly favorable terms multi-district claims pending against a manufacturer of graphics arts equipment in Chicago and New York federal courts alleging antitrust violations, fraud, deceptive trade practices and wrongful termination of dealer contracts and claiming several million dollars in damages.
- Settled on highly favorable terms claims of wrongful dealer termination pending in federal court in Puerto Rico against a manufacturer of outdoor power equipment.
- As lead counsel, successfully defended admiralty claims against a manufacturer of large diesel marine engines pending in federal court in Alaska; obtained dismissal of fraud and unfair trade claims, including dismissal of multi-million dollar punitive damage claim.

Memberships

- American Bar Association
- American Bar Association - Litigation and Antitrust Sections
- Chicago Bar Association - Federal Civil Practice and Antitrust Committees
- Japan America Society of Chicago - Former Director

Distinctions

- *Leading Lawyers*, 2013-2026
- Recipient of American Jurisprudence Prizes in Contracts, Corporations, Property, Antitrust Law and Legal Research and Writing
- Recipient of "Antitrust Prize" for scholarship, 1992
- Legal 500 Chicago Elite – Commercial Disputes