

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY HOT LIST | A SPECIAL REPORT

We recognize 15 law firms that set the bar in intellectual property law in 2015, scoring big wins for clients. They range from major firms with 1,000 or more lawyers to smaller shops with an IP focus. This year's group includes firms that went before the U.S. Supreme Court—and won—in key trademark and patent cases that impacted industries including technology and banking. Others took home big wins in matters involving music, sports and, yes, Spider-Man. These are their superhero stories.



Sterne, Kessler, Goldstein & Fox

When the America Invents Act was signed into law in 2011, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office had the option to limit newly created proceedings such as *inter partes* review, a patent challenge, to 400 cases a year.

But the patent office has not invoked that limit. That seems to have been good news for Sterne, Kessler, Goldstein & Fox. The firm says it has handled more matters before the Patent Trial and Appeal Board than any other firm in the U.S. Attorneys at the firm represented clients in 160 *inter partes* review proceedings in 2015.

"We've been there since the beginning," said Lori Gordon, a Sterne Kessler director and *inter partes* review veteran.

The firm has had much success in those matters, securing the invalidation of patent

claims brought by Symantec Corp. against the firm's client Veeam Software. The latest victories in that case came in 2015.

The firm believes its success in the technically demanding procedures stems in part from the number of subject-matter experts on its roster. The firm has 50 doctorate holders and another 50 with master's degrees.

"We're built for doing this kind of litigation," said David Cornwell, a Sterne Kessler director involved in more than 85 *inter partes* reviews.

But the firm is more than an *inter partes* review shop. It maintains an active litigation practice in federal district and appellate courts and a strong, global patent prosecution group. In one recent example of how the firm's work at the Patent Office has led to a growing appeals practice at the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, Sterne Kessler won appeals of successful *inter partes* review proceedings for clients including Level 3 Communications Inc. and K/S HIMPP, a Danish partnership that provides IP to hearing aid manufacturers.

Last year, the firm filed 1,196 patent applications in the U.S. for clients including Biogen Inc. and Broadcom Corp.

—ROY STROM



LORI GORDON

DIEGO M. RADZINSKI

FIRM FACTS:

- Year founded: 1978 ■ Headquarters: Washington
- Total attorneys: 129 ■ IP partners: 48 ■ IP associates: 75