

Press Coverage | June 24, 2025

Perplexity Trademark Case Tests Confusion Analysis in AI Era

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Michael D. Hobbs, Jr.

Michael Hobbs, a partner in Troutman Pepper Locke's Intellectual Property Practice Group, was quoted in the June 24, 2025 *Bloomberg Law* article, "Perplexity Trademark Case Tests Confusion Analysis in Al Era."

The case is a "shakeout of what's the likelihood of confusion if something involves AI," said Troutman Pepper Locke LLP partner Michael Hobbs Jr.

Comet ML's chances may have been better five years ago when AI wasn't so pervasive and any AI business could arguably share a market, Hobbs said. But emerging industries are sometimes painted with a broad brush, and the outcome depends on how quickly the court grasps the alleged technical distinctions between browsers and development platforms.

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Hobbs said he's seen similar escalation tactics in other trademark cases. "Any combination of carrots and sticks are very much on the table when you're trying to get a case like this resolved from a defendant standpoint," he said.

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