Michael D. Hobbs, Jr.

Partner

Atlanta

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Mike focuses his practice on intellectual property, dividing his time between litigation and client counseling in the fields of trademark, copyright, false advertising, and unfair competition law.

OVERVIEW

Mike negotiates complex trademark and copyright licenses in federal litigation, before the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board, and in connection with large-scale trademark clearance and registration projects. His comprehensive approach to working with clients allows him to develop a strong knowledge of their objectives and advance their goals efficiently.

Mike is frequently invited to speak at industry conferences and on panels on current IP issues in industries such as sports, entertainment, technology, and media. His commentary has appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, the *Atlanta Journal Constitution,* and *Law360,* as well as on NBC and Bloomberg.

Mike has been consistently recognized for his work by *World Trademark Review, Best Lawyers,* and *Managing Intellectual Property*.

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- Represented Mizuno USA in sponsorship agreement negotiations with the Atlanta Braves to become the official baseball equipment partner of the Braves with promotional rights in the new Braves stadium. Negotiated lease for Mizuno's first concept store in North America.
- Successfully defended the world's largest flooring manufacturer, Mohawk, in five separate trademark infringement lawsuits against competitor Beaulieu. All claims were dismissed.
- Secured trademark and logo protection for Operation Smile, Inc., an international medical charity, in a trademark lawsuit in Hong Kong. The High Court of Hong Kong confirmed ownership of Operation Smile's Hong Kong trademark rights and enjoined use of its trademarks by a former local licensee.
- Served as intellectual property counsel to Denny's Restaurants, Plow and Hearth/Evergreen Enterprises, Mizuno Corporation, Southern Company, Dapper Labs, American Tire Distributors (Tire Pros), HD Supply, Inc., Mohawk Carpet Corporation, The STEP Company, Integrity Toys, NewsBank, Inc., YKK Corporation of America, Operation Smile, Inc., Fanatics, and Alton Brown.
- Served as counsel for a leading flooring company in a trademark infringement lawsuit against a large consumer tool manufacturer. Awarded seven figures in damages on summary judgment. *Pergo (Europe) AB v. Stanley*

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Black & Decker, Inc. (N.D. Ga.).

- Acted as counsel for the plaintiff artist in a copyright infringement trial. Obtained jury verdict of more than $900,000. *Zheng Li v. The Affordable Art Co., et al*. (N.D. Ga.).
- Served as defense counsel in a trademark infringement claim. Obtained dismissal with prejudice on all claims. *Delta Plumbing, Inc. v. Georgia Delta Mechanical, Inc. and Delta Mechanical, Inc.*
- Represented a licensee of Atlanta Braves Jason Heyward in a trademark infringement action against a sports memorabilia company. Obtained entry of judgment for a permanent injunction and a confidential settlement award. *E.A.D., Inc. v. Sportscrack, LLC* (N.D. Ga. 1-10-CV-1616-JEC).
- Represented numerous authors in agreements with book publishers.
- Counsel to numerous licensors and licensees in trademark, copyright, and software license agreements.
- Frequently served as mediator in trademark infringement litigation.
- Served as counsel to numerous clients in trademark, copyright, and domain name infringement actions in federal court and before administrative agencies.
- Administered multiple sweepstakes and promotions for Mizuno Corporation, Southern Company, Georgia Power Company, Cousins Properties Incorporated, Leica Geosystems, Crystal Springs Water, Holiday Inn, Mohawk Carpet Corporation, XM Satellite Radio, General Motors Corporation, Scandinavia Tobacco Company, and others.
- Listed correspondent and procured more than 2,600 trademark registrations in U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.
- Procured trademark registrations in more than 152 countries.
- Successfully represented client in ICANN dispute proceeding to obtain southerncompany.com, southernlincwireless.com, and multiple other domain names.
- Represented clients in negotiations for product and service endorsement agreements with Ben Griffin, Jhonattan Vegas, Keith Mitchell, Nick Faldo, Yoenis Céspedes, Andrelton Simmons, Chipper Jones, Paul Azinger, Luke Donald, Charles Howell III, Jonathan Byrd, Stacy Lewis, Jenny Finch, Billy Andrade, Todd Helton, John Smoltz, Jeff Sluman, Larry Mize, John Cook, Brad Elder, Bob Tway, Edwin Moses, Teresa Edwards, U.S. National Volleyball Team, U.S. National Softball Team, Atlanta Track Club (Peachtree Road Race), and others.
- Set up national licensing plan for a fitness instruction program.
- Advised clients in complying with laws regarding Internet websites, including terms and conditions, privacy policies, and social media advertising.
- Represented numerous clients in advertising review and compliance matters, including review for FTC, national television network broadcast, false advertising, and comparative advertising issues.

AWARDS

- *Managing Intellectual Property*: IP Star (2013-2018, 2021-2026)
- *Chambers USA*: Intellectual Property, Georgia (2006-2026)
- *Best Lawyers in America*®: Copyright Law (2011-2027), Litigation – Intellectual Property (2011-2027), Trademark Law (2011-2027)
- *World Trademark Review*: WTR 1000 (2012-2026)
- *Best Lawyers in America*®: “Lawyer of the Year” Atlanta, Trademark Law (2019, 2026)
- North American Entertainment, Sports & IP Law Summit Hall of Fame (2026)
- *World Intellectual Property Reporter*: Leaders (2024-2025)
- *Law & Politics* and *Atlanta Magazine*: “Super Lawyer” in Intellectual Property Law (2004-2025)
- *Best Lawyers in America*®: “Lawyer of the Year” Atlanta, Copyright Law (2014)
- *Georgia Lawyers for the Arts*: “Robert C. Lower” Arts Award
- *Atlanta IP Inn of Court*: Pro Bono Award

- *State Bar of Georgia*: “Justice Robert Benham Award” for Community Service
- *Georgia State University College of Law*: Intellectual Property Community Service Award
- AV Rating® by Martindale-Hubbell

TOP AREAS OF FOCUS

- Domain Name Litigation + UDRPs
- Intellectual Property
- International
- Trademark + Copyright

ALL AREAS OF FOCUS

- Academic + Research Institutions
- Beer, Wine + Spirits
- Business Litigation
- Domain Name Litigation + UDRPs
- Intellectual Property
- International
- Litigation + Trial
- Marketing + Advertising
- Private Equity
- Trademark + Copyright

PROFESSIONAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Practice coordinating partner, Troutman Pepper Locke
- Rights of Publicity Committee, INTA
- Board of Directors, Georgia Justice Project
- Past member, Board of Governors, State Bar of Georgia
- Member, Access to Justice Committee, State Bar of Georgia
- Past trademark chair and past section chair, Intellectual Property Section, State Bar of Georgia
- Chair, Chief Justice Robert Benham Award for Community Service
- Secretary, Georgia Intellectual Property Alliance
- Board of Directors, Gateway Center
- Board of Directors, Georgia Lawyers for the Arts
- Board of Advisors, Children’s Museum of Atlanta
- Secretary, United States Intellectual Property Alliance
- Member, Atlanta IP Inn of Court
- President (2018-2019), Board of Trustees Executive Committee (2016-present), class member (2008), Leadership Atlanta

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

EDUCATION

- Vanderbilt University Law School, J.D.
- Davidson College, B.A.

BAR ADMISSIONS

- Georgia
- Connecticut

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- Moderator, “Artificial Intelligence, Real Trademarks: Emerging Issues in Brands, Brand Protection and Enforcement,” Georgia Intellectual Property Alliance 20th Annual Corporate IP Institute, October 2026.
- Speaker, “Bots, Boards & Breaches: Board Governance in the Age of AI,” Private Directors Association Atlanta Chapter, May 12, 2026.
- Moderator, “Intellectual Property, Sports and Entertainment Law Update,” North American Law Summit, November 2025.
- Panelist, “Fireside Chat: The Board’s Role in Intellectual Property,” Public Directors Association, October 2025.
- Panelist, “From Brussels to Bangkok: Strategies for Protecting Your Brands and Creative Content Without Losing Your Mind,” Georgia Intellectual Property Alliance (GIPA) Corporate IP Institute, October 8-9, 2025.
- Moderator, “Marketing and Advertising for Intellectual Property Attorneys,” INTA Annual Meeting, May 2025.
- Moderator, “Intellectual Property, Sports and Entertainment Law Update,” North American Law Summit, November 2024.
- Moderator, “Ad-Ventures in Advertising Law and Issues: Navigating the Wild World of Marketing and Promotions,” Georgia Intellectual Property Alliance 19th Annual Corporate IP Institute, October 2024.
- Speaker, “Sublicenses and Unintended Sublicenses in Social Media,” Strafford Webinars, July 2, 2024.
- Speaker, “Elevating Sports Sponsorships in the Digital Age,” Federal Bar Association, Reshaping Endorsements and Sponsorships of Athletes, Teams, and Naming Rights for Venues and Tournaments: The Impact of the Digital Age on Sports Sponsorship Contracts Seminar, April 19, 2024.
- Moderator, “Intellectual Property, Sports and Entertainment Law Update,” North America Law Summit, November 2023.
- Speaker, Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta Podcast “Can I Copyright My Nonprofit’s Website,” November 2023.
- Speaker, “Navigating the IP Landscape: Intellectual Property Issues, Strategies, and Management for In-House Counsel,” Troutman Pepper Webinar, October 25, 2023.
- Moderator, “Everything, Everywhere, All at Once: Trademark and Copyright Law Updates on AI, NFT’s and the Metaverse,” 19th Annual Intellectual Property Springposium, April 2023.
- Speaker, “Concerns for the Digital Age,” Troutman Pepper CLE Webinar, April 2023.
- Panelist, “IP Issues That Arise in Employment Relationships Worldwide,” Lex Mundi, March 2023.
- Moderator, “Intellectual Property, Sports and Entertainment Law Update,” North America Law Summit, November 2022.
- Moderator, “Fairly Used or Fairly Abused: The Conundrum of Fair Use in Trademark and Copyright Law,” Georgia Intellectual Property Alliance 17th Annual Corporate IP Institute, October 2022.
- Moderator, “Best Practices for Trademark Prosecution and Portfolios,” Georgia Intellectual Property Alliance, October 2022.
- Presenter, “Trademarks for Small Businesses,” United State Patent and Trademark Office/INTA, May 2022.

- Panelist, "When the CEO Calls," Troutman Pepper CLE Webinar, February 2022.
- Moderator, "Intellectual Property, Sports and Entertainment Law Update," North American Law Summit, November 2021.
- Moderator, "When the CEO Calls: IP Tips for In-House Counsel," Georgia Intellectual Property Alliance, October 2021.
- Speaker, "Sublicenses and Unintended Sublicenses in Social Media," Strafford Publications, Inc., March 2021.
- Moderator, "Entertainment, Arts & Sports IP Roundtable," Georgia Intellectual Property Alliance, February 2021.
- Speaker, "Embed, or Not to Embed, That Is the Question," Celesq CLE, January 2021.
- Speaker, "A Map for MAP: A Webinar Guide to Retailer Pricing Policies," Sports and Fitness Industry Association, July 2018.
- Speaker, "AIPLA 2018 Spring Meeting: Trademark Year in Review," May 2018.
- Speaker and Moderator, "SFIA Business Risk Summit: Advertising and Sports Products," April 2018.
- Speaker, "IP for Women-Owned Businesses," Greater Women's Business Counsel POP Conference, August 2017.
- Speaker, "Protecting IP Rights in the Sports and Entertainment Industries," Strafford Seminars, June 2017.
- Moderator, "Trademark Insights From In-House Counsel," State Bar of Georgia, April 2017.
- Speaker, Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) 2016 Litigation, Regulatory & Risk Management Summit, February 2016.
- Speaker, ABA North American Law Summit on Entertainment, Sports and IP, November 2014, November 2015, November 2016, November 2017.
- Speaker, "Introduction to IP Law," Law Review CLE, May 2013.
- Speaker, "Recent Developments in Intellectual Property Law Every Business Lawyer Needs to Know," *The Best of CLE*, The Seminar Group, 2012, 2013, 2015.
- Speaker, "Introduction to Copyright, Trademark and Other IP Law," Law Review CLE, March 2012.
- Moderator, "Sweepstakes and Promotions for the Trademark Attorney," INTA Annual Meeting, May 2012, May 2015, May 2016, May 2017.
- Speaker, "Patent, Trademark Copyright Update," *The Best of CLE,* The Seminar Group, November 2011.
- Speaker, "2011 Trademark Update," Intellectual Property Institute, Sponsored by ICLE in Georgia, November 2011.
- Speaker, "Sweepstakes, Contest and Promotions," American Conference Institute, September 2011.
- Moderator, "Trademark Protection for Athletes and Celebrities," INTA Annual Meeting, May 2011.
- Speaker, "What IP Attorneys Need to Know About Online Advertising: Avoiding Liabilities & Protecting Brands," ExecSense Webinars, May 2011.
- Speaker, "Trademark Update," Springposium, Georgia State University and Atlanta Bar Association, May 2011.
- Speaker, "Intellectual Property Protection for Musicians, Athletes and Actors," Intellectual Property Institute, Sponsored by ICLE in Georgia, November 2010.
- Moderator, "Trademark Protection in the Realm of Books, Movies and Other Media," INTA Annual Meeting, May 2010.
- Speaker, "The Intersection Between Marketing and Lawyer: Deal Maker or Deal Breaker," State Bar of Georgia Sports and Entertainment Law Section, April 2010.
- Speaker, "Emerging Trademark Threats With Social Media," BrightTALK Webinars, January 2010.
- Speaker, "The Instant Impact of *Apple, Inc. v. Psystor*," ExecSense Webinars, November 2009.
- Speaker, "Understanding the Instant Impact of *Cincom Systems v. Novelis, Inc.*," ExecSense Webinars, October 2009.

- Speaker, “Fraud Issues in Prosecution, TTAB Proceedings and Litigation,” Intellectual Property Institute, Sponsored by ICLE in Georgia, November 2009.
- Speaker, “Instant Impact – Understanding Facebook’s Username Cybersquatting Risks to Your Client,” ExecSense Webinars, June 2009.
- Roundtable moderator, “Security Interests in Intellectual Property,” INTA Annual Meeting, May 2009, May 2005.
- Speaker, “Recent Developments in Sports-Related Litigation,” State Bar of Georgia Entertainment and Sports Law Section, December 2008.
- Speaker, “Protecting the Intellectual Property of Athletes and Celebrities,” Intellectual Property Law Institute, Sponsored by ICLE in Georgia, November 2008.
- Speaker, “Domain Names, Cybersquatting and Protecting Your Brands on the Internet,” Georgia State University, October 2008.
- Panelist, “The Next Frontier in Due Diligence: Changing Importance of IP in M&A,” Intellectual Property Law Institute, Sponsored by ICLE in Georgia, November 2007.
- Moderator, “Managing Employee IP Legal Issues,” Corporate Intellectual Property Institute, Georgia State University, October 2007.
- Speaker, “Intellectual Property for the Entrepreneur,” Georgia State University, March 2006.
- Co-chair and speaker, “Management of Technology in the Workplace,” The Seminar Group, January 2006, August 2006.
- Speaker, “The Top Trademark Decisions of 2004,” Minnesota State Bar Association, March 2005.
- Speaker, “Trademark Law Update,” Georgia Springposium, April 2005, April 2006.
- Panelist, “Sports Marketing: Endorsements, Sponsorships and Merchandising,” Hot Topics and Trends in Sports Licensing, Sponsorships, and Athletic Endorsements, State Bar of Georgia Entertainment and Sports Law Section, April 2005.
- Speaker, “Effective Corporate IP Programs,” Law Seminars International, December 2004, November 2005.
- Speaker, “Trademark Law for the Entertainment Lawyer,” Entertainment Law Institute, Sponsored by ICLE in Georgia, November 2004.
- Speaker, “Trademark Portfolio – Acquisition and Protection Workshop,” Law Seminars International, July 2004.
- Chair, “Understanding Basic Trademark Law,” Practicing Law Institute, October 2003.
- Speaker, “Recent Developments in Trademark Law,” State Bar of Georgia Mid-year Meeting, January 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006.
- Speaker, “Understanding Trademarks in Georgia,” Lorman Education Services, May 2001.
- Speaker, “The Legal Nexus Between Sports & Entertainment Issues,” State Bar of Georgia Entertainment Law Section, April 2001, March 2003.
- Speaker, “Internet E-Commerce & Computer Law,” Cincinnati Bar Association, May 2001.
- Speaker, “Intellectual Property Litigation,” Sponsored by Law Seminars International, April 2001.
- Speaker, “Recent Developments in Trademark Law,” Intellectual Property Institute, Sponsored by ICLE in Georgia, November 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006.
- Speaker, “Current Issues in IP Licensing,” Intellectual Property Institute, Sponsored by ICLE in Georgia, October 1997.
- Panelist and speaker, “Entertainment Law for the Next Millennium: Legal Issues in New Technology,” Sponsored by ICLE in Georgia, April 1997.
- Speaker, “Doing Business in the Pacific Rim,” Intellectual Property Issues, Sponsored by ICLE in Georgia, July 1992.

PUBLICATIONS

- Co-author, "'Demon Hunter' IP Suit Highlights Reverse Confusion Perils," *Law360*, September 21, 2026.
- Author, "False Advertising Liability, FTC Scrutiny, and Competitive Litigation in the Age of AI Marketing," *Troutman Pepper Locke*, August 27, 2026.
- Author, "The Long Voyage Home: *VIP Products v. Jack Daniel's* and the Ninth Circuit's Final Word on Tarnishment," *The Trademark Lawyer*, August 12, 2026.
- Co-author, "Debunking Myths Every Copyright Defendant Has Told Themselves," *Corporate Compliance Insights*, April 14, 2026.
- Co-author, "9th Circ. Copyright Ruling Highlights Doubts On Intrinsic Test," *Law360*, January 16, 2026.
- Co-author, "The Future Of Gen AI Training Amid Reddit Data Scraping Suit," *Law360*, November 19, 2025.
- Co-author, "You're Out?: Rooftop Views Of Sports Games Raise IP Issues," *Law360*, September 3, 2025.
- Co-author, "Beware of Scam Notices Targeting Trademark Applicants," *Troutman Pepper Locke*, June 16, 2025.
- Co-author, "Marvel, DC Super Hero Trademark Loss Shows Danger of the Generic," *Bloomberg Law*, October 31, 2024.
- Co-author, "How AI Cos. Can Cope With Shifting Copyright Landscape," *Law360*, May 28, 2024.
- Podcast, "Copyright and Fair Use in the Context of AI," *LearnFormula*, April 2024.
- Co-author, "SCOTUS to Consider Extent of the Lanham Act's Extraterritorial Reach," *Troutman Pepper*, November 18, 2022.
- Co-author, "Copyright Claims Board: A New Stage for Copyright Infringement Claims," *Troutman Pepper*, November 9, 2022.
- Co-author, "Legal Ink: An Overview of Copyright Law and Tattoos," *Journal of Intellectual Property Law & Practice*, December 11, 2021.
- Co-author, "Crocs Rock: Using the ITC to Stop Trademark Infringers," *Bloomberg Law*, August 16, 2021.
- Co-author, "Trademark Offices Implement New Post-Brexit EU and UK Policies for EU Trademarks," *Troutman Pepper*, January 7, 2021.
- Co-author, "To Embed, or Not to Embed, That Is the Question," *Law.com*, November 23, 2020.
- Co-author, "To Embed, or Not to Embed, That Is the Question," *The Intellectual Property Strategist*, November 2020.
- Co-author, "Does a Waiver From Veruca Salt's Father Save the Chocolate Factory? The Legal Enforceability of Waivers," *ACC Docket Magazine*, July 2012.
- Author, "Preparing a Client When Dealing With Domain Name and Internet 2.0 Type Disputes," Reed Seminars, 2009.
- Author, "Managing Advertising & Marketing Legal Issues," Aspatore Books, 2008.
- Author, "Protecting Big Ideas," *Buckhead Home & Life Magazine*, Fall 2008.
- Author, "Getting to Know the Client," *Advertising and Marketing Law: Client Strategies*, Aspatore Books, 2007.
- Author, "Orange Flavor Is No Trademark," *The National Law Journal*, April 23, 2007.
- Author, "Builder Beware: How to Avoid Blueprint and Building Design Lawsuits," *Construction Business Owner Magazine*, August 2006.

MEDIA COMMENTARY

- Quoted, "AI, Bulk TM Apps Might Be Spurring Intent-to-Use Increase," *Law360*, November 10, 2026.
- Quoted, "'I Am Giorgia Meloni': Can a Trademark Protect Politicians From AI Deepfakes?" *World IP Review*, October 7, 2026.
- Quoted, "Jack Daniel's Dog Toy Tarnishment Ruling Raises Dilution Bar," *Bloomberg Law*, August 7, 2026.
- Quoted, "Jack Daniel's Loss in Long-Running 'Bad Spaniels' Case Significantly Raises Bar for Tarnishment

Claims, Experts Say," *World Trademark Review*, August 7, 2026.

- Quoted, "Copyright & Trademark Policy and Trends to Watch in 2026," *Law360*, January 2, 2026.
- Quoted, "Will 9th Circ. Take 'Rare' Step Of Nixing Kat Von D's IP Win?," *Law360*, July 24, 2025.
- Quoted, "Perplexity Trademark Case Tests Confusion Analysis in AI Era," *Bloomberg Law*, June 24, 2025.
- Quoted, "Dewberry Ruling May Lead To More Defendants in TM Fights," Law360, February 26, 2025.
- Quoted, "How OpenAI Is Looking to Beat the Growing Pool of Copyright Cases," *The Fashion Law*, July 23, 2024.
- Quoted, "Justices Will Weigh Liability of Corporate Affiliates in TM Row," *Law360*, June 24, 2024.
- Quoted, "Scarlett Johansson vs. OpenAI: Legal Weighs in on Right of Publicity Claims, 'Sultry Female Voices'," *Legaltech News*, May 23, 2024.
- Quoted, "High Court Leaves Discovery Rule Question for Another Day," *Law360*, May 9, 2024.
- Quoted, "Copyright & Trademark Policy to Watch in 2024," *Law360*, January 1, 2024.
- Quoted, "The Biggest Trademark Rulings of 2023," *Law360*, December 15, 2023.
- Quoted, "Troutman Pepper Hosts Event Honoring Youth Sports Coaches," *Law.com,* January 24, 2023.
- Quoted, "6 Months of Vidal Prove She's Not Playing Around at USPTO," *Law360*, October 14, 2022.
- Quoted, "Luka Doncic Bid to Get Trademark Back From Mom a Legal Jump Ball," *Bloomberg Law*, September 19, 2022.
- Quoted, "Cleveland Team Is Sued Over Guardians Name Change by Roller Derby Team," *Reuters*, October 27, 2021.
- Quoted, "Sublicensing Terms Must Strike Right Balance Between University Rights and Licensee Needs," *Tech Transfer Tactics*, September 15, 2021.
- Quoted, "Jack Daniel's Seeks to Take Dog Toys Battle to Supreme Court," *IP Law News*, November 20, 2020.
- Quoted, "Gorilla Glue Faces Packaging Trial After 11th Cir. Revival," *IP Law News*, October 21, 2020.
- Interviewed, "Content Rights Issues in Company Communications: When Your CEO Calls at the Last Minute," *Association of Corporate Patent Counsel (ACPC) Micro Bulletin*, August 12, 2020.
- Quoted, "Social Media Eyes Embeds as Courts Mull Copyright Limits," *Bloomberg Law*, July 2, 2020.