GOLDBERGSEGALLA



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Buffalo

Manhattan

PRACTICES

Commercial Litigation and Arbitration

Intellectual Property

Corporate Law and Transactions

Construction Litigation and Counsel

Retail and Hospitality

Bankruptcy, Restructuring, and Creditors' Rights

Class Action Litigation

INDUSTRIES

Construction

Energy and Utilities

Architecture, Engineering, Surveying, and Design

Food and Beverage

Retail and Hospitality

Startups and Small Businesses

Christopher J. Belter

PARTNER

EXPERIENCE

As Goldberg Segalla's chief operating officer and a member of the firm's management committee, Chris Belter oversees the firm's business operations, client service, and strategic growth.

Chris is a seasoned trial attorney whose practice focuses on complex construction and commercial disputes. He has represented clients ranging from major construction firms, utilities, major manufacturers, transportation companies and insurance carriers in courts and arbitration forums nationwide. During his 30-year career, he has taken more than 100 trials and arbitrations to verdict or award.

As a chair of the firm's Construction Law practice group, Chris represents contractors, construction managers, product manufacturers and insurers. His work includes high-value claims involving breach of contract, change orders, delay and acceleration, design and construction defects, and performance and payment bonds. He also has extensive experience in complex litigation and alternative dispute resolution involving all types of utility projects including renewable energy projects.

As a chair of the firm's Business and Commercial Litigation practice group, Chris represents companies in complex disputes involving contractual relationships, misappropriation, fraudulent conveyance, commercial leases, licensing, tortious interference, and related issues.

EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Commercial Litigation

In the commercial litigation arena, Chris has achieved successful outcomes for businesses across a range of industries, including manufacturing, food and beverage, renewable energy, communications, technology, insurance, and professional services. Representative matters include:

- Defending at trial in the Delaware Court of Chancery a corporation's directors and officers against breach of fiduciary duty and more than 10 other claims brought by certain shareholders over a disputed business merger
- Obtaining for an owner of music royalties a rare multimillion-dollar recovery in a complex misappropriation and fraudulent conveyance action that reached across both domestic and foreign jurisdictions
- Defending a $13 million commercial claim against a top soft drink manufacturer over the termination of a New York City distribution route
- Defending a multimillion-dollar breach of contract and improper termination claim brought by a studio owner against the producer of a major-network television show
- Defending the manufacturer of one of the world's most popular sport drinks against a competitor's $15 million tortious interference claim
- Defeating through motion practice an injunction that sought to shut down six major metropolitan locations of a national pizza chain
- Obtaining summary judgment for a construction supply manufacturer on complex warranty claims for roofing materials
- Successfully guiding a value-added reseller of a major software suite through

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investigations conducted by the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Department of Defense, and other entities following the acquisition of the software developer by a computer industry giant
- Defeating through motion practice a prospective class action alleging violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act

Construction Litigation

In construction litigation, an area for which he is regularly listed by *Best Lawyers in America*, Chris handles breach of contract, delay and acceleration, design and construction defect, performance and payment bond, and other high-value claims for contractors, construction managers, and others in connection with large-scale private and public construction projects, including major solar, wind, and other renewable energy initiatives. Representative matters include:

- Securing a $70 million arbitration award for a national renewable energy contractor in a complex construction development dispute that involved issues of public bond and federal grant financing, construction delays and design deficiencies, claims of liquidated and consequential damages, and construction trust fund misappropriation; the award was rendered after extensive litigation and two months of arbitration hearings
- Recovering through arbitration more than $4 million for a wind energy transmission contractor in a case involving major change order and delay and acceleration claims related to a storm
- Representing a pipeline installation contractor in disputes totaling over $100 million involving natural gas pipelines serving the hydrofracking industry; the case involves major delay claims, back-charge claims related to earth-slips, and complex and novel issues regarding the scope of the lien law
- Representing a construction manager in an arbitration arising out of claims asserted by a private university for construction defects involving masonry, roof, and building envelope issues
- Obtaining summary judgment in favor of a commercial financer of hotels and resorts in a multimillion-dollar dispute over the financing arrangement for the construction of a timeshare property

Intellectual Property

With experience handling dozens of cases involving claims of trademark and copyright infringement, he is particularly adept at helping companies enforce their intellectual property rights and protect their invaluable brands. Representative matters include:

- Defending a modeling agency in a jury trial in the Southern District of New York against copyright infringement and tortious interference claims brought by a photographer seeking over $10 million in damages
- Defending a regional craft brewery against claims of trademark infringement from a nationally distributing brewery
- Representing a major tobacco company in a trademark infringement case against sellers of counterfeit cigarettes, resulting in the successful seizure of all counterfeit product, recovery of several hundred thousand dollars in statutory damages, and a permanent injunction

HONORS & AWARDS

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Christopher J. Belter

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- *Chambers USA*, Construction (New York)
  - Band 3, 2023-26
  - Notable Practitioner, 2016-19
- *Chambers USA*, Litigation: General Commercial (New York: Upstate)
  - Band 3, 2020-26
  - Notable Practitioner, 2016-19
- *Best Lawyers in America*
  - Construction Law, 2023-27
  - Litigation — Commercial, 2022–27
  - Litigation — Construction, 2014–27
  - Litigation – Intellectual Property, 2024-27
  - Insurance Law, 2026-27
- *Buffalo Business First* Power 250, 2024-26
- Upstate New York *Super Lawyers*, 2007–26; Top 50 List, 2023-26
- *Buffalo Business First* Legal Elite of Western New York, Commercial Litigation, 2013-20
- *Super Lawyers*, Corporate Counsel Edition

BACKGROUND

ADMISSIONS

- New York
- U.S. District Courts for the Northern, Southern, Eastern, and Western Districts of New York
- U.S. Bankruptcy Courts
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit

EDUCATION

- State University of New York at Buffalo Law School, J.D., 1993
- State University of New York at Buffalo, B.A., 1989

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Defense Research Institute:
  - Commercial Litigation Committee: National Steering Committee; Intellectual Property Subcommittee; Business Torts Subcommittee
  - Construction Law Committee: Former National Committee Chair
- American Bar Association
  - Business Law Section
  - Commercial and Federal Litigation Section
  - Intellectual Property Law Section
- New York State Bar Association
- Bar Association of Erie County
- Claims and Litigation Management Alliance (CLM)

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COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- United States Air Force Reserve, 1985-1993
- Youth hockey coach

PUBLICATIONS & EVENTS

PUBLICATIONS

- Q&A with Christopher J. Belter: *Orlando Business Journal* on Goldberg Segalla's Florida Expansion, January 26, 2021
- Quoted in "Construction Group Of The Year: Goldberg Segalla," *Law360*, January 22, 2020
- Quoted in "How Firms Can Be a One-Stop Shop for Construction Clients," *Law360*, March 4, 2019
- New York Chapter, "Construction Litigation Desk Reference: A State by State Compendium" (Co-Author), *The DRI Defense Library Series*, 2010
- "What Lies Beneath: The Gathering Storm of Chinese Drywall Defect Claims" (Co-Author), *For the Defense*, DRI, June 2009
- "Drywall From China Leads to Glut of Claims" (Co-Author), *Buffalo Law Journal*, May 2009
- "Diversity Programs: Trends and Strategies for Success" (Co-Author), ABA's *Minority Trial Lawyer*, 2009
- Program Chair, DRI's Construction Law Seminar, September 2008
- "Breaking the Bank(ruptcy Code)? Terminating Surety and Fidelity Bonds" (Co-Author), *For the Defense*, DRI, March 2008
- Author and Presenter, "Litigation Strategies in a Mixed Business Tort and Intellectual Property Lawsuit," DRI Intellectual Property Seminar on Commercial Litigation, Chicago, IL, 2008
- "Terminating Surety and Fidelity Bonds Upon the Insolvency or Bankruptcy of the Principal" (Co-Author), NYSBA *NY Business Law Journal*, Spring, 2008
- Program Vice Chair, DRI's Construction Law Seminar, September 2007
- "Causes of Action in Construction Defect Litigation" (Co-Author), *DRI Construction Defect: Claims and Coverage Compendium*, 2007
- "New York's Construction Worksite Safety Law – Bad for Business?" Buffalo Niagara Partnership's Education Seminar Series, 2007
- "Aggressive Players and Ugly Flops: The Expansion of Deceptive Trade Practice Statutes to Business Torts," DRI Intellectual Property Commercial litigation Committee Seminar, Key Biscayne, FL, 2006
- Lead Editor, *Unfair Trade Practice, A Compendium of State Law*, DRI's Defense Library Series, 2006

PRESENTATIONS

- "Damage Control: Avoiding or Minimizing Consequential and Liquidated Damages in Contract Disputes," Defense Research Institute Business Litigation Seminar, Washington, D.C., May 8–9, 2014
- "Damage Control: Avoiding or Minimizing Consequential and Liquidated Damages in Contract Disputes," Fall 2013 USLAW Network Client Conference, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, October 3–5, 2013

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- "Who Can You Trust? Strategies and Pitfalls When Pursuing Lien Law Trust Fund Claims," Commercial Law League of America Spring Meeting and 117th National Convention, Chicago, IL, April 14, 2011
- "The Greening of America — New issues in Construction and Insurance Litigation," DRI Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, 2009
- "Litigation Strategies in a Mixed Business Tort and Intellectual Property Lawsuit," DRI Intellectual Property Seminar on Commercial Litigation, Chicago, IL, 2008
- "New York's Construction Worksite Safety Law – Bad for Business?" Buffalo Niagara Partnership's Education Seminar Series, 2007
- "Aggressive Players and Ugly Flops: The Expansion of Deceptive Trade Practice Statutes to Business Torts," DRI Intellectual Property Commercial litigation Committee Seminar, Key Biscayne, FL, 2006

WEBINARS

- "Chinese Drywall Litigation: Emerging Developments and Legal Theories," DRI Webcast, August 2009