



Christopher J. Belter
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PRACTICE AREAS

Corporate Services and
Commercial Litigation
Sports and Entertainment
Construction
Intellectual Property



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Christopher Belter, a senior trial partner at Goldberg Segalla, dedicates his practice to resolving complex commercial, construction, and intellectual property disputes. He has represented clients in courts and arbitration forums in more than a dozen states over the course of his two-decade career, during which he has taken more than 100 trials and arbitrations to verdict or award. He is the chair of Goldberg Segalla's Corporate Services and Commercial Litigation Practice Group, a team of 50-plus lawyers practicing across the firm's entire footprint, and chair of its over 100-member Construction Practice Group.

In the commercial litigation arena, for which he and his team are recognized in the *Chambers USA* Upstate New York directory, Chris has achieved successful outcomes for a broad range of companies in complex disputes involving contractual relationships, misappropriation and fraudulent conveyance, commercial leases, licensing, claims of tortious interference, and other issues. He also defends directors and officers in matters involving allegations of breach of fiduciary duty, negligence, and bad faith, as well as claims brought by the FDIC and the SEC.

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.

In construction litigation, an area for which he is listed in the 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. He has extensive experience with complex litigation and alternative dispute resolution involving major solar, wind, and other renewable energy projects.

He is a longstanding member of the Commercial Litigation Steering Committee at the Defense Research Institute (DRI), the largest organization of defense attorneys in the country, and a past national chair of its Construction Committee. He co-authored the New York chapter in DRI's *Construction Litigation Desk Reference: A State-by-State Compendium*, and he is a frequent speaker to national audiences on minimizing damages in contract disputes, litigation strategies in lawsuits combining business tort and intellectual property claims, and other topics in his areas of concentration.

Experience Highlights

- **Commercial Litigation**
- 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

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- Successfully guiding a value-added reseller of a major software suite through 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
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- **Construction Litigation**
- 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 financier of hotels and resorts in a multimillion-dollar dispute over the financing arrangement for the construction of a timeshare property
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- **Intellectual Property Litigation**
- 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

- Notable Practitioner, Chambers USA, Upstate New York General Commercial Litigation 2015-17
- Band 3, *Chambers USA*, Upstate New York: General Commercial Litigation, 2019
- *Best Lawyers in America* Litigation — Construction, 2014–19
- Super Lawyers, Corporate Counsel Edition
- Upstate New York *Super Lawyers*, 2007–18
- *Business First's* Legal Elite of Western New York (Commercial Litigation), 2017–18

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, Commercial and Federal Litigation, and Intellectual Property Law Sections
- New York State Bar Association

- Bar Association of Erie County
- Claims and Litigation Management Alliance (CLM)

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Admitted to Practice

- 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

Community Involvement

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

Education

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

Publications

- 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(ruption 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

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
- "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
- "Chinese Drywall Litigation: Emerging Developments and Legal Theories," DRI Webcast, August 2009
- "Litigation Strategies in a Mixed Business Tort and Intellectual Property Lawsuit," DRI Intellectual Property Seminar on Commercial Litigation, Chicago, IL, 2008

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