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TOP 100

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Karen N. Ballack

Weil, Gotshal and Manges LLP



Ballack has helped technology companies with large transactions involving intellectual property for almost three decades. Over that time she's developed a dedicated client base that includes some of the industry's biggest movers and shakers.

This year, when Yahoo Inc. spun off its operating business in a \$4.48 billion sale to Verizon Communications Inc., Ballack led a core team of five attorneys in handling all the details pertaining to Yahoo's intellectual property rights.

"Getting to know the people internally and understanding Yahoo's business and the value of its IP portfolio solidified the confidence they had in us," Ballack said.

Ballack started working with Yahoo in 2012 when the company's former CEO Marissa Mayer first came on board. Mayer began her tenure with a number of acquisitions and Yahoo hired Weil to handle the IP side of those transactions.

"We became so familiar with the business goals they were trying to achieve," Ballack said. "We had a lot of knowledge about their internal appetite."

So while Yahoo ultimately used Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP and Affiliates for its corporate restructuring during the spinoff, it stuck with Ballack and her team when it came to the IP matters. Ballack said that included first strategizing the transfer of Yahoo's international IP portfolio and other IP rights to the subsidiary to prepare for the sale.

“For me it was significant because the reverse spin-off and the subsequent sale of that business to Verizon raised a myriad of complex tech and IP issues that we worked closely with the Yahoo team on,” Ballack said. “It was always a two-step analysis, both in terms of proprietary IP and third party IP.”

Ballack said the Yahoo transaction was the most significant of her year, but having to take new approaches to see clients through complex matters is her specialty.

“I love working in this space primarily because I get to work with an array of tech and biotech companies from startups to multinational companies,” Ballack said. “There are so many different technologies that bring issues and challenges that have been dealt with in the past but also raise new and challenging issues. I like being part of the solution for our clients.”

— Paula Lehman-Ewing