

## Leon D. Bass

OF COUNSEL / COLUMBUS

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Celebrating his 20th year in practice representing the creative and entrepreneurial, Leon has built a robust reputation for legal counsel in **trademark, copyright, trade secret, entertainment, sponsorship and sweepstakes law, franchise, start-ups, and legal ethics** as well as **litigation** in those arenas. Leon works with diverse clients of all sizes in industries including the food and beverage, entertainment, and technology industries.

Leon is an attorney at [Taft Stettinius & Hollister, LLP](#), a 130 year-old 400+ attorney, full service law firm. Taft's ten offices include Columbus, Ohio as well as Chicago, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Cleveland, Ann Arbor, Dayton, Phoenix, Delaware, and Northern Kentucky, as well as a Japan and China practice group. Taft attorneys serve individuals and businesses worldwide, in both mature and emerging industries.

Leon works with businesses large and small across multiple industries and has built an exceptional intellectual property practice that includes traditional IP and entertainment law counsel and assessment with IP and related business and entertainment litigation.

Leon serves the needs of clients ranging from Fortune 500 companies to small local entities and individuals, as well as the unique needs of entertainment entities, concert promoters, festivals, film producers, authors, artists, record labels and musicians.

Leon has a proven track record of managing and counseling on and litigating copyright, trademark and other IP issues, litigating IP and entertainment law disputes, and drafting and negotiating contracts in the IP and entertainment space, including licensing, recording and publishing, music venue, festival and concert, and manager and agent agreements.

Leon has also served as Adjunct Professor at Otterbein University, teaching a law class that focuses on copyright, trademark, and business law in the context of the music and entertainment industries. He regularly practices in the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

## PRACTICE AREAS

- INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
- TRADEMARK, COPYRIGHT, AND TRADE SECRET LAW
- ENTERTAINMENT LAW
- OUTSIDE GENERAL COUNSEL
- SPONSORSHIP AND SWEEPSTAKES LAW
- FRANCHISE LAW
- START-UPS & NEW BUSINESSES
- LEGAL ETHICS & PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
- LITIGATION

## EDUCATION

- The Ohio State University College of Law
- Michigan State University (1995)

## ADMISSIONS

- Federal - Southern District of Ohio
- Federal - Northern District of Ohio
- State - U.S. Virgin Islands
- State - Ohio

A musician himself, Leon is a member of the Columbus band, Grassinine, who regularly performs at local charity functions. He is also the co-founder of the annual "Music in the Round" event which benefits the Marafiki Aids Orphanage in Kenya as well as other charities.

## **Additional Professional Experience**

- Adjunct Professor, Otterbein University (2011-2015): Instructor of course in Music Law; extensive coverage of copyright law, trademark law, contract law as well as music industry legal and business issues applicable to recording, publishing and touring
- Ohio Attorney General, Columbus
- Rhino Records, Legal and Business Affairs, Los Angeles, CA
- Famous Music Publishing Company, Legal Affairs, Los Angeles, CA

## NOTABLE MATTERS

- Successful representation of large craft brewery in trademark infringement matter.
- Successful resolution in Defense of concert promoter in trademark infringement matter.
- Successful defense of trademark infringement and USPTO opposition proceedings brought by large corporation in federal district court (Texas) against local business client.
- Obtained judgment in favor of client invalidating Plaintiff's long owned and well-known industry specific registered trademark, receiving national trade press.
- Successfully obtained dismissal in defense of multi-million dollar breach of concert promotion agreement for U.S. national "Rock Never Stops" tour, featuring Quiet Riot, Ted Nugent, Night Ranger and Slaughter.
- Successfully defended multiple law suits for copyright infringement and breach of contract by national recording artist against our record label client.
- Successfully represented a large concert venue in a civil fraud case.
- Successful representation of commercial photographer in copyright infringement case against large national companies involving hundreds of copyrighted photographs.
- Served as expert witnesses in copyright and trademark cases against Microsoft and for another software company.
- Successful Representation of Academy Award winning film "Dallas Buyer's Club" and other films in copyright infringement matters.

## SPEECHES AND PUBLICATIONS

- Editor, "Making It" by Matthew Crumpton, Esq. and Tristan Kinsley (book on music industry)
- Author, "Everything You Need to Know about Trademark Protection and Registration"
- Author, "Why You Can't Copyright Your Song If You Have Already Written It!"
- Author, "Takin' Care of Business: A Band's Basic Business Guide"
- Author, "Will You Face The Music? Music Downloading 101"
- Author, "Brand due diligence saves millions" Columbus Business First, May 14, 2010
- Author, "When to Consider Trademark Protection and Registration" CWS Newsletter, Vol. 1, 2009

## Speaking Engagement Venues

- The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law Sports & Entertainment Law Association
- Capital University Law School Sports & Entertainment Law Association
- Midpoint Music Festival
- AllBiz Music Conference
- Undercurrent Radio

## AWARDS

- Top Lawyer by Columbus CEO (2015-2016)
- Listed as a Rising Star by Ohio Super Lawyers (2011, 2012)
- Ranked as "Excellent" by AVVO (2014-2017)
- Legal Elite - Best for IP & Entertainment Law - Ohio (2016)
- Law Firm of the Year, Corporate INTL Magazine, six-time winner, including: "Entertainment Law Firm of the Year" in Ohio and the US Virgin Islands "Intellectual Property Law Firm of the Year" in Ohio in the US Virgin Islands

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Columbus Bar Association (Professional Ethics Committee)
- U.S. Virgin Islands Bar Association (Member, Ethics and Grievances Committee, Chair, Unauthorized Practice of Law Committee)

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Capitol Square Rotary (President and Board of Directors)
- Columbus Community Festival (Board Member, Entertainment Selection Committee)
- Greater Columbus Local Music Awards (Founder and Executive Producer)
- Hocking College (Board of Advisors - Music Program)
- Music in the Round (Founder and Chairperson )
- Musicon, LLC (President and Chairman of the Board)
- GrooveU (Advisory Committee)