

## Kathi Vidal Discusses Strategic Use of Trade Secrets in Intellectual Property at INTA 2025 Annual Meeting

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Winston & Strawn partner Kathi Vidal was featured in a MLex article covering a panel discussion at the [International Trademark Association \(INTA\) 2025 Annual Meeting](#), where she joined industry leaders to explore the evolving role of trade secrets in intellectual property strategy. During the panel discussion, Kathi stated that there are many situations which call for opting out of the public patent application process and opting into a trade secret-centric approach to IP management. But, she continued, the impact of artificial intelligence should not be overlooked during the decision-making process.

“AI is scaling everything . . . It’s scaling the inventive process, so that inventions are taking less energy to create. But it’s also scaling the ability to reverse engineer,” a scenario not unlawful under the Defend Trade Secrets Act, she observed. Thus, Kathi says the more pertinent question is: “can you keep it secret?”

She noted that industries with a young workforce prone to job switching and a belief that breakthroughs should be shared for the benefit of all may be better served with patent protection. Yet another advantage to patenting, she added, is that a patent signifies ownership of something new and novel; that, in turn, can provide a much-needed funding boost for small and medium-sized enterprises. “A lot of the value right now in companies comes down to their intangible assets, and most of that is patents,” she said.

[Read the full article \(subscription required\).](#)

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Kathi Vidal