



Michael P. Mayer

Partner

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Michael is a trial lawyer who represents companies and individuals in antitrust and complex commercial litigation matters in federal and state courts around the country. He has broad experience in class action defense, intellectual property matters, grand jury proceedings, and responding to government investigation claims of anticompetitive practices and consumer fraud. Michael is also an adjunct professor at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law where he teaches a course regarding pretrial strategies.

As a *Chambers USA* ranked antitrust attorney, Michael Mayer has secured victories for his clients in some of the largest and most significant antitrust disputes in the country, many involving class actions and white-collar criminal matters and investigations. In his commercial trial practice, he represented a beef producer in the US\$6 billion “pink slime” litigation against ABC. The case has been called the largest defamation case in U.S. history, and it was resolved favorably after four weeks of trial. In addition to his antitrust and commercial litigation practice, Michael also specializes in partnership and trusts and estates disputes, particularly those involving the allocation of family business assets and partnership breakups. He has litigated estate and family disputes for over 20 years both for the estate and on the opposite side—when a family member challenges a will or trust and makes fraud claims directed towards the estate’s assets.

Michael has been recognized by several prominent publications for his antitrust and complex litigation work including *Chambers USA*, *The Legal 500 US*, *Benchmark Litigation US*, and *Lawdragon*.

Key Matters

Representative Clients and Matters:

Antitrust

- Secured dismissal of a case alleging conspiracy and monopolization claims against dental organizations involving the issuance of certifications in the dental industry. (*United States Board of Oral Implantology v. American Board of Dental Specialties, et al.*, 390 F. Supp. 3d 892 (N.D. Ill. 2019))
- Secured summary judgment on behalf of large paper company alleged to have engaged in a conspiracy in the containerboard industry under Section 1 Sherman Act. (*Kleen Prods. LLC v. Int'l Paper*, 276 F.Supp.3d 811 (N.D. Ill. 2017); *Kleen Products LLC v. Ga.-Pac. LLC*, 910 F.3d 927 (7th Cir. 2018))
- Secured dismissal of a Section 1 antitrust claim brought against various private equity firms for allegedly entering into a conspiracy involving leveraged buyouts (LBOs). Secured dismissal for private equity firm at the outset of the case. (*Dahl v. Bain Capital Partners, LLC*, 1:07-cv-12388 (D. Mass.))
- Secured summary judgment on behalf of a large phone manufacturer of Section 1 Sherman Act claims with respect to technology intended to be used in the wireless communications industry. Prevailed on summary judgment, which was subsequently upheld by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals (*Golden Bridge Technology, Inc. v. Motorola, Inc.*, 547 F.3d 266 (5th Cir. 2008); *Golden Bridge Technology, Inc. v. Nokia, Inc.*, 2007 WL 2688487 (E.D. Tex. Sept. 11, 2007))
- Defended a merger case brought by the FTC, alleging violations of Section 7 of the Clayton Act and Section 5 of the FTC Act after client purchased certain assets of Pit-Des Moines, Inc. Was part of the core trial team in the first consummated merger case tried in front of the FTC in more than two decades. (*In the Matter of Chicago Bridge & Iron Company et al.*, Docket No. 9300 (F.T.C.))
- Defended antitrust claims brought under Sections 1 and 2 of the Sherman Act and Section 3 of the Clayton Act in the vehicle auction operator industry. After dismissing various claims at the outset of the case, the matter settled on favorable terms. (*Kasp, Inc. v. Adesa, Inc.*, 2006 WL 385310 (E.D. Ky. Feb. 17, 2006))
- Defended a federal nationwide class action and thousands of follow-on opt-out cases alleging price-fixing claims in the corrugated container industry (*In re Linerboard Antitrust Litigation*, MDL 1261 (E.D. Pa.))
- Defended a federal nationwide class action lawsuit and six state class action lawsuits alleging price-fixing claims in the automotive refinish paint industry (*In re Automotive Refinishing Paint Antitrust Litig.*, MDL No. 1426 (E.D. Pa.))
- Represented a drug manufacturer in pursuit of Walker Process antitrust claims against competitor in connection with megestrol acetate drug (*Morton Grove Pharmaceuticals v. Par*, 04-cv-7007 (N.D. Ill.))

Complex Commercial Disputes

- Successfully represented a beef producer at trial in a defamation case against ABC News seeking over US\$6 billion in damages. Secured a confidential settlement after four weeks of trial testimony
- Successfully defended fraud claims brought against board members of LR Nelson Inc. (*Rubbermaid Incorporated v. Robert Bosch Tool Corporation et al.*, Case No. 09-1395 (C.D. Ill.))
- Prosecuted breach of contract claims against satellite phone manufacturer (*Motorola, Inc. v. Iridium Satellite LLC et al.*, 2010 CH 05684 (Cook County Circuit Court))

- Successfully prosecuted claims against general contractor and others across multiple jurisdictions and courts arising from construction defects in connection with the opening of a new restaurant (*Del Frisco's of Philadelphia, Inc. v. Lorient L.L.C.*, 09-1053 (D. Kan.))
- Defended a contract claim brought by Ford's diesel engine supplier (*International Truck & Engine Co. v. Ford Motor Company*, Case No. 2008 L 002148 (Cook County Circuit Court))
- Defended federal and state securities actions brought by shareholder, resulting in take nothing verdict (*Anderson v. Aon Corp.*, 2012 WL 1034539 (7th Cir. March 29, 2012); *Anderson v. Aon Corp.*, 2008 WL 4865574 (N.D. Ill. June 16, 2008); *Anderson v. Aon Corp.*, 2008 WL 5388321 (N.D. Ill. Dec. 22, 2008); *Anderson v. Aon Corp.*, 2011 U.S. Dist. Lexis 111217 (N.D. Ill. Sept. 29, 2011))
- Successfully prosecuted breach of contract and non-compete claims against former officer (*Aon Corp. v. Utley*, 371 Ill. App. 3d 562, 863 N.E.2d 701 (Ill. App. Ct. 2006))
- Prosecuted a breach of contract claim and replevin action against medical company, resulting in favorable judgment for client (*General Electric Company v. Apollo MRI, Inc.*, Case No. 2007 L 8336 (Cook County Circuit Court))
- Defended a contract claim brought by its former parent. After receiving a partial summary judgment award, our clients settled on favorable terms (*Viad v. Motor Coach Industries Int'l*, 2003 WL 22853414 (Del. Sup. Ct. 2003))

Trust and Estates Disputes

- Regularly provide confidential litigation counseling for intra-family estate disputes, particularly those involving family businesses that will continue to operate as going concerns upon the death of the family matriarch and patriarch.
- Successfully represented estate in defense of will and trust challenges made by family members in connection with the sale of family business.
- Successfully represented family members in connection with prosecution and defense of will and trust challenges in various courts in connection with sale of family business.
- Represented estate and successfully secured significant settlements for an estate that owned many businesses and partnerships.

Intellectual Property

- Successfully defended case asserting patent infringement claims involving gift card technology (*Travel Tags Inc. v. UV Color, Inc. et al.*, 09-1619 (D. Minn.))
- Successfully defended patent infringement claims involving patents relating to megestrol acetate, an appetite stimulant drug, resulting in a take nothing dismissal with prejudice (*Morton Grove Pharmaceuticals v. Par*, 04-cv-7007 (N.D. Ill.))
- Obtained temporary restraining order in connection with a license dispute over patents relating to digital video recorders (*Thomson, Inc. v. Macrovision Corp.*, No. 29D03-0611-PL-1144 (Hamilton Superior Court, Indiana))

White-Collar Criminal/Internal Investigations

- Successfully represented poultry producer in grand jury proceedings and secured the dismissal of indictment
- Represented a high net-worth individual in connection with a federal grand jury investigation involving allegations of fraud
- Represented a hedge fund in connection with a SEC investigation involving insider trading
- Represented a large institution in connection with a DOJ grand jury investigation involving federal RICO counts
- Represented a private equity firm in connection with DOJ grand jury investigation

- Represented an engineering construction firm in connection with a DOJ grand jury investigation involving alleged price fixing and bid rigging

Recent Experience

Winston Scores Decisive Victory in Case Against Nation's Largest Credit Reporting and Scoring Companies

Secured Another Massive Summary Judgment Victory in Chickens Price-Fixing Case for Claxton Poultry Farms

Norwest Equity Partners Acquires QTI Fibers

Secured Landmark Victory for BPI Against ABC News in Massive Defamation Case

Recognitions

Michael was ranked by *Chambers USA* in the Antitrust category (2021–2024). He was recognized as a “Key Lawyer” in *The Legal 500 US* (2021, 2022, and 2024) for Antitrust Civil Litigation/Class Actions: Defense; selected to *Lawdragon's* “500 Leading Litigators in America” for Complex Commercial Litigation, Antitrust, IP, Securities, and White Collar (2022–2025) and “500 Leading Global Antitrust & Competition Lawyers” (2025); and recognized as a “Future Star” in *Benchmark Litigation US* since 2019. Michael has been named by *Super Lawyers* as a “Rising Star” (2009–2013) and a “Chicago Super Lawyer” (2023–2024). He has also received recognition by the Coalition for the Homeless for his pro bono service for the homeless. In 2014, Winston & Strawn was awarded “Chicago Litigation Department of the Year” in the *National Law Journal* for white collar defense. Winston & Strawn's Antitrust/Competition Practice was named “2015 Team of the Year” in cartel defense by *The Legal 500 US*.

Activities

In addition to his practice, Michael is an active teacher. Since 2009, he has served as an Adjunct Professor at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law, teaching a pretrial advocacy course that focuses on strategies involving pre-litigation, motion practice, discovery, and case development. Michael frequently conducts training courses for summer associates on matters relating to taking depositions and providing oral arguments. He has also been a guest lecturer at the Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, speaking on antitrust issues.

Michael is a member of the American Bar Association (including the Antitrust Section of the ABA) and the Chicago Bar Association. He serves as an investigator for the CBA's Judicial Evaluation Committee.

Michael actively participates in pro bono representation. He recently secured a sizeable settlement on behalf of an inmate seeking redress under a 42 U.S.C. 1983 claim. He also successfully represented a client as co-counsel with the Coalition for the Homeless in an appeal relating to a judgment in favor of his client in a sexual harassment suit against a former landlord. He has also briefed and argued a criminal appeal before the Illinois Court of Appeals and represented pro bono clients in summary suspension hearings. In addition to his pro bono work, Michael has served as a mentor in the firm's Associate Mentoring Program and as an adviser in the firm's Summer Associate Program.

Credentials

EDUCATION

Michael received a B.S. in aviation technology and operations, *magna cum laude*, from Western Michigan University in 1997 and a J.D., *cum laude*, from the University of Wisconsin Law School in 2000, where he was note and comment editor of the *Wisconsin International Law Journal*.

ADMISSIONS

- Wisconsin
- Illinois

Related Insights & News

RECOGNITIONS

Winston & Strawn's Antitrust Work Shortlisted for Three GCR Awards 2025

FEBRUARY 5, 2025

RECOGNITIONS

Winston Attorneys Featured on the 2025 *Lawdragon 500* Leading Global Antitrust & Competition Lawyers List

JANUARY 30, 2025

RECOGNITIONS

Winston Team Recognized as Runner-Up in Litigator of the Week Column

DECEMBER 3, 2024

RECOGNITIONS

Winston & Strawn Recognized in 2025 *Benchmark Litigation*

OCTOBER 3, 2024

RECOGNITIONS

Winston Attorneys Featured on the 2025 *Lawdragon 500* Leading Litigators in America List

SEPTEMBER 6, 2024

RECOGNITIONS

Winston & Strawn Recognized in *The Legal 500 U.S.* 2024

JUNE 12, 2024

RECOGNITIONS

Winston & Strawn Recognized in *Chambers USA* 2024

JUNE 6, 2024

RECOGNITIONS

Winston & Strawn Recognized in 2024 *Benchmark Litigation*

OCTOBER 6, 2023

RECOGNITIONS

Winston & Strawn Partners Recognized in 2024 *Lawdragon* 500 Leading Litigators in America

SEPTEMBER 8, 2023

CLIENT SUCCESS

Winston Scores Another Massive Summary Judgment Victory in Sprawling Broiler Chickens Price-Fixing Case for Client Claxton Poultry Farms

JUNE 30, 2023

RECOGNITIONS

Winston & Strawn Recognized in *Chambers USA* 2023

JUNE 6, 2023

RECOGNITIONS

Winston & Strawn’s Antitrust Work Shortlisted for GCR Awards 2023

JANUARY 27, 2023

Capabilities

- Antitrust/Competition
- Litigation/Trials
- Commercial Litigation & Disputes
- Government Investigations, Enforcement & Compliance
- Class Actions & Group Litigation
- Technology Antitrust