

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY **HOT LIST** | A SPECIAL REPORT

We recognize 15 law firms that set the bar in intellectual property law in 2015, scoring big wins for clients. They range from major firms with 1,000 or more lawyers to smaller shops with an IP focus. This year's group includes firms that went before the U.S. Supreme Court—and won—in key trademark and patent cases that impacted industries including technology and banking. Others took home big wins in matters involving music, sports and, yes, Spider-Man. These are their superhero stories.



WILLIAM JAY

DIEGO M. RADZINSKI

Goodwin Procter

For two decades, B&B Hardware was locked in litigation over its trademark for “Sealtight,” the brand name of its metal fasteners.

The company had convinced the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board not to register another metal fastener brand, “Sealtite,” on the grounds that the name would lead to confusion. But on the second front of its fight, a lawsuit alleging trademark infringement, B&B Hardware lost as federal courts didn’t defer to the TTAB’s findings.

Goodwin Procter represented B&B Hardware before the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in March 2015 that the courts are bound by the TTAB’s findings, and vice versa, on “materially similar” issues.

For Goodwin Procter, it was just the latest high court victory. Earlier in

2015, the Supreme Court ruled for Teva Pharmaceuticals USA Inc. in a patent case involving the company’s lucrative multiple sclerosis drug, Copaxone. Goodwin Procter had prevailed before the district court, but the Federal Circuit overturned that win after considering the facts of the case afresh. In a landmark decision, the Supreme Court ruled that the appeals court should review claim-construction findings for clear error rather than from scratch, or “de novo,” overturning a long-standing Federal Circuit practice.

“It certainly was significant that we were asking the Supreme Court to take up and reverse a rule the Federal Circuit had followed for almost 20 years,” said Goodwin Procter partner William Jay.

The case, he said, showed the firm’s litigation chops and expertise with pharmaceutical products. “This was a chance for them to work together and show off both components of our litigation practice,” Jay said.

Jay argued the Teva and B&B Hardware cases before the Supreme Court in October and December 2014, creating an overlapping briefing schedule. “It was definitely busy. It helps to have the support of a great team.”

—C. RYAN BARBER

FIRM FACTS:

- Year founded: 1912 ■ Headquarters: Boston
- Total attorneys: 918 ■ IP partners: 54 ■ IP associates: 79