

Top Boutiques of 2015

GIANT SLAYERS: THE SMALL, HYPER-FOCUSED LAW FIRMS THAT TAKE ON BIG MATTERS AND WIN

LITIGATION

Willenken Wilson Loh & Delgado LLP



From left, Jason Wilson, Eileen Ahern and Paul Loh

Alexander Drecun / Special to the Daily Journal

The partners at Willenken Wilson Loh & Delgado LLP have a simple formula for growing their client base and building a reputation: win more cases.

As trial lawyers, Willenken Wilson knows its clients demand success. Their attorneys approach complex litigation as a chess master analyzes a chess board. Whether by verdict, motion, or optimal settlement, they look to declare checkmate in the fewest possible moves.

“What is the fact or legal issue that will trump all others,” said William Delgado, partner. “We really try to think through what is going to be the path to victory in any particular case.”

Prominent New York trial attorney Lou Willenken co-founded the litigation boutique in 2002 with an emphasis on attorneys who specialize in trial work.

Today, the firm is prosecuting breach of contract actions on behalf of two major gas utility companies and seeking seven-figure damages to reimburse them for a product defect in the case *San Diego Gas & Electric v.*

LOS ANGELES

J-M Manufacturing Co. Inc. In an unrelated case, the firm is defending California’s Labor Commissioner, the Department of Industrial Relations and its Division of Labor Standards Enforcement in a lawsuit alleging California’s wage claim process violates the Fourteenth Amendment and the California Constitution.

Willenken’s entrepreneurial spirit, with that of the four other attorneys who began the firm, have paved the way for the boutique’s accomplishments including a recent \$9.4 million trial court verdict on behalf of Southern California Gas Co. — with the verdict affirmed by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals — a summary judgment on behalf of Proctor & Gamble in a trademark infringement case and defeating two class actions on behalf of Ticketmaster. These, and other accomplishments have helped grow the firm’s roster to include national corporations and technology and retail leaders, including Microsoft, Walgreens, Starbucks and Sears.

Partner Jason Wilson attributes the successes, in part, to the team at Willenken Wilson.

“The firm was founded by five lawyers. They all had complex litigation backgrounds and when we expanded the firm we were only looking for people who have complex litigation backgrounds,” Wilson said. “We think there are a lot of opportunities for sophisticated, nimble litigation boutiques.”

Willenken Wilson has grown over the last 13 years to include 14 attorneys, half of whom graduated from top five law schools, including those at Yale, Harvard and Columbia, and a quarter of whom have clerked for a federal judge.

“We try to find the smartest people we can, who themselves already have a track record of doing well to get the best results,” Wilson said.

Wilson says that over the next five years the firm will move forward as it has since the beginning, by attracting talented attorneys and putting an emphasis on winning results.

— Ryan Van Velzer