



From appellate guru to anti-counterfeiting strategist—all through the varied spectrum of IP—these winners are distinguished by their sheer brainpower, legal smarts, creativity and hard work.

—Pamela Sherrid, Editor, IP Law & Business

## BRIAN SIFF, 42

Partner, Dickstein Shapiro LLP

Some IP lawyers live for the courtroom, but Brian Siff has a reputation as someone more interested in helping clients with their problems than cutting notches on his belt. Says Mark Seidenfeld, counsel at client Scholastic, Inc.: "He's sensitive and pragmatic on business issues, and not just the pure legal aspects." Even the other side of the table agrees. "If he was not representing one of our competitors, I'd certainly consider hiring him," says Ken Patel, a manager and general associate counsel for IP at The Procter & Gamble Company. "Unlike the typical outside counsel, he's resolution-oriented for his clients."

Siff absorbed important business and IP lessons early. His father, a professional inventor with patents on such things as the world's then-smallest gyroscope, and a stepladder that folded to one inch thick, would raise money, build a company, then sell the business and start over.

The son received a B.S. in mechanical engineering from Cornell University and a J.D. from the Washington University School of Law. "Dealing with people and getting

involved with their business strategies" motivates him, he says. One major client is Arquest, Inc., a spin-off from the Johnson & Johnson Companies, which is the second-largest store-brand disposable diaper supplier in North America. "Early on in our product development, we propose our design to Brian to do preliminary patent work before we jump into a business," says Matthew Rinaldi, president and COO.

Having Siff act as a counselor for companies fits Dickstein's goals. Because lawyers work closely and frequently with clients, Siff's approach generates substantial cash flow, avoiding the feast or famine of pure litigation, says Dickstein's intellectual property practice group leader Gary Hoffman.

But don't let Siff's willingness to negotiate fool you. He is skilled to go to battle in litigation if it's called for. For example, he successfully argued the Markman hearing over credit screening in online trading exchanges for the plaintiff EBS Dealing Resources, Inc. He has also represented both Hewlett-Packard Company and Noble Gift Packaging, Inc. in a number of matters. He's versatile beyond



patents, representing clients such as designer Alexa Hampton and author Gail Sheehy in copyright and trademark matters.

And he likes to win. "Brian could hit a ball farther and harder than anyone I've played with in my life," says former colleague Jonathan Marshall, now a senior counsel at Fish & Richardson, who used to play in the same softball league. "He's easygoing on the outside, but he is intensely competitive." A shoulder injury has put Siff off softball, but has had no deleterious effect on his legal game.

—Erik Sherman