

→ Advertising

Our Advertising, Marketing & Promotions Team and our Entertainment, Technology & Advertising Group overlap. We prepare endorsement, sponsorship, sports marketing and entertainment marketing agreements; license and protect intellectual property rights; structure branded entertainment initiatives and customer loyalty programs; review and clear advertising copy for use in online and offline media; comply with domestic and European Union privacy concerns; and prepare advertising agency and media agreements. We also advise clients on compliance with state and federal regulations governing fantasy sports initiatives and some of the highest profile contest and sweepstakes promotions in the country.

Sports Marketing/Sponsorships/Endorsements

Sheppard Mullin's Sports Industry Team offers the multi-disciplinary expertise necessary to provide legal counsel to major brands, teams, event organizers, media companies and others involved in sports-related transactions or disputes. Our transactional attorneys handle ambush marketing initiatives and have structured and negotiated sports marketing agreements with every major professional sports league in the United States, as well as countless individual franchise teams and active-roster players, college athletic departments, non-domestic sports teams and leagues, major entertainment venues and extreme sports event organizers. Our litigators have trial and arbitration experience with leagues, players associations, teams and the various guilds and unions affecting the sports marketing industry.

Entertainment Marketing

Our attorneys handle branded-entertainment marketing initiatives for major brands and prominent advertising agencies on behalf of their brand clients. We also handle joint promotion agreements; online, digital and mobile marketing initiatives and other activation campaigns for various brands and prominent cable television networks, as well as many of the major Hollywood studios on the biggest tent-pole motion picture releases every year.

Fantasy Sports, Contests & Sweepstakes

Sheppard Mullin's Sports Team and our Advertising Practice help clients structure and execute online fantasy sports initiatives, interactive gaming programs and online subscription gaming sites. We represent publishers and networks in evaluating whether accepting ads for online gaming sites would expose such clients to potential liability, and we are regularly involved in some of the highest-profile contest and sweepstakes promotions in the country.

Music

Sheppard Mullin's music industry savvy includes representing high-profile performing artists and promising new artists in all aspects of their music career, as well as our historical representation of advertising agencies, television networks, and movie studio institutional clients in both transactional and litigation matters. These

matters involve soundtrack licensing, contractual and guild music clearances, publishing, and other legal issues associated with the use and ownership of music. In addition to being well versed in handling conventional music industry transactions and disputes, Sheppard Mullin's attorneys also counsel cutting edge companies on resolving issues as they pertain to the digital distribution of music over the Internet.

Traditional and Emerging Media

Sheppard Mullin's Advertising Practice and Entertainment, Technology & Advertising Group regularly advise a major online search engine on its search and display advertising initiatives. Beyond that, we advise clients on structuring their online and mobile marketing campaigns and information collection policies and practices in ways that address increasing privacy concerns but still tap into consumers' changing media habits. We develop website terms and conditions and privacy policies; structure COPPA, DMCA, CDA, EU Safe Harbor and other regulatory compliance; negotiate back-end hosting agreements, third-party development agreements and related technology licensing agreements; and advise on the monetization of online content, including revenue sharing arrangements. The Practice also advises clients on such topics as domain name acquisition and luxury brand protection, and pursuing counterfeiters and infringing importers and otherwise litigating brand protection disputes that arise from the unauthorized distribution or other use of the brand or products online.

Clearance and Compliance Review and Dispute Resolution

To minimize the risk that the creative message will be challenged by private plaintiffs or government regulators, Sheppard Mullin's Advertising Practice reviews client advertising copy to make sure that the express and implied claims being made in the ads can be substantiated and that the client has the right or privilege to use any intellectual property images, including sound images, that are included in the campaign materials. The Practice's clearance review covers copyright, trademark, privacy, publicity, defamation and related First Amendment issues, FTC regulatory "guidelines", comparative advertising concerns and television network standards and practices. The Practice also litigates disputes that arise in connection with comparative advertising campaigns, both in state and federal court and before the NAD.

Production and Distribution

Contractually documenting relationships between advertisers and their agencies, media buyers, and production units is an important and increasingly creative first step that should not be overlooked. Sheppard Mullin's Advertising Practice counsels clients on structuring these relationships so that the rights, obligations, and expectations of the parties are clearly communicated and protected in the inevitable event such relationships come to an end. In addition, the Advertising Practice's hands-on familiarity with advertising and television commercial production, including drafting and negotiating talent agreements and music and film clip licenses and addressing American and Canadian guild concerns, provides clients with confidence that the production of their advertising message will proceed smoothly. Finally, our Entertainment Group represents major studios, independent producers, television networks, new media ventures and other entertainment-related entities in the development, production, finance and distribution of motion pictures, television series and other entertainment content, including specialized services with respect to complex chain of title and copyright termination issues.

Gift Certificates and Rebates

With an increasing number of state laws prohibiting dormancy fees and expiration dates and imposing certain redemption obligations, gift certificate and rebate programs are under increased scrutiny from government regulators and private citizens. Attorneys in our Advertising Practice litigate on behalf of and counsel major national retailers, manufacturers and others on issues related to gift cards, gift certificates, rebates and loyalty programs. We advise clients on pending legislation, and structuring gift card, rebate and loyalty programs in ways that minimize the risk that they will be challenged.

Going Global

With the globalization of product markets, international advertising regulations are playing a broader role in advertising review and compliance procedures. The Advertising Practice's network of international law firms makes Sheppard Mullin a one-stop shop for our clients' global advertising needs.