

Franchising, Licensing and Distribution



Franchisors and distributors need legal counsel from attorneys who are both deeply knowledgeable of their unique objectives and challenges and are able to foster the productive relationships that are the foundation for their businesses. Our attorneys have decades of experience working for emerging, national and international clients in franchising and distribution. We have helped our clients establish the foundation for their businesses, structure their systems of operation, develop into new markets, protect and monetize their intellectual property, and grow and expand their business concept nationally and internationally.

Our team is led by attorneys [Thomas J. Kent, Jr.](#), and [Amanda Dempsey](#) who are joined by a team of business, intellectual property and trial attorneys with experience serving the needs of franchisors and distributors across all industries. We are able to help emerging and mid-market U.S. and international companies handle all aspects of owning and operating franchise and distribution businesses.

Key Contacts



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Team

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Building a franchise

Emerging franchises need advice from legal professionals who have successfully laid the groundwork for other new and growing business. We are able to assist our clients with:

- Structuring franchise systems
- Preparing franchise disclosure documents and franchise agreements
- Registering franchise offerings with regulatory authorities, nationally and internationally
- Strategy and execution for brand and IP protection

Advice for established and growing franchises

All businesses face a myriad of opportunities for growth, expansion or change. We help our clients grow and adapt to achieve their business goals whether that is diversifying revenue, expanding their footprint, or pursuing mergers or acquisitions.

- Developing sub-franchising, master franchise and joint venture agreements
- Transfer, renewal and termination of franchises
- Workout and bankruptcy advice for financially distressed franchisors and franchisees
- Foreign country expansion and U.S. investment

Franchise litigation support you can rely on

As the franchise business model continues to evolve, legal challenges are becoming more frequent and complex. Saxton & Stump offers comprehensive franchise litigation and arbitration services to help franchisors navigate legal disputes and protect their brands and interests. With our extensive litigation experience across a wide variety of industries, we represent clients in matters involving:

- Franchise-focused litigation and arbitration involving franchise systems, franchisees, vendors, and related claims

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Related Services and Industries

[Business and Corporate](#)
[Intellectual Property](#)
[Intellectual Property Litigation](#)
[Hospitality](#)
[Mergers and Acquisitions](#)
[Food and Beverage](#)

- Anti-trust issues, including price fixing, territory exclusivity, procurement arrangements, and supply chain restraints
- Trademark, copyright, patent and trade secret enforcement
- Labor and employment matters such as joint employer liability, vicarious liability, discrimination and harassment claims, health and safety violations, and unfair labor practices
- Regulatory agency actions and investigations
- Breach of contract matters

Our attorneys are seasoned in the courtroom and understand the unique dynamics of franchise relationships. We work strategically to resolve issues efficiently while protecting your brand and business. Our collaborative approach enables us to leverage the full breadth of our firm's resources to achieve favorable outcomes throughout the entire lifecycle of your business.

Franchise brand and IP protection

Intellectual property is at the core of every successful franchise and distribution system, forming the foundation of franchise brand protection and long-term value. It starts with the name customers recognize and trust and includes the processes and trade secrets that set your business apart. Our team helps franchisors and franchise system investors protect and leverage their intellectual property through a proactive, business-aligned strategy designed to preserve value, open opportunities, and safeguard mission-critical assets.

In addition to advising on federal, state, and international trademark registration, copyrights, patents, trade secrets, and domain name disputes, we also offer a comprehensive **Trademark Monitoring Program for Franchise Owners**. This tiered franchise trademark monitoring service proactively identifies potentially infringing marks, provides legal analysis, and delivers strategic recommendations to help you maintain brand integrity, preserve exclusive rights, and avoid costly disputes as you grow nationally and internationally. As a full-service franchise law firm, our comprehensive IP services include:

- Federal, state, and international franchise trademark registration and maintenance
- Franchise Trademark Monitoring Program
- Copyright registration and protection

- Patent procurement and protection
- Trade secret protection
- Domain name and cyber-squatter disputes
- Intellectual property litigation and dispute resolution

Licensing

We are able to work with you to monetize your IP through licensing agreements that protect your brand, expand your revenue streams, and support the growth of your business. Our team has experience assisting clients with:

- Licensing agreement negotiation
- Federal, state, and international trademark protection
- Joint ventures and strategic alliance agreements

Advocacy and counsel for distributors

Our team is well-versed in the concerns of businesses looking to create, expand or enforce distribution agreements. We can help you evaluate, develop and negotiate the parameters of compliant, effective agreements that support your business plans.

- Distribution arrangements that are compliant with federal and state franchise disclosure and business opportunity laws
- Alternative distribution channels
- Supplier relationships, exclusive arrangements, pricing and rebates

Access to a full-service team

When partnering with us, you partner with a team of lawyers who are recognized leaders in their fields. Saxton & Stump is a multi-disciplinary law firm, which allows our Franchising, Licensing and Distribution clients to leverage attorneys and consultants who are well-versed in their respective focus areas.

Saxton & Stump's [Business and Corporate](#) group can assist in general business

matters, forming a new business, business succession planning, financing, governance documents and contract reviews. We have a team of experienced [Mergers and Acquisitions \(M&A\)](#) attorneys who can assist with the purchase and sale of businesses and their assets. Our team is also able to leverage our [Labor and Employment](#) team who represent and counsel entities of all sizes and types including healthcare organizations, manufacturers, retailers, and service industry businesses. Should disputes arise, our [Business Litigation and Strategic Solutions](#) is also able to pursue an efficient resolution that takes into account our client's business goals. Our Franchising, Licensing and Distribution team also works closely with our [Intellectual Property](#) attorneys on patent, copyright and trade secret matters.