

John L. Slafsky

PARTNER EMERITUS

Trademark and
Advertising



FOCUS AREAS

Advertising, Promotions,
and Marketing

Internet Strategy and
Litigation

Trademark and Advertising

HIGHLIGHTS

In-Depth Expertise

John retired in 2025 with more than 25 years of experience in trademark, copyright, and advertising law. He has particular expertise in protecting brands for internet, software and hardware, entertainment, and sports businesses.

A Recognized Leader in the Field

John has been recognized by *Chambers USA* for his work and has been selected as a “Global Leader” and designated “Gold Band” by *World Trademark Review*. He has also been designated as one of the “Top Intellectual Property Lawyers” in California by the *Daily Journal*.

Committed to Pro Bono

John is a recipient of the firm’s John Wilson Award for exceptional pro bono service to the community. He has a longstanding history of representing organizations focused on the arts and education.

EXPERIENCE

John Slafsky retired as partner at Wilson Sonsini in 2025.

John has over 30 years of experience in the fields of trademark, copyright, and advertising law. He offered strategic advice to clients concerning advertising and promotions and also handled disputes in and out of court. Among John’s counseling activities were: advising clients regarding marketing campaigns; the selection, registration, and enforcement of trademarks in the United States and worldwide; copyright clearance; the handling of Internet domain name disputes; the transfer and licensing of intellectual property; and consumer protection issues. He litigated cases in federal and state courts relating to trademarks, copyright, unfair competition, right of publicity/privacy, domain names, defamation, and consumer protection.

John has repeatedly been recognized as a leader in his field, including by *Chambers USA*, *The Daily Journal*, *World Trademark Review*, and other publications.

John received the firm’s *John Wilson Award* – the firm’s highest award for combining excellence in legal practice with commitment to pro bono service. He has a longstanding history of representing nonprofit organizations focused on education and the arts. He also received the *Wiley W. Manuel Award* from the State Bar of California for exceptional contributions of time and expertise on behalf of low-income clients.

CREDENTIALS

Education

- J.D., New York University School of Law, 1993
- A.B., Politics, Princeton University, 1987
Magna Cum Laude

Associations and Memberships

- Past Chair, New Emerging Issues Subcommittee, International Trademark Association
- Past Chair, Domain Name System Subcommittee, International Trademark Association
- Past Chair, Loss of Rights Subcommittee, International Trademark Association

Honors

- Recognized in the 2023-2024 editions of *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business*
- Listed among 2021 "Top Intellectual Property Lawyers" in California by the *Daily Journal*
- Selected as a "Global Leader" by *World Trademark Review*
- Selected repeatedly as one of "World's Leading Trademark Professionals" (*Gold Band*) by *World Trademark Review*
- Recognized in the 2012-2018 editions of *Northern California Super Lawyers*
- *AV Preeminent* Peer Review Rating, Martindale-Hubbell
- Wiley W. Manuel Certificate for pro bono legal services for the poor, State Bar of California
- Contributing Editor, *The Intellectual Property Strategist*

INSIGHTS

Select Speaking Engagements

- Moderator, "Product Endorsements by Doctors, Influencers, and Celebrities," 30th Annual Medical Device Digital Health Conference, Wilson Sonsini, June 2023
- "Hot Topics in Marketing Law," WSGR College for Clients, June 2021
- "Innovative Approaches to Advising Start-Ups," Mexico Intellectual Property Association (AMPPI), February 2020
- "Copyright Law and Fair Use," University of Chicago National Museum Publishing Seminar, May 2018
- "Hot Topics in Marketing Law," WSGR College for Clients, February 2017
- "Social Media, Rights of Publicity, and Ethics," Stanford E-Commerce Best Practices Conference, June 2016
- "Developing Enforceable Rights in the U.S.: A Native's Perspective for Foreign Trademark Owners," 10th Annual Brands Forum, March 2014
- "Hot Topics in Marketing Law," WSGR College for Clients, October 2012
- "Marketing & Advertising Law," WSGR Entrepreneurs College, June 2012
- "Trademark Transactions: Doing Deals," Intellectual Property Owners Association, September 2011
- "Marketing & Advertising Law," WSGR Entrepreneurs College, June 2011
- "Combating Widespread IP Infringement on the Internet," Advanced IP Forum for Advertising Counsel, April 2011
- "Lost Profits in Trademark and Copyright Cases," Business Valuation Resources, January 2011
- "Emerging Issues in Marketing Law," WSGR College for Clients, November 2010
- "Marketing/Advertising Law," WSGR Entrepreneurs College, June 2010
- "Keyword Advertising: Potential Liability & Avenues for Relief," Pike & Fischer, July 2009
- "Emerging Issues in Marketing Law," Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, December 2008
- "Internationalization," 13th Annual Private Equity CFO Conference, July 2006
- "The Blogging Enterprise," University of Texas, November 2005
- ".EU Seminar for Trademark Owners," International Trademark Association, November 2005
- "Keeping Your Advertising Out of the Courtroom," Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, June 2005
- "Cyberliability: Introduction to Online Marketing Law," American Marketing Association, November 2004