

Media Content & Distribution

Wilkinson Barker Knauer attorneys have a wealth of experience representing media content and distribution clients in regulatory, policy, and transactional matters. Amid a rapidly evolving media landscape, our firm is both steeped in knowledge of existing regulations and equipped to assist clients in adapting to new business and regulatory models.

The firm's broadcast clients range from large and well-established media companies, trade associations, and investment funds to small and mid-sized businesses, some of which are newly formed. The firm also represents a number of video programming distributors, including wired and wireless cable television systems, private cable systems, satellite operators, IPTV providers, and online video distributors. Our media clients include non-broadcast video programmers, motion picture studios, manufacturers of network and consumer equipment, video delivery application developers, daily newspapers, and others.

The firm assists clients in navigating regulatory compliance issues before the FCC, FTC, Copyright Office, and other government agencies. Our attorneys have deep expertise with the FCC's myriad technical and operational rules for broadcasters, including: channel allocation issues; the license renewal process; applications for facility modifications and station licensing; complaint and enforcement proceedings; contests, advertising, and promotional issues; political airtime and advertising; and EEO audit and compliance matters. Wilkinson Barker attorneys also have substantial experience with the numerous FCC rules applicable to video programming distribution and equipment, including cable franchising and rights of entry/access, as well as developing areas of law, such as program carriage, program access, and video device compatibility with distribution platforms. We counsel clients on advertising and marketing restrictions for various media, including traditional platforms, online behavioral advertising, and content focused on children. Clients also rely on us to help them comply with the FCC's closed captioning rules and other accessibility requirements.

In the policy arena, we offer clients strategic counseling and advocacy in all major media proceedings at the federal level. Some Wilkinson Barker attorneys are former FCC and FTC officials with substantial expertise on media policy issues. Our attorneys participate in rulemakings and other proceedings regarding issues such as national and local media ownership, journalism and information needs of communities, localism and enhanced disclosure, sponsorship identification and product placement, set-top box compatibility, food marketing to children, and implementation of the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act. The firm also represents clients in court appeals of FCC media policy decisions.

Wilkinson Barker has extensive experience in transactional matters for media clients, including complex acquisitions and mergers involving multi-station, large-market television and radio properties, as well as the purchase and sale of small market stations. Our attorneys negotiate and draft agreements for asset and stock acquisitions, mergers, equity investments, debt financings, and other business transactions affecting programming, syndication, and station services. The firm brings substantial expertise to the structuring and formation of corporations, partnerships, joint ventures, and limited liability companies on behalf of both broadcasters and media investors. This includes significant experience structuring arrangements consistent with the FCC's foreign ownership restrictions. We also represent bidders in FCC auctions for broadcast allotments. The firm also counsels clients on transactional issues associated with acquisitions and sales of cable television, wireless cable and other MVPD systems. In addition, our attorneys negotiate various licensing agreements for media clients, including

HIGHLIGHTS

Ranked as a "top tier" firm by US News/Best Lawyers, Chambers and Legal 500

Decades of experience representing large and small broadcasters on licensing, regulatory compliance, transactional and policy issues

Experts in MVPD and emerging video distribution platforms, including mobile and the Internet

contracts with wireless carriers and software providers for mobile applications that allow delivery of premium video content.

In addition to assisting clients with traditional content distribution, Wilkinson Barker helps clients develop and deploy alternative platforms for content distribution, counseling on a wide range of copyright and network management issues that draw on the firm's expertise in the broadband and wireless areas. The firm's content distribution expertise, along with its knowledge of broadband and mobile wireless regulation, provides an invaluable tool to clients who must continually adapt to the converged media environment.