



Michael Brightman

Associate

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Overview

Michael Brightman represents plaintiffs and defendants in complex civil litigation across the country. His practice spans a range of subjects, including antitrust, trade-secret, environmental, and trademark disputes. He has taken and defended depositions, argued dispositive and discovery motions in court, and secured powerful victories on both sides of the “v.”

ONGOING COMPLEX LITIGATION

Michael represents Veeva Systems, a publicly traded CRM and master data management technology company, in multiple high-stakes federal antitrust lawsuits against healthcare data and information technology provider IQVIA, Inc. The cases involve antitrust issues relating to master data management and alleged trade secrets. In one matter, Michael recently persuaded the Special Master that IQVIA had improperly manipulated the attorney-client privilege, resulting in IQVIA’s broad waiver of privilege over all its Deputy General Counsel’s (and lead witness’s) communications regarding the core antitrust issues in the case.

Michael is also defending oilfield services company Baker Hughes in the Southern District of Texas against allegations that its logo infringes on BMC Software’s trademark. Michael has briefed and won key motions, and recently persuaded the Court to overrule BMC’s objections to crucial findings regarding BMC’s burden of proving its claim for disgorgement of profits.

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“Michael masterfully navigated through a set of challenging legal arguments He has a true passion for the law, and it showed by his successful performance in resolving this long-standing litigation matter.

Michael is a consummate professional. He demonstrated initiative, maturity and experience beyond his years, an unparalleled work ethic, dedication to his job, loyalty to his law firm, and skillful representation to our organization.”

Scott D. Booth, Project Manager, KBR, Inc.

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“I just wanted to tell you again how wonderful your oral argument was today. You were tremendously prepared and handled yourself beautifully. You were a credit to your firm.”

Theodore J. Leopold, Partner and Co-Chair of Complex Tort Litigation and Consumer Protection practice groups, Cohen Milstein

BACKGROUND

Before joining Susman Godfrey, Michael clerked for Judge Stanley Marcus of the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit. Michael earned his J.D. with high honors from the University of Chicago Law School, where he was selected as a Kirkland & Ellis Scholar and elected to the Order of the Coif. He also served on the *University of Chicago Law Review* and finished as a semifinalist in the Edward W. Hinton Moot Court Competition. Michael received his B.A. *cum laude* from New York University. Before entering law school, Michael organized door-to-door canvassing campaigns for nonprofit organizations.

Notable Representations

Representative Matters

In *Irizarry v. Orlando Utilities Commission* (M.D. Fla.), Michael represented a group of suburban Orlando homeowners as plaintiffs in environmental litigation against the Orlando Utilities Commission and several real estate developers. When the Commission—among the largest municipal utilities in the country—moved for judgment on the pleadings based on sovereign immunity, Michael authored the plaintiffs’ opposition brief and argued the plaintiffs’ position in federal court against a managing partner. **Michael won—in sweeping fashion.** The Court held that the Commission was ineligible for sovereign immunity both under the specific statute in question and categorically as a municipal body. You can read Michael’s brief [here](#), his oral argument [here](#), and the Court’s opinion [here](#). The *Orlando Sentinel* hailed the decision as an “[important victor\[y\]](#).” Michael’s co-counsel lauded his oral advocacy:

Michael also spearheaded the defeat of the developer-defendants’ motions to dismiss and motion for summary judgment. The *Florida Bar Journal* covered those decisions [here](#). The matter settled on confidential terms.

On the defense side, Michael served as counsel to procurement and construction firm KBR in *Adhikari v. KBR, Inc.* (S.D. Tex.), in which plaintiffs sued KBR under the Alien Tort Statute for alleged human trafficking in connection with the Iraq War. Michael played a vital role in developing KBR's legal strategy, principally authored KBR's motions for summary judgment, and prepared and presented witnesses for key depositions. He also argued several critical motions, including a two-hour discovery hearing in federal court where **Michael prevailed on every issue**. Thanks to Michael and a team from Susman Godfrey's efforts, the Court observed, "I don't see a connection between the horrific allegations and KBR," and informed the plaintiffs that "the document production has taken place and hasn't really advanced your case." The case settled on confidential terms shortly thereafter.

Honors & Distinctions

- Rising Star, *Texas Super Lawyers* (2024 Thomson Reuters)
- Order of the Coif
- Kirkland & Ellis Scholar (awarded to the top five percent of the first-year class)
- Editor, *University of Chicago Law Review*
- Thomas R. Mulroy Prize for Excellence in Appellate Advocacy

Clerkships

Honorable Stanley Marcus, United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, 2017-2018

Education

The University of Chicago Law School (J.D., with High Honors)

New York University (B.A., Politics, cum laude)

Admissions

Bar Admissions

- Texas
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Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas