

## Rising Star: Susman Godfrey's Matthew Berry

*Law360, New York (July 26, 2017, 1:03 PM EDT)* -- Matthew Berry is a Susman Godfrey LLP attorney who's been entrusted with some of the firm's biggest work and has proven his worth by earning a \$168 million settlement for animation-studio clients and a \$50 million patent infringement verdict in the last year, making him one of Law360's five Rising Stars in the trials area.

### *ON HOW TRIALS ARE JUST PLAIN FUN:*

Berry frequently uses the word “fun” in describing his trials, including a recent patent case where he represented the plaintiff, Green Mountain Glass, and won them \$50.3 million over foe Ardagh Group’s alleged infringement of a patent for recycling glass of three colors — amber, green and clear — into a final product of just one color, usually amber, particularly for beer bottles.

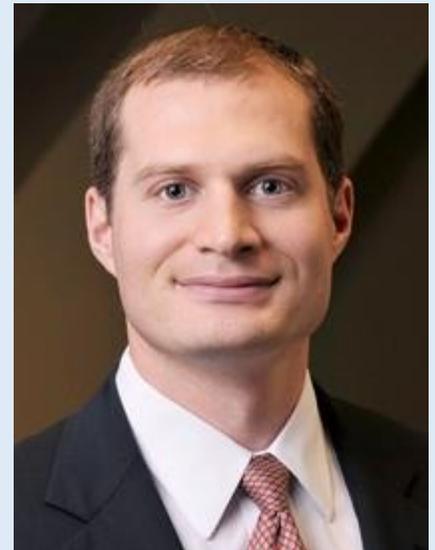
“It was just such a fun and rewarding experience to have gone through that,” Berry says. “Being in a trial is what you live for. It's where you want to be all the time.” And although sometimes you have to settle when that’s best for the client, “It's much more fun to get up in trial,” he says.

### *THE CHALLENGE OF PICKING OUT THE RIGHT FACTS FOR YOUR CASE:*

When you’ve been working on a case for years, distilling it to a few days’ worth of information can be a heck of an editing challenge, according to Berry. But that’s one of the main skills that separates good trialists from great ones.

“There are very few issues that truly matter in most cases. So what is it that's really going to matter to the jury, and how can we deliver that to them in a way that's going to make it easy for them to understand in a short period?” he says. “A limited number of facts really matter, and it's important to identify what those facts are and

**RISING**  
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**STAR**



**Matthew Berry**  
 Susman Godfrey

**Age:** 37

**Home base:** Seattle

**Position:** Partner

**Law school:** University of Washington School of Law

**First job after law school:**  
 Clerked for Ninth Circuit Judge Stephen Trott

then work backwards. You figure out how they fit into the case, why they're important.”

***PROUDEST MOMENT AS AN ATTORNEY:***

That would be the day he made partner at Susman Godfrey after only four years, Berry says without hesitation. And having that laurel opened up the door for bigger responsibilities — like the trial where his firm represented Dodgers owner Frank McCourt.

“I've been lucky enough to go to trial with both Steve [Susman] and Lee [Godfrey]. On the Dodgers divorce case, Steve and I were the only Susman Godfrey attorneys from out of town for that trial. We lived on the same floor of the same hotel for a couple of months. He's such a great person, absolutely brilliant. I'm just lucky to be able to work with the people I do every day,” Berry says.

***ADVICE TO YOUNG ATTORNEYS:***

Keep your eye on the nitty-gritty, Berry advises. “I think many people, as they get more senior, like to focus more on the glamorous tasks. That's not the approach I take. The documents are important. Find the hot ones in there; learn the documents.”

That approach paid dividends in a case called *In re Animators*, an antitrust class action in which a \$168 million settlement on behalf of Disney, Dreamworks, Pixar and Sony animators — among others — was just given final approval. Berry was Susman's point person.

“In the *Animators* case, we found out through one document that the agreement was called a no-poach. So you search all the other documents for terms like ‘poach.’ You immediately get 90 percent of the documents you need. Find the hot documents and put them together, almost like a jigsaw puzzle,” he says.

— *As told to Cara Salvatore*

*Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2017 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,200 submissions. This interview has been edited and condensed.*