

MVP: Susman Godfrey's Marc Seltzer

Law360, New York (December 13, 2017, 1:44 PM EST) -- Susman Godfrey LLP's Marc Seltzer secured hundreds of millions of dollars in antitrust settlements over the past year for auto parts buyers in the massive price-fixing litigation and animators fighting the likes of Disney and Pixar over alleged “no poach” deals, landing him among Law360's 2017 Competition MVPs.

WHY COMPETITION:

Seltzer attributes his appreciation for his practice area to his early years as a lawyer, when he worked with Stephen Susman on *In Re Corrugated Container Antitrust Litigation*, which alleged a nationwide conspiracy to fix prices in the corrugated container industry.

“I learned how important the antitrust laws are to preserving free and open markets and how important they are for benefiting both consumers and participants in the market as well, so they can compete on a level playing field,” Seltzer said.

“It’s actually very important to our democracy that we have strong antitrust enforcement,” he added.

MOST SIGNIFICANT CASE THIS YEAR:

Seltzer’s appreciation for antitrust regulations led to him sticking with the practice throughout his career, gaining valuable experience that makes him a top candidate as lead counsel for a number of national antitrust actions.

Seltzer serves as co-lead counsel in *In re Automotive Parts Antitrust Litigation*, in which he represents end-payor plaintiffs who allege a global cartel of auto parts makers conspired to fix prices on various components. According to Seltzer, the scope of the litigation makes it one of the most significant cases he has worked on.

The MVP logo features the letters 'MVP' in a blue, serif font. A red circle is drawn around the 'V', with a red arrow pointing upwards from the bottom of the circle.

Marc Seltzer
Susman Godfrey

“It is very important, in terms of vindicating the rights of consumers who we claim are overcharged by these international cartels. And in that sense, it is important in terms of providing a remedy as well as effectively enforcing the antitrust laws,” he said.

Nearly \$900 million in partial settlements have been recovered so far.

BIGGEST CHALLENGES:

While the most far-reaching case that Seltzer worked on was the auto parts litigation, he said the biggest challenge he faced was in *In re Animation Workers Antitrust Litigation*.

Seltzer was appointed as co-lead counsel for a class of approximately 10,000 animation employees alleging companies such as Disney, Pixar, Dreamworks, Lucas Films and Sony agreed to not hire employees from the other companies.

The case presented a new obstacle, the overlap of certain antitrust principles with employment law.

“That case involved the application of settled antitrust principles to a new area of antitrust enforcement, namely, an alleged agreement between the companies not to poach each other's employees,” he said.

In the end, over \$168 million in settlements were secured for the afflicted employees, and the U.S. Department of Justice also took notice.

“Following this enforcement activity, and our litigation as well, the Department of Justice has issued a statement saying that it would look very critically at any kind of repetition of this sort of anti-competitive activity in the future,” Seltzer said.

ADVICE TO YOUNG ATTORNEYS:

While Seltzer acknowledges the impact that his own experiences in litigation have had on his growth, he encourages younger attorneys to evaluate and analyze how businesses and economies coexist.

“I think, for a young lawyer, it's important to learn as much as you can about how businesses and the economy work,” he said. “To be involved in seeing how businesses actually operate and understand both the issues that come up during the course of the life of a business and also what's important in terms of the protections that antitrust laws are designed to make possible.”

MOTIVATION:

Aside from finding ways to become a better attorney in the antitrust practice, Seltzer said his motivation is the fact that his profession allows him the opportunity to assist those in need.

“Being a lawyer is a great opportunity to help people,” he said. “That's the thing that really motivates me. To be able to apply your learning, your skill and your experience to help somebody in need who is

facing a legal problem is very satisfying.”

— *As told to Darcy Reddan*

Law360's MVPs are attorneys who have distinguished themselves from their peers over the past year through high-stakes litigation, record-breaking deals and complex global matters. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2017 MVP winners after reviewing more than 1,000 submissions.

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