What is your role in your company/organization?

I am responsible for the global anti-counterfeiting and brand protection program for our three brands – Versace, Jimmy Choo and Michael Kors.

What do you view as the greatest challenge to brand protection today? How should it be addressed?

The ever-increasing sophistication and agility of counterfeiters. It’s not about a market trader offering cheap knock-offs anymore. It’s about the international organized criminal groups facilitating the mass production and distribution of all types of counterfeit goods. They’re innovative and can adapt quickly and efficiently. We’ve seen the evidence during the pandemic – the rapid rise in e-commerce, advanced advertising strategies, increasing presence on social media, mass manufacturing of fake PPE. The only way to effectively disrupt these networks is to locate, prosecute and punish those at the top of the supply chain. This requires international cross-sector and multi-agency collaboration.

What’s one fun or interesting thing about yourself that you can share with the IP community?

Inspired by my oldest son, I am passionate about raising awareness and improving support for children with disabilities. I’m a trustee of an incredible charity that provides early intervention therapies and support for vulnerable children and their families in the UK, and am involved in a range of fundraising, research and awareness raising initiatives.

Contact info: chloe.long@capriholdings.com
What is your role in your company/organization?

I am the global lead on all anti-counterfeiting related investigations. This involves combining strategic and tactical approaches to detecting and preventing the production of counterfeit GSK products; from Consumer Healthcare goods and prescription pharmaceuticals through to Vaccines.

What do you view as the greatest challenge to brand protection today? How should it be addressed?

The seemingly international acceptance of sub-standard or counterfeit products, which are often regarded as a money saving alternative to genuine goods, particularly in geographies where economic conditions are sub optimal. This price driven acceptance, twinned with a marketplace that delivers instantly, has created a safe landscape for counterfeiters to operate in; having the choice of platforms on which to sell illegal goods and no shortage of demand. The challenge remains in monitoring and policing these platforms, while also attempting to discourage consumers from buying into a perceived ‘victimless crime’.

What’s one fun or interesting thing about yourself that you can share with the IP community?

In my spare time I take part in high altitude mountaineering expeditions; and over the years have ventured to previously unexplored ranges in far eastern Kyrgyzstan, where my team and I have recorded first ever ascents, naming the mountains and placing them on a map. I like to think it’s my way of writing a little piece of history and showing just how much of our planet remains unexplored.

Contact info: marc.x.lambert@gsk.com
What is your role in your company/organization?

At the MPA, I head up the global content protection team, working directly with our members to define their global enforcement strategy and connect with the MPA’s branch/partner programs and law enforcement agencies around the world to deploy that strategy. I am also on the leadership team for The Alliance for Creativity and Entertainment (ACE), a global coalition dedicated to protecting the dynamic legal market for creative content and reducing online piracy. In this role at ACE, I’m able to draw upon the global content protection resources of the Motion Picture Association (MPA) as well as the internal content protection expertise of ACE members.

What do you view as the greatest challenge to brand protection today? How should it be addressed?

Today’s tech innovations are empowering creators to produce content that has never been possible, enabling audiences to enjoy this work across an ever-expanding universe of channels and platforms, and, of course, driving economic growth. But within this vast, new ecosystem, online piracy poses a significant — and rapidly evolving — threat to creators and consumers around the world. The theft of entertainment content is the single greatest threat to the creative industry. It harms both domestic and foreign films and businesses, threatens jobs, undermines investment, reduces tax contributions to governments, and stifles creativity. ACE allows content creators to unite for the first time with the common goal of reducing illicit and illegal acts of online piracy that harm the thriving digital ecosystem.

How do you / your company contribute to the brand protection community?

The joint mission of the MPA and ACE -- to promote creativity and protect content for both domestic and international entertainment entities -- is driven by a comprehensive strategy that combines industry partnerships, wide scale education, working with government and in some cases, actions through the courts, all of which we are doing on a daily basis. When pursuing an enforcement action, ACE members are focused on the illegal actions of owners, operators, and developers of pirate sites, add-ons, and services that facilitate theft. Ultimately, when film, television and streaming content is respected and protected at every stage of the value chain, the health of our member companies remains strong which greatly benefits audiences around the world.

What’s one fun or interesting thing about yourself that you can share with the IP community?

I joined the MPA in 2013. In 2016 I’ve moved from the MPA Brussels office to the MPA Los Angeles office. I’m from The Netherlands and do miss my relatives and friends, but the Southern Californian sun, mountains and ocean are a good distraction!

Contact info: Jan_vanvoorn@motionpictures.org
INVESTIGATIVE MEMBER

Spotlight

Sean Dees
Advanced Investigative Services, Inc.
President
Nashville, IL, USA

What is your role in your company/organization?
Conduct investigations and supervise all day to day investigative and security operations.

What makes your company unique?
The area that we cover. Advanced Investigative Services, Inc. (AIS) is licensed in and conducts investigations in Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri and Tennessee. AIS is also affiliated with Prudence Investigative Organization, Inc (PIO) that is licensed in and conducts investigations in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Oklahoma.

What’s the most rewarding part of your job / what is the thing that you’ve been most proud of in your anti-counterfeiting work?
Being able to see an investigation all the way through from conception to disposition. Closing down large operations engaging in the sales and trafficking of counterfeit merchandise and the network of colleagues and friends made along the way.

What’s one fun or interesting thing about yourself that you can share with the IP community?
My office is 100 yards from my residence, which is in the middle of 120 acres.

Contact info:
aiss.dees@midwestinvestigators.com
What is the Role in your company/organization?

I am the president and owner of AED Investigations, Inc. for the past 15 years. I have worked as an investigator for over 20 years. I oversee investigative support in brand protection for criminal and civil cases.

What makes your company unique?

AED Investigations, Inc. is a full service private investigative firm located in South Florida. We have provided expertise in criminal and civil cases. We constantly monitor the web for counterfeit and infringing products for our clients. Our firm also conducts investigations into brick & mortar locations. We work closely with each client to fulfill any direction in the case: cease and desist letter, online monitoring, criminal proceedings, & evidence handling. We also do full service process serving anywhere in the United States.

What’s the most rewarding part of your job/what is the thing you’ve been most proud of in your anti-counterfeiting work?

The most rewarding part of my job is to work with my clients one by one. Over the past 20 years I have developed several good relationships with clients and we get together at conferences all over the United States. I feel rewarded in helping the stop against counterfeiting. Our company has grown over the years through many referrals due to our success in helping the fight against counterfeiting.

What’s one fun or interesting thing about yourself that you can share with the IP community?

I am a native Floridian, born and raised in Miami, FL. I have many hobbies to keep myself busy: exercising, kayaking, playing tennis, boxing, & running. My amazing wife and 2 young daughters have motivated me to always do my best.

Contact info: Eric@AEDInvestigations.com
What is your role in your company/organization?

Founder & Managing partner

What makes your company unique?

BARLAW is a young proactive and creative team lead by two women partners. The unique IP law firm 100% lead by women in Peru. BARLAW is a leading law firm in LATAM for brand protection and anticounterfeiting matters, so keep thinking 24/7 in how to protect and defend the brands of our valuable clients from all different industries. Our team of 40 professionals include lawyers, paralegals and a strong investigation department, so we are prepared to help companies and solve their IP problems in one-stop shop! We have received different international recognitions worldwide even though we only are 9 years!

What's the most rewarding part of your job/what is the thing that you’ve been most proud of in your anti-counterfeiting work?

The most rewarding part of my job is that each day I face new challenges, even though, I have been doing brand protection and anticounterfeiting work for more than 23 years, I still keep learning. New investigations, seizures, raids, trainings come every day and with my great team, we always try to obtain the best results for clients, which they really appreciate. Also need to mention that the best of this ‘anticounterfeiting world’ is that you have the opportunity to meet great friends and colleagues all around the world and make strong laces for the whole live. LOVE MY WORK!

What’s the one fun or interesting thing about yourself that you can share with the IP community?

14 years ago at an IACC conference, I decided to buy lots of stuff in TARGET store (still go every time in the US), so as the store was close to the hotel, I decided to grab a shopping cart (instead of a cab) take it out of the store, walk 6-7 blocks in the street with this cart plenty of goodies. When I arrived, colleagues were chatting at the entrance of the hotel and saw me with all my stuff. They laughed so much at how I looked. That day I showed my other side: a crazy desperate shopper!

Contact info: abarrera@barlaw.com.pe
What is your role in your company/organization?

As the Founder and Principal of Winterfeldt IP Group, I lead our excellent team of attorneys and legal professionals in providing advice to clients in the intellectual property realm, specializing in global trademark portfolio management and related digital brand protection issues.

What makes your company unique?

Our firm offers a holistic approach to brand protection integrating digital brand promotion and enforcement with a rigorous traditional trademark portfolio practice. We offer concierge-style client service, ensuring our approach is scalable and tailored to the specific needs of each client’s priorities, budget, business and industry. Our attorneys have held various prominent national and global industry leadership roles and regularly speak and publish on cutting-edge industry topics. We also devote substantial time to diversity and inclusion matters, with a particular commitment to pro bono service for diversity-related charitable organizations.

What’s the most rewarding part of your job / what is the thing that you’ve been most proud of in your anti-counterfeiting work?

I am particularly proud of the concrete results we achieve in connection with enforcement work. When a client’s brand is experiencing counterfeiting or other digital infringement, there is a substantial urgency to finding a solution that removes the infringing content from the Internet where it can be seen by the global consumer marketplace. We work to obtain quick takedowns of this content while also developing broader strategies to reduce the impact of bad actors. We also have a 100% success rate in connection with UDRP proceedings to recover infringing domain names, which often direct to sites offering counterfeit goods.

What’s one fun or interesting thing about yourself that you can share with the IP community?

Prior to practicing law, I focused my undergraduate and graduate studies on art history, including ancient Egyptian and ancient American art. Although I ultimately took my career in another direction, these studies helped to teach me the rigorous writing and critical thinking skills I have been able to apply to my work, as well as the appreciation for global cultures that is essential for a trademark practice that encompasses an international community across so many jurisdictions.

Contact info: brian@winterfeldt.law
What is your role in your company/organization?

I manage global sales and marketing for Authentix. My responsibilities are to reach our markets with the right message, deliver the right products and solutions, and make sure our sales directors and regional managing directors have the support and resources needed to properly sell and service our most valuable assets, our clients.

What makes your company unique?

Authentix has unparalleled experience implementing a variety of highly secure and cost-effective security solutions for some of the world’s largest brand owners, national governments, and central banks. We have offices on five continents and programs running in dozens of countries. At the core, our people make Authentix truly unique by being constantly committed to service, integrity, and technology innovation when approaching any opportunity. We are committed to our client’s success with the overarching goal of providing an incredible ROI, as well as peace of mind.

What’s the most rewarding part of your job / what is the thing that you’ve been most proud of in your anti-counterfeiting work?

It is rewarding to help our brand owners and their consumers, as well as many national governments and their citizens, enjoy the long-standing trust that has been built over many years and in some cases, generations. It is also rewarding to know that our solutions prevent injury and save lives by keeping illegitimate and unauthorized products out of the supply chain and from reaching innocent consumers. I am also very proud of our corporate social responsibility projects in various areas around the world that have improved the lives of hundreds of thousands in disadvantaged regions.

What’s one fun or interesting thing about yourself that you can share with the IP community?

I was one of the founding executives of Authentix, serving as COO/CFO of Isotag and then acquiring Biocode (UK) in 2002. We ultimately rebranded the merged operation as Authentix a short time after. I exited in 2005 and went to lead several startup companies in the software and brand protection industries, which were later strategically acquired. Since being purchased by Blue Water Energy in 2017, Authentix has and continues to pursue a rapid growth strategy. In late 2018, I received a surprising phone call asking me to return and lead the global sales and marketing operations for Authentix which was exciting and ironic all at the same time. So, in a sense, it was like coming back home to many familiar faces.

Contact info: lara.trail@authentix.com
What is your role in your company/organization?

I am responsible for the commercial side of SURYS Brand Protection business in North America.

What makes your company unique?

SURYS mission is to provide confidence for the brands that we protect. We safeguard a brand’s equity and revenues while simultaneously creating opportunities to engage their consumers. Our worldwide presence affords us the capability to address our customers’ real needs for a cost-effective solution that provides:
- Immediate appeal & visual recognition
- Offline automated authentication
- Track & Trace functionalities
- Consumer engagement opportunities
We have developed a breakthrough integrated system based upon an Optical Chip that combines technologies that prevent product tampering, facilitate track & trace while incorporating overt, covert and digital security features that securely connect any product to the digital world.

What’s the most rewarding part of your job?

I greatly enjoy meeting people and building relationships with clients, earning their trust and putting together multi-tiered solutions to address their challenges, whether within the private sector or at Government level. Utilizing optical, material and digital technologies to formulate a solution to an issue and then see it delivering in the real world is hugely satisfying. I am proud to have been able to develop a career protecting products and documents from the threats of counterfeiting, diversion and tampering around the globe. I have been fortunate to work with a large number of brand owners within many industries as well as Olympic committees, State and Federal Governments.

What’s one fun or interesting thing about yourself that you can share with the IP community?

I’m not a morning person and on one early flight followed my usual pattern of listening to music and catching up on some sleep. After landing I was surprised to see a Guard of Honor at the gate and as I entered the terminal suddenly faced a barrage of questions in front of a TV camera; “How was the flight?”; “Did he say anything?” I looked at my interviewer blankly and simply said “Who?” at which point he lost interest and went to find someone with more insight. It turned out I was on the first flight that Sully had flown together with his co-pilot since the Miracle on the Hudson...

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