

How Amar Thakur Used His Legal Skills to Support Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP's Intellectual Property Practice

By Kenneth Davis

When Amar Thakur graduated from law school back in 1995, he initially wanted to go into business law but ended up going into intellectual property law instead. Thakur said he first got into IP law because of his technical background.

Amar Thakur is a skilled attorney and partner at Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP, a leading law firm specializing in intellectual property law. His impressive legal acumen and background have enabled him to make great strides in building up the firm's IP practice. He has a comprehensive understanding of US and international patent applications and prosecution and is a recognized authority on copyright matters.

Throughout his career, Amar has advised clients on a variety of intellectual property-related issues including patent prosecution, copyright and trademark disputes, enforcement, and IP litigation. Additionally, he counsels and represents clients in the areas of licensing, research and innovation, technology transfer, and intellectual property asset management. He has also handled entertainment, media, and advertising matters, obtaining numerous copyright registrations and licensing agreements.

Amar is an experienced negotiator who is highly regarded for his expertise in the field of technology, software, and internet law. He is adept in the development and negotiations of technology-based agreements, such as software-as-a-service (SaaS) and other cloud-based contracts. He also provides advice on internet-based business issues, such as privacy and data security.

Amar's commitment to his clients, his knowledge of legal concepts, and his strong background in IP law contribute to his outstanding success in the field. He is an experienced user of patent-related analytics, various search engines, and IP databases, which he uses to assist clients in their legal strategies. His experience in IP law has enabled him to become one of the most prominent members of Sheppard Mullin's IP department.

Amar Thakur has dedicated his career to the field of intellectual property law. His impressive legal training, expertise in patent and copyright applications, and ability to negotiate complex IP agreements enable him to provide exceptional legal services to clients. His success as an IP attorney makes him an invaluable asset to Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP's IP practice.

Amar Thakur: An Intellectual Property Pioneer

Amar Thakur, Partner and Intellectual Property lawyer at Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP, has made a name for himself and his firm in the IP space. With over 15 years of vast experience in legal practice, including 12 years as a partner at Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton, Thakur has been instrumental in the development of the firm's IP practice and has helped to expand its presence around the world.

Thakur's Intellectual Property Practice

Thakur's expertise in intellectual property law has enabled him to contribute to the firm's success in this field. He provides legal advice and counsel to clients on a wide range of IP matters, including patent procurement, licensing, copyright, trade secrets, trademark clearance, and IP protection strategies. He has also been successful in negotiating favorable settlements for his clients in a variety of disputes.

Advancing Intellectual Property Law

As part of his work, Thakur has been involved in the drafting of numerous intellectual property laws and regulations, including the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), the International Patent Classification (IPC), the European Patent Convention (EPC), the Community Patent Convention (CPC), and the European Trademark System (ETS). He has also played a central role in the negotiation of several international trade agreements,

such as the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA), the International Trade and Investment Agreement (ITIA), and the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).

An Influential Figure in IP

Thakur has been described as an influential figure in the world of intellectual property by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). He has also been recognized for his contributions to the advancement of IP law on multiple occasions, including a nomination for the Best IP Lawyer of the Year award in 2019 and a Top IP Professionals award in 2020. His work has also been featured in a number of publications, including the International Journal of Intellectual Property Law and Practice and the Journal of Intellectual Property Law.

Amar Thakur

"I would say intellectual property law chose me," he said. "Because I had a degree in electrical engineering, I had headhunters calling me with that background. And then when I looked into the area, I found it incredibly interesting. And now at this point, I can't imagine doing anything else."

Thakur is currently a partner at renowned national firm Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton in its Del Mar Heights office, where he has a thriving intellectual property practice. In January, he was named co-chair of the firm's intellectual property practice group. He said his practice is devoted to litigation and licensing.

"So I represent people in patent and trademark litigation," he said. "And I also have a pretty substantial practice in technology licensing and transactions."

Thakur has a roster of prominent clients in the life sciences and technology fields, including Broadcom Corporation, Amgen, Peerless Systems, and Sony Online Entertainment.

He recently represented InfoVista, a leading provider of service-centric performance-management software, in a trademark-infringement lawsuit against Microsoft. The case settled on December 29 of last year.

"The terms of the settlement are confidential," Thakur said. "But it is public information that in January of this year, Microsoft announced that they were buying \$15 million of our client's software."

Thakur also represented Beckman Coulter, a maker of biochemical laboratory instruments, in a patent-infringement lawsuit against Applera. He said the case was settled in the middle of last year with a "complicated set of agreements that included a \$35 million payment to our client."

Additionally, he has a trade-secret case currently pending for his client Wireless Facilities against Celeris Systems.

Thakur joined Sheppard Mullin from Latham & Watkins in June 2004. He explained why he decided to make the move from Latham to Sheppard Mullin:

"I was attracted to Sheppard Mullin because I think it's a premier California firm with a large office in San Diego-Del Mar," he said. "At that point, I believe they were 60 or 65 lawyers or so, but they didn't really have a material IP practice in San Diego-Del Mar, which is obviously an essential component of a law firm. So it was sort of an entrepreneurial opportunity for me to go in and be the second IP lawyer in the Del Mar office and try to grow it, and as you've probably heard, things have gone quite well."

Thakur completed his undergraduate work at the University of Washington in Seattle, graduating in 1992 with a degree in electrical engineering. He went on to earn his law degree, with honors, from [Arizona State University](http://www.bcgsearch.com) in 1995.

After graduating from law school, he went to work in the Phoenix office of law firm Bowman and Brooke, where he was a general associate. Thakur said that he really wanted to practice law in California but took the job at Bowman and Brooke because his wife was working on her M.B.A. at Arizona State University.

Once Thakur's wife completed her M.B.A., they moved to California, and he joined [Fish & Richardson](#) in the law firm's San Diego office in 1997. At Fish & Richardson, his practice focused on intellectual property matters. In 2000, he came over to Latham & Watkins' San Diego office and continued to practice intellectual property law. Thakur joined Sheppard Mullin's Del Mar Heights office as special counsel in June 2004. In January of 2005, he made non-equity partner and then equity partner in January 2006.

Thakur discussed what he enjoys most about his job:

"I think what I enjoy most about the job is sort of being able to have grown it in the way I wanted to grow it," he said. "We've grown in the Del Mar office; before January, I was helping grow that. And we've grown it from two to 16 lawyers and brought in great clients and brought in what I think is really top-tier talent in our group. The group is relatively all young, and there's really sort of good energy in the group, and I've enjoyed that as well."

About Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton, LLP

Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton's founding partners began the firm in Los Angeles in 1927 with the simple blueprint of providing superior client service and legal counseling. Sheppard Mullin attorneys continue to respond rapidly to ever-changing business and legal environments with creative, cost-effective, and practical solutions. The firm's philosophy is to staff matters with experienced, effective, results-oriented attorneys who recognize that availability, accessibility, and responsiveness to clients are fundamental.

The firm practices in the following areas of law: general civil trial and appellate practice in all state and federal courts; financial institutions law; commercial law; banking; bankruptcy and reorganization; construction; corporate; securities; antitrust; entertainment; intellectual property; unfair competition; labor and employment; pension and employee benefits; federal, state, and local taxation; government contracts; real estate; land use; environmental; white-collar criminal defense; international business; administrative; probate; trust; estate planning; aerospace and defense.

In addition to running his practice and co-chairing Sheppard Mullin's intellectual property practice group, he

frequently speaks publicly about [legal issues related to intellectual property](#) and technology transactions. He also regularly participates on panels at American Corporate Counsel Association events and is a guest lecturer at the Graduate School of Management at the University of California, Irvine. Thakur said he also often speaks at gatherings where law students are present. A month ago, he hosted a get-together at his house for the South Asian Bar Association.

"It was mostly law students who were in the community who wanted to meet with lawyers in the area," he said. "So I'm always trying to do something like that. At the end of the day, I think it's important to continue to reach out to your community and reach out to students."

Thakur had the following advice for law students:

"The reality is grades matter, so study hard," he said. "And I would say the other thing is to do what you enjoy. If it's not your passion, don't do it for the money. [Find the area of law that you like the most](#), and at the end of the day, happiness is the function of doing what you like, not a function of how much money you make."

Thakur was born in London, England, and went to high school in New Delhi, India. He and his family moved to the states in 1987. His wife, Lisa, is the Vice President of Operations for Scripps Health. They have two sons: Devan (seven) and Jai (four).

He said he enjoys running in half marathons as well as playing golf.

Update: Interesting candidates can find latest [IP/technology transactions attorney jobs](#) at [BCGSearch.com](#)

See [Top 10 Reasons Most Law Firms Have No Idea How to Hire and Evaluate Patent Attorneys](#) for more information.