



## Christopher M. Thomas

Partner

christhomas@parkerpoe.com

t 919.835.4641



Chris Thomas concentrates his practice on disputes concerning intellectual property rights, including trademarks, trade secrets, patents, copyrights, domain names, rights of publicity, false advertising, unfair competition, plant variety protection, and unfair and deceptive trade practices. He is a North Carolina State Bar board certified specialist in trademark law. His clients include electronic musical instrument manufacturers, software companies, consumer entertainment products companies, auto dealers, and life sciences companies.

Chris has extensive experience representing clients in commercial and business tort litigation, including litigation involving intellectual property rights, in federal and state courts, before the United States Patent and Trademark Office, and in proceedings before the National Arbitration Forum. He regularly counsels clients on trademark adoption, search and clearance, prosecution, opposition, maintenance, enforcement, and licensing. He also assists clients with copyright registration, licensing, and transfers.

*Chambers USA* has recognized that Chris is "praised for being 'efficient and effective' in the realm of intellectual property disputes, including trademark and patent litigation." *Chambers USA* also reported that he "has an impressive reputation among interviewees as an 'intelligent, studious, and analytical' IP disputes lawyer. Sources were quick to point out his 'great ideas for strategy' as well as his skill at providing 'an objective view of likelihood of success where some others over-promise.'"

He is admitted to practice in the United States District Courts for the Eastern, Middle, and Western Districts of North Carolina, and the United States Courts of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit and the Federal Circuit.

Prior to law school, Chris worked with information technology for a leading humanitarian organization fighting global poverty.

### REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- Obtained \$1.7 million jury verdict for software client plaintiff on claim for false advertising in violation of the North Carolina Unfair and Deceptive Trade Practices Act.



#### RALEIGH OFFICE



#### PRACTICE AREAS

Intellectual Property  
Litigation  
Intellectual Property  
Litigation  
Fintech  
Retail Automotive Dealers



#### EDUCATION

University of Georgia  
JD, *cum laude*, 2003  
Georgia State University  
MBA, 1999  
Allegheny College  
BA, 1991



#### ADMISSIONS

North Carolina, 2003



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- Successfully defended clients at jury trial in federal court against claims of trade secret misappropriation, false advertising, unfair and deceptive trade practices, tortious interference with actual and prospective economic advantage, and breach of contract.
- Obtained summary judgment on a copyright infringement claim based on the affirmative defense of implied nonexclusive license from a joint author.
- Successfully defended client against plaintiff's motion for preliminary injunction based on alleged trade dress rights.
- Obtained summary judgment on claim of ownership of a mark and defeating counterclaims for copyright infringement and trademark infringement.

### CLIENT ALERTS

- "Act NOW to Protect Your Trademarks on Facebook," June 2009

### PUBLICATIONS

- "How U.S. Supreme Court Copyright Ruling Affects Businesses," Triangle Business Journal, April 2019
- "Consumer Entertainment Product Trademarks," The Journal, May 2017
- "Antitrust Limits on Mediation and Settlement," North Carolina Bar Association, April 2010
- "Personal Use in Copyright Law: An Unrecognized Constitutional Right," January 2003

### SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- "The New IP Battlefield: Protecting Your Business When Claims of Trade Secret Misappropriation Are Involved," Association of Corporate Counsel - Research Triangle Chapter CLE, July 2013



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### HONORS

- North Carolina Bar Board Certified Specialist in Trademark Law
- Woodward/White's *The Best Lawyers in America* "Lawyer of the Year" in Raleigh for Copyright Law, 2019
- Woodward/White's *The Best Lawyers in America* in Intellectual Property Litigation, 2018-2019; Copyright Law, 2019
- *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers* in Intellectual Property, 2013-2019
- *North Carolina Super Lawyers* Rising Star, 2013
- *Business North Carolina* magazine's "Legal Elite" in Intellectual Property Law, 2012-2013, 2018

### MEMBERSHIPS

- Artspace, Board of Directors, 2012-present
- Burning Coal Theatre Company, Board of Directors, 2007-2012