

ATTORNEYS OF THE YEAR 2022

GROUPS



Chad Drown



Kate Razavi



Kevin Wagner

FAEGRE DRINKER TRIAL TEAM FOR SEAGATE TECHNOLOGY

In law school, you learn about written advocacy and oral advocacy, but you don't learn about visual advocacy. However, most of the world learns best through visuals, said Chad Drown, a partner at Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP.

Last year, a team of Faegre Drinker trial lawyers – including Drown, Kate Razavi and Kevin Wagner – used a visual strategy to win a verdict for their client, Seagate Technology, in a highly complex patent lawsuit. Drown, Razavi and Wagner are all partners in Faegre Drinker's Intellectual Property Group and have been litigating together “since the beginning of our careers,” Drown said.

Seagate, a data storage company and longtime client of Faegre Drinker, was named in a multibillion-dollar patent infringement lawsuit involving Seagate's entire portfolio of hard disk drive products.

A retired Carnegie Mellon professor sought \$2 billion from Seagate, claiming the company incorporated technology into its hard drives that he had invented. Seagate was adamant that they did not want and did not use the professor's invention. But it wasn't going to be easy to explain to the jury why.

The technology involved “a nearly impenetrable combination of magnetism and atomic-level crystals that are 100,000 times smaller than a human hair,” Wagner said. What's more, the case was tried in the professor's hometown.

The Faegre Drinker team focused on developing a highly visual story for the jury, by – among other things – using simple items like tennis balls and more than 30 large graphics boards to teach the complex technology. After deliberating for five hours, the jury agreed with Seagate, issuing a verdict of no infringement.

Winning the case and others like it boils down to three things, Drown said: “You have to teach the technology, tell a compelling story, and then find some-thing to prove and prove it.”

“The visual presentation doesn't have to be fancy, but it needs to be useful and engaging,” Razavi said. She and Drown have helped would-be attorneys learn the importance of presenting facts visually at trial by teaching “visual advocacy” seminars at the University of Minnesota Law School.

“Having a team that has worked together for years makes winning these complex cases easier – and more fun,” said Drown.