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Methodology

Our methodology is based on a weighted review of information from firms, market feedback and publicly available information.

The links to our online surveys can be found **here**. Please note that participation in our research does not guarantee ranking in IP STARS. See our [FAQs page](#) for more information.

The practice areas we rank

Prosecution ranking (patent and trade mark): Here we consider all registration-related work and any interaction with the IP office, both pre-and post-grant. For example, where relevant, we take into account oppositions, revocation and invalidity actions, strategy and portfolio management advice, and patent litigation support.

Contentious ranking (patent and trade mark): Here we mainly consider dispute resolution work, especially litigation and enforcement, in all sectors. It does not matter whether the matter is in a court or tribunal or reached trial. Where relevant we also consider domain names, Hatch-Waxman litigation and multinational litigation coordination. Please note that we do not generally consider contentious IP office proceedings under this ranking, and for the US we have a separate national table for ITC enforcement.

Copyright ranking: We consider non-contentious and contentious copyright and related rights work across all copyright-based sectors including digital/software.

Life sciences ranking: Currently, this ranking is only available in the US. We consider all regulatory work in the life science sectors including pharmaceutical and biotechnology.

ITC litigation ranking: We consider contentious and non-contentious IP work concerning the US International Trade Commission (ITC).

Transactional and advisory ranking: We consider non-contentious IP work

including licensing, due diligence, protection strategy and IP tax relief.

Design ranking: We consider registered and unregistered design work.

Factors we evaluate

In general, we are particularly interested in a firm's strengths in the practice area concerned and client outcomes delivered. The key information we evaluate include:

- (a) the expertise in the firm, sectors covered and depth of resources;
- (b) the size of workload and its level of sophistication;
- (c) changes within the firm, especially staff hires or departures and client wins or losses; and
- (d) competitor and client feedback received.

These are assessed cumulatively and no one factor is decisive. For example, it is possible for a firm not to be ranked in a higher tier or at all in IP STARS despite receiving positive market feedback.

Ranking system

Firms are ranked alphabetically in tiers or as 'Highly recommended' or 'Recommended', depending on the jurisdiction. The rankings reflect the strengths and reputation of firms vis-à-vis their rivals, according to available research information. For example, firms in Tier 1 and Tier 2 have a leading reputation, long-established practitioners and a varied portfolio of work.

For the avoidance of doubt, a lower tier does not mean that a firm offers low quality service. The firm rankings and IP stars lists are subject to change each year.

Although all the selected leading practitioners are regarded as IP stars, we specify the area of IP in which they have the most reputation and experience. Patent star and trade mark star are the two main practitioner rankings we have.

Managing IP Awards

Each year we recognise firms that were involved in highly significant contentious and non-contentious IP work. We also have other special awards to recognise, among other things, corporate social responsibility and individual achievements.

See previous years' shortlists and winners on our [awards page at www.managingip.com/Awards.html](http://www.managingip.com/Awards.html)

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