Brian C. Ascher

Partner

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New York



Brian C. Ascher is a partner in the New York office of Gibson Dunn, where he is Co-Chair of Gibson Dunn's Media, Entertainment & Technology Practice Group and a member of the firm's Litigation Practice Group. Brian represents corporate and individual clients in a wide range of complex commercial litigation in both federal and state court, including several trials. Brian's practice focuses on civil litigation, including contract, profit participation, trade secrets, and other intellectual property disputes. In addition, Brian has significant experience in litigating founder disputes and First Amendment cases.

Brian is ranked by *Chambers USA* as a leading attorney for Media & Entertainment: Litigation, and *The Hollywood Reporter* has named him to their 2026 New York Power Lawyers list, recognizing the industry's top practitioners. Brian has consistently been named to *Variety's* Legal Impact Report since 2021 and was included on *Billboard's* "Top Music Lawyers" list for 2026. He has also been recognized as one of *Lawdragon's* 500 Leading Global Entertainment, Sports & Media Lawyers since 2025. He has been recognized as a *Benchmark Litigation* "Future Star," a *Law360* 2020 "Rising Star" in the Media & Entertainment category, and a 2021-2023 *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in America*™ in Entertainment and Sports Law. Previously, Brian was named as one of two Rising Stars in the Media and Entertainment category and recognized nationally in the United States category by *Euromoney Legal Media Group*. In addition, he was part of the team that earned recognition in *Daily Journal's* 2020 "Top Verdicts" for a bench trial win for AMC Networks in a profit participation case concerning *The Walking Dead*.

Representative matters include:

- AMC Networks: Representing AMC in breach of contract and profit participation litigation concerning the hit television series, *The Walking Dead* and *Fear The Walking Dead*. Part of team that obtained a total victory for AMC following a two-week bench trial in 2020 and a sweeping summary judgment win in 2022, knocking out claims seeking hundreds of millions of dollars in alleged liability.
- Bob Dylan: Successfully argued before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, obtaining unanimous affirmance of sanctions award in Mr. Dylan's favor against opposing counsel in a closely-watched case. Representing Mr. Dylan in various matters, including a successful dismissal of a breach of contract action concerning the sale of Mr. Dylan's music publishing catalog to Universal Music Group.
- White House reporters: Represented CNN and its White House correspondent, Jim Acosta, and *Playboy* White House correspondent, Brian Karem in separate successful First Amendment / Due Process Clause lawsuits to reinstate their suspended White House press credentials. The D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously affirmed the district court's ruling in the Karem case.
- Pinterest: Achieved a favorable settlement for Pinterest and one of its co-founders in a founder dispute.

Capabilities

Litigation
First Amendment and Free Expression
Intellectual Property
Media, Entertainment, and Technology
Technology Litigation
Trade Secrets
Trials

Credentials

Education

New York University - 2009 Juris Doctor
Colgate University - 2003 Bachelor of Arts

Admissions

New York Bar

Clerkships

USDC, New Jersey, Hon. Faith Hochberg, 2011 - 2012

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- Heaven’s Door Spirits: Represented premium whiskey brand partially owned by Bob Dylan in a trademark infringement action seeking to enjoin the marketing of the brand shortly after launch, resulting in a favorable settlement.
- Hamdi Ulukaya and Chobani: Achieved a favorable settlement for Chobani and its founder and CEO, Hamdi Ulukaya, in a founder dispute seeking majority ownership of the company. Subsequently, successfully argued and won two motions to dismiss and two appeals in an action for breach of that settlement agreement.
- Square: Achieved a favorable settlement for Square and its co-founders, Jack Dorsey and Jim McKelvey, shortly before trial in a founder dispute that included claims for breach of joint venture agreement, fraud, and misappropriation of trade secrets.
- Lynn Tilton and Patriarch Partners: Represented prominent CLO fund manager in various litigations in multiple jurisdictions, including a trial win in an SEC fraud action seeking disgorgement of over $200 million, and a favorable settlement achieved on the last day of a jury trial in a fraudulent inducement action.
- Cablevision: Part of trial team that achieved a lucrative settlement during a jury trial on behalf of Cablevision and subsidiary VOOM HD Holdings in a multi-billion dollar breach of contract action against DISH Network.
- Prominent sports agent: Represented a prominent sports agent in a confidential baseball-related arbitration.
- Pro bono representation: Represented the Clooney Foundation for Justice in negotiation of a documentary film contract. Obtained dismissal of a city agency’s statute-of-limitations defense in a trial in an Article 78 action. Represents artists and writers through Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts.

Brian received his Juris Doctor degree from the New York University School of Law in 2009, where he served as an Articles Editor of the *New York University Environmental Law Journal*. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy, with honors, from Colgate University in 2003, where he graduated *summa cum laude* and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

From 2011 to 2012, Brian served as a law clerk to the Honorable Faith S. Hochberg in the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey. Prior to law school, Brian worked in film production and distribution.

Brian is admitted to practice in the State of New York and before the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. He is also a member of the Entertainment Law Committee of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York.

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