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Media & Entertainment Group Of The Year: Gibson Dunn

By Alison Knezevich

Law360 (February 2, 2026, 4:04 PM EST) -- Gibson Dunn & Crutcher LLP successfully defended OpenAI in the first defamation case against a chatbot, is representing Warner Bros. Television in a battle over the medical drama "The Pitt" and secured an appellate victory for Bob Dylan in a high-profile case, earning the firm a spot among the 2025 Law360 Media & Entertainment Groups of the Year.

Leaders of the practice are based in the media and entertainment hubs of Los Angeles and New York, but the group's roughly 350 lawyers span the nation and globe. The attorneys draw on cross-disciplinary collaboration and extensive insights into their clients' industries as they take on a wide variety of matters.

The team offers "special expertise that is extremely valuable for clients, both in the transactional and litigation context," said Kevin Masuda, co-chair of the practice.

Practice co-chair Ilissa Samplin noted that deep industry knowledge is among the factors that set Gibson Dunn lawyers apart. The attorneys "understand the industry on top of the law," she said.

"Witnesses have commented on it when we're preparing them; we really understand their business," she said, adding that this fluency helps the team craft creative approaches to cases.

The practice's accomplishments in 2025 included wins in closely watched cases.

In one of them, the firm helped OpenAI defeat a radio show host's defamation suit over ChatGPT. A Georgia state judge in May granted summary judgment in favor of OpenAI in the case brought by Mark Walters, a nationally syndicated radio host focused on Second Amendment issues.

Walters alleged that ChatGPT defamed him when it "hallucinated" and falsely claimed that he was the defendant in another lawsuit. Walters' friend, an editor at the Second Amendment News outlet AmmoLand.com, had used ChatGPT to summarize that lawsuit, which was filed by the Second Amendment Foundation against the attorney general of Washington state. The editor, who was not a party to the case, did not publish the inaccurate ChatGPT output.



The court noted ChatGPT gave users multiple warnings that output can be "factually inaccurate information."

The Los Angeles-founded Gibson Dunn also takes on Hollywood's highest-profile disputes.

In one of them, the firm is defending Warner Bros. Television in a lawsuit brought by the widow of "ER" creator Michael Crichton, who claimed that the critically acclaimed medical drama "The Pitt" ripped off her late husband's work without credit or compensation.

Warner Bros. says "The Pitt" is "entirely different from 'ER.'" Gibson Dunn moved to nix the suit under California's anti-SLAPP, or strategic lawsuit against public participation, law. A Los Angeles Superior Court judge denied the motion in February 2025, agreeing with Warner Bros. that the creation of "The Pitt" was a constitutionally protected act of free speech, but saying she couldn't decide that the suit was completely meritless.

The Gibson Dunn legal team has appealed.

In another headline-grabbing case, the Gibson Dunn team obtained a Second Circuit victory last year unanimously affirming sanctions against opposing counsel in a dropped lawsuit that had alleged that Bob Dylan sexually abused a 12-year-old girl in 1965. Dylan said the allegations were fabricated and designed to extort him.

Gibson Dunn lawyers had represented Dylan in fighting the lawsuit, which was brought in 2021 under the New York Child Victims Act. The plaintiff fired her counsel and dropped her lawsuit the following year, and a New York federal judge in 2023 sanctioned the attorneys for discovery violations. This past August, a Second Circuit panel unanimously upheld the sanctions in a precedential opinion.

The ruling was "further vindication" for Dylan, said Brian Ascher, co-chair of the practice.

"It was a big win at the trial court, a big win at the Second Circuit to get affirmed, and a great result for our client," he said. "It was a case with heinous allegations, but a satisfying case to be part of, given the outcome and the success we were able to achieve for our client."

In another court victory for a Gibson Dunn client, a California state appeals court in November 2024 upheld Los Angeles County Superior Court decisions in favor of AMC Networks in a yearslong dispute with producers of "The Walking Dead" who alleged that they were cheated out of profits from the hit show.

Gibson Dunn lawyers also steer industry clients through major transactions.

In some noteworthy deals, the firm represented Global Music Rights and The Azoff Co. in the sale of a significant stake of Global Music Rights to private equity firm Hellman & Friedman and advised Paramount Pictures in a slate financing transaction with Domain Capital.

Practice leaders said Gibson Dunn lawyers' breadth of specialties helps put forth the best legal strategies for clients.

In one recent matter, Samplin was able to call upon the expertise of colleagues who focus on executive compensation, she said.

It was an entertainment dispute, "but having them in the mix made all the difference," she said.

--Editing by Rich Mills.

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