



Curtis Behmann

Partner & National Leader, Beyond IP Strategy

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Curtis is passionate about innovation, design, technology and intellectual property strategy. Innovative companies, their investors and advisors trust Curtis to help them strengthen their competitive advantage and create barriers to entry for competitors. He works with clients in areas from telecommunications and medical devices to autonomous vehicles, artificial intelligence and 3D printing.

He has developed an innovative suite of strategic intellectual property advisory services, to help companies use IP to drive business success.

Curtis, one of the top 300 IP strategists in the world according to the IAM Strategy 300, is a professional engineer, registered patent agent and design expert. His more than 20 years' experience brings a unique combination of deep expertise and board-level strategic insights to startups, scale-ups and world-leading multinationals. Companies rely on Curtis' strategic thinking, curiosity, problem solving expertise and investment in long-term relationships.

Curtis is a director of the Intellectual Property Institute of Canada (the voice of intellectual property professionals in Canada) and treasurer of AIPPI Canada. He is a member of BLG's Innovation Thought Leadership Committee, chair of BLG's Ottawa Charitable Donations Committee, and a former member of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee (2008-2018).

Prior to joining BLG, Curtis was a senior patent examiner at the Canadian Intellectual Property Office.

Experience

- Trusted advisor to an American multinational medical technologies corporation for more than 10 years, providing patent and industrial design prosecution counselling and guidance.
- Advised an investment fund focused on innovative companies, developing a playbook and framework for assessing company IP maturity and negotiating IP clauses in funding agreements.
- Advising a stealth-mode start-up working on silicon, hardware and machine learning with a patent landscape review, patent assessment and application filing, including advising co-founders on risk assessment.
- Providing patent prosecution counselling services for more than 12 years to an American telecommunications conglomerate, including navigating evolving guidelines on patent-eligible subject matter.
- Worked with a multinational professional services firm to provide board-level assessment of intellectual property strategy and review of an existing patent portfolio for an optical semiconductor designer and manufacturer.
- Trusted advisor for more than 15 years to a privately-held clean technology innovations company, including providing patent and design advice, and a recent strategic review and culling of patent and trademark portfolios, to maintain vital IP investments while reducing overall investment.
- Expanded IP portfolio of a software development firm producing video streaming tools while providing timely IP due diligence advice to CFO.
- Developed tailored IP strategy for an advanced manufacturing start-up in the context of a complex collaboration and investment environment.
- Provided patent drafting, prosecution and IP strategy guidance to a healthcare software design consultancy, including direction on wisely focusing IP investments and helping avoid a planned IP investment that would not have provided business value.
- Advised for more than a decade a global fabless semiconductor company with offices worldwide, working in semiconductor, storage, communications and optical networking spaces. Patent drafting and prosecution work with company inventors in Canada, United States and India. Actively provided strategic guidance from initial idea vetting stage at the company's patent review committee, through to patent grant. Provided stability and continuity through changeover of four different primary IP contacts throughout the relationship, through to a large acquisition.
- Advised a postsecondary institution on strategic assessment of two patent portfolios (hydrogen technology and big data), including patent asset assessment and portfolio metrics, market assessment, and commercialization options.
- Assisted a leading manufacturing client with IP strategy prioritization for different R&D investments. Mandate included preparing board-level guidance and a detailed implementation blueprint (with timelines and quarterly breakdown of IP investments) for those responsible for implementation.
- Developed and implemented an initial IP strategy for a start-up developing sustainable active packaging, including patent assessment and application filing, and strategic agreements-related advice to CEO.
- As CIPO patent examiner, examined patent applications relating to emerging Internet and wireless technologies, data-switching networks, fiber-optic networks and related protocols, architectures, software and hardware.

Insights & Events

- Author, "Funding for IP strategy and protection for Canadian companies", BLG Article, June 2023
- Guest Lecturer, "Leveraging IP in Business Strategy - The CTO Perspective", NextGen CTO Program, University of Windsor EPICentre, November 2021.
- Panelist, "Innovation Series – Developing an IP Strategy", Provincial Scale-Up Webinar, September 2021
- Author, "IP Strategy: Why it matters for your company's success", BLG Article, April 2021
- Author, "Intellectual property and your business: What you need to know", BLG Article, April 2021
- Panelist, "The Hague Agreement: An International Perspective," AMPPI Webinar on Industrial Design Protection, December 2020
- Presenter, "Update on patent eligibility of software inventions and diagnostic methods in Canada," Webinar for health and technology-focused startups, December 2020
- Guest Lecturer, "The Value of Product Design: IP and the Industrial Design Professional," Carleton University, January 2019 & February 2020
- Author, "Using the New Canadian Industrial Design Practices to Your Advantage", BLG Article, November 2018
- Author, "BLG Quick Reference Guide — Industrial Design Changes in Canada," October 2018
- The Sensor: Are Patent Wars Coming for Autonomous Vehicles?, BLG Perspective, June 2018
- Author, "Canadian Government Provides Details of First Ever National IP Strategy", BLG Article, April 2018
- Presenter, "Innovation at BLG," Ottawa Law & Technology Meetup, April 2018
- Panel moderator, "Being a Brilliant In-House Counsel," IPBC Global conference, June 2017
- Author, "Canada," Design Rights: Functionality and Scope of Protection, Wolters-Kluwer, 2017

Beyond our Walls

Professional Involvement

- Board of Directors, Intellectual Property Institute of Canada (IPIC)
- Secretary, AIPPI Canada
- Canadian representative, International Standing Committee on Design, AIPPI (International Association for the Protection of Intellectual Property)
- Chair, Canada's Industrial Design Practice Committee
- Member, Organizing Committee for 2014 congress in Toronto, AIPPI
- Member, American Intellectual Property Law Association
- Member, Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
- Member, Professional Engineers Ontario
- Member, Christian Legal Fellowship

Community Involvement

- Volunteer, BLG Reads to Kids Program, 2002-present
- Coach, Nepean Blue Devils Basketball Association, 2017-present
- Guitarist/song leader, Cornerstone Wesleyan Church, 2013-present

Awards & Recognitions

- Recognized in the 2023, 2021 and 2020 editions of *Intellectual Asset Magazine's IAM Strategy 300*, recognizing the top 300 IP strategists in the world.
- Recognized in the 2023 edition (and since 2014) of *Intellectual Asset Magazine's (IAM) Patent 1000 - The World's Leading Patent Professionals* (Prosecution - Recommended).
- Recognized in the 2022 edition (and since 2014) of *Managing Intellectual Property's IP Stars* (Patent).
- Recognized in the 2021 edition (and since 2020) of *Best Lawyers in Canada* (Intellectual Property Law).

Education

- BSc (Hons.), electrical engineering, University of Ottawa, 1997

BLG | Canada's Law Firm

As the largest, truly full-service Canadian law firm, Borden Ladner Gervais LLP (BLG) delivers practical legal advice for domestic and international clients across more practices and industries than any Canadian firm. With over 725 lawyers, intellectual property agents and other professionals, BLG serves the legal needs of businesses and institutions across Canada and beyond – from M&A and capital markets, to disputes, financing, and trademark & patent registration.

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