

## Patent Risk Management



**Mark D. Hansing**  
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### If You Want to Build a Similar Product to One in the Marketplace

#### Overview

There are times a business wants or needs to make a similar product to one in the market. The business may have even developed an improvement to it. However, if patents cover the existing product, they could block your ability to commercialize your innovation (sometimes called “freedom-to-operate” or “right-to-use” in the marketplace). The risk can be significant and should not be ignored. All the investment of time and money to develop, manufacture, and launch your innovation may be for naught. In many cases, the patent owner may not only sue to stop your sales but also for money damages.

#### Targeted Freedom-to-Operate or Right-to-Use Searches and Opinions

Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, there is no guaranteed way to eliminate all such risk. One reason is cost. The most thorough freedom-to-operate (FTO) or right-to-use (RTU) searches and opinions can easily reach into five figures. This may not be viable in many circumstances. But there are ways to design such searches that fit into a risk management budget. Below is one example:

**Step 1:** Focus the search just to direct competitors. Full FTO or RTU searches try to discover relevant patents of anyone from the now over 10 million issued U.S. patents. In contrast, a “competitor” search typically reduces this to a hand-full. Vetting direct competitor patents may address the highest risk of an infringement claim. The costs of such targeted searches and opinions can be a fraction of a full FTO search.

**Step 2:** If Step 1 finds any relevant patent, evaluate whether there is a clear way to design around it. Some patents describe and illustrate a product broadly but have claims that are narrower. For example, the patent claims may require a feature your product omits or that you could easily eliminate and, thus, avoid the patent. Alternatively, the patent claims may help you identify a substitute for a feature that supports FTO or RTU.



Instead of dropping your product or gearing up for a fight with the patent owner, you could design around the patent with low risk of infringement.

**Step 3:** If Step 1 finds a relevant patent with broad claims, evaluate whether there is a chance the validity of those claims can be challenged. For example, the FTO search could be extended to look for earlier patents, and sometimes publications or sales, of others that were not considered by the Patent Office when granting the patent. Sometimes, with just that extended searching, strong evidence the patent is invalid is found. You could then make a calculated business decision to proceed with your product and defend against a charge of infringement if brought by the competitor with the patent. If the evidence of invalidity is strong, you could proactively file proceedings in the Patent Office or the federal courts to seek to knock out the patent.

**Step 4:** If Step 1 finds a relevant patent, and Steps 2 or 3 are not selected or do not give sufficient comfort, other strategies are possible. One example is to do extended searching to see if an expired patent can be found that discloses a product with enough features for you that you could, instead of your design, copy and sell the expired patent design. Once a patent is expired, absent unusual circumstances, it is public domain and can be copied by anyone. Even if the expired patent is not your design, it may allow you to enter the marketplace with a version of the product with low risk. NOTE: U.S. Patents have a life-span of about 20 years from their filing date. However, a maintenance fee must be paid to the U.S. Patent Office three times during that span. If the patent owner does not pay a fee, the patent expires early. Sometimes this extended searching finds relatively recent issued patents that have expired early and can be copied. Thus, they might have relatively recent technology but be free to copy.

**Step 5:** If any of the Steps finds relevant patents that cannot otherwise be handled (e.g. by Steps 2-4), and if you make a business decision you have to get into the marketplace with your product, you can always contact the competitor with the patent and ask for a license to make and sell it. While this can be fraught with issues and uncertainty (it is easy for a direct competitor to simply say “no”), it sometimes can work. The competitor may want to get additional value from its patent. The competitor may decide a license has less risk to them than worrying about a design-around or defending a challenge to its patent.

## Summary

Full FTO/RTU searches and opinions are the best tool available to give you intelligence whether or not there are issued patents that might affect freedom to operate/right to use your product in the marketplace. If your proposed product is envisioned to be a primary source of revenue and value, there is no doubt you should seriously consider such a full FTO/RTU review.

However, if it is difficult to justify the cost of such a full evaluation, the foregoing provides some possible alternative risk management strategies for consideration. Of course, one or more of those possible steps could be conducted and, if no acceptable result is found, the full FTO/RTU review could then be conducted.

As with most aspects of marketplace activity, these decisions are business decisions. You should consult your IP counselor to fully understand these and other possible strategies to help inform a business judgment acceptable to you in terms of risk management. It is best that such decisions be made as early in your product design/development process as possible.

# AI



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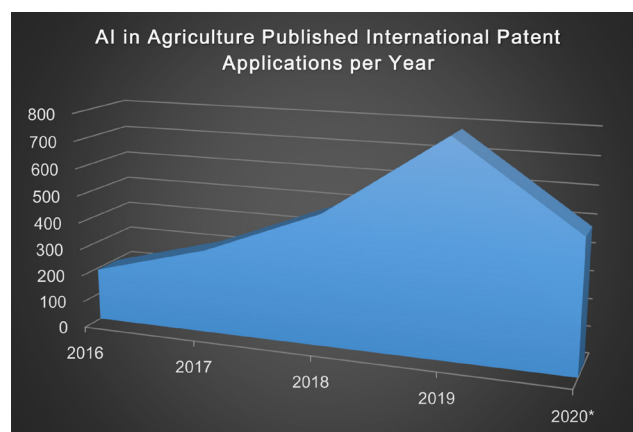
## Artificial Intelligence or Accelerating Innovation?

AI is a hot topic in academics, industry, tech spaces, and it turns out in patent filings. The World Intellectual Property Organization reported 50,000 patent filings in 2016 alone directed to AI and the growth curve was on a steep upward trajectory. In fact, AI for robotics had a 265% growth in patent filings between 2013 and 2016. Areas of hot interest in the past 5-8 years have been neural networks (used in machine translation) and deep learning (used in speech recognition systems). These tools have transformed certain areas of technology and business with vast

improvements in places like Google Translate and various voice to text applications used in cell phones, voicemail technology, and automated assistants (such as Siri and Alexa).

Looking at the patent filings, we can often identify areas of technology that are forthcoming. For example, AI applications in transportation were one of the hottest growth areas for some years (and still remain high). Not surprisingly, we saw significant increases in automotive features employing AI. Technologies employing AI include lane steering, automatic braking and the many sensors systems supporting both of these features. Fuel systems get less public recognition but informed by AI systems that track fuel consumption and efficiency, for traditional fuel systems and electric vehicles such as those used by Tesla and Toyota's Prius. More sensational uses include those in automated driving systems being tested.

So, if we look at contemporary patent filings what trends might we find? One area of significant growth is the agricultural industry. The chart below shows the number of published international patent applications encompassing AI in agriculture from 2016 through August 2020. As shown, there has been a steady trend increasing the number of patents filed directed to AI in agriculture with 2019 being a record year having 782 international patent applications publishing. This year, 2020, has already surpassed 2018 with 4 months of publications yet to come.



We can expect that AI patents will continue to grow rapidly. Two questions that will repeat for most of us: How is your industry being impacted by AI? And, are there ways you can harness AI for your business?

# Mitigating Copyright Issues

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## In Remote Learning

Remote learning raises important questions related to how copyright protected materials can be used in an online learning environment. One of the more frequent myths that we hear is that copyright law does not apply to a situation because that situation is educational in nature. However, just because a use is educational in nature, does not necessarily mean that copyright law doesn't apply.

Copyright law affords broad protection to original works of authorship, including protection against the unauthorized reproduction, display, and public performance of copyrighted works. And while the Copyright Act does include limitations on the exclusive rights granted to copyright owners, including limitations related to education, these education related limitations are typically more narrowly tailored than most people have come to believe.

The Copyright Act of 1976 includes an exemption for the “performance or display of a work *by instructors or pupils* in the course of *face-to-face teaching activities* of a nonprofit educational institution, *in a classroom* or similar place devoted to instruction”. As you can see the above exception only applies to face-to-face teaching activities in the classroom.

Thus, in 2002, Congress amended the Copyright Act when they passed the Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization (TEACH) Act to expand the exemptions to an online distance learning setting. Generally, the TEACH Act permits the performance of a nondramatic literary or musical work and “reasonable and limited portions of any other work” (e.g., reading an excerpt of a book or play, or playing a short clip of a sound recording), as well as the “display of a work in an amount comparable to that which is typically displayed in the course of a live classroom session,” in connection with online distance learning; see 17 U.S.C. Section 110(2). Additionally, the TEACH Act generally allows for the digital reproduction of a work to the extent necessary to facilitate authorized performances and displays.

So, while the TEACH Act does allow for certain exemptions, the Act is subject to several limitations.

- 1) The work must have been “lawfully made and acquired”. Simply downloading a work from the internet likely would not qualify, if the original material is itself infringing or protected by copyright.
- 2) The performance or display of a work must be made by or under the “actual supervision” of an instructor “as an integral part of a class session” and it must be “directly related to and of material assistance to the teaching content”. Thus, playing a video or audio recording for entertainment purposes would not qualify. The work must be directly related to the classroom content.

- 3) The exemption only applies to accredited nonprofit education institutions. For-profit education institutions would not qualify.
- 4) The transmission of the work must be limited to students “officially enrolled” in the course. And institutions must apply reasonable technological measures that prevent students from downloading or further distributing the work.
- 5) The exemption does not permit educators to copy and use others’ online course materials, as opposed to developing their own materials.

The TEACH Act can be a powerful tool for educators and institutions but it may not be the only tool available. The Copyright Act authorizes the “fair use” of a copyrighted work and specifically refers to teaching as one that may be considered fair. Many educators argue that the Fair Use Doctrine should accommodate the additional flexibility required by a public health crisis. They argue that educational institutions should be allowed to copy and use portions of protected works for emergency distance education under the circumstances that institutions face because of COVID-19. They generally cite to the benefit provided to the public in remote teaching as students can continue to learn while engaging in social distancing and while access to physical materials is impractical.

However, the Fair Use Doctrine has not changed due to COVID-19, and there is no caselaw that directly addresses the application of the Fair Use Doctrine during a pandemic or public health crisis. Therefore, while public policy and many copyright owners will likely guide a more forgiving application of the Fair Use Doctrine, institutions should act cautiously when using copyright protected works in an online distance learning environment. And because the Fair Use Doctrine asks courts to balance the nature of the work infringed, the amount infringed, and the nature of the infringement (commercial benefit, educational, etc.) against the potential harm or market impact to the copyright owner, educational institutions can and should take steps to improve their position in a fair use defense and/or mitigate the potential risk of a copyright infringement dispute. Because a fair use defense to copyright infringement is highly fact intensive, educational institutions should seek the advice of counsel when determining if a use of materials is likely to be fair use.

# Terminal Disclaimers

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## Important Considerations in Licensing Agreements for Patents

Common ownership must be maintained when licensing patents connected by a terminal disclaimer, otherwise the disclaimed patent will be unenforceable. Licenses in which all substantial rights are transferred to another party may be enough to be a *de facto*

assignment and break common ownership.

An inventor is not allowed to have multiple patents for the same invention, nor patents for obvious variations of an invention. Therefore, a patent application may be rejected when the invention is identical to, or patentably indistinct from, another invention with a common inventor, applicant, owner, assignee, or subject to a joint research agreement. This type of rejection is called a double patenting rejection. There are two types of double patenting rejections. One is a statutory double patenting rejection and is grounded in statute 35 USC § 101 which only allows an inventor to obtain a patent for an invention. To overcome this rejection, the conflicting claims in the application must be cancelled or amended.

The other double patenting rejection is non-statutory, or obviousness-type, double patenting. This type of rejection bars an inventor from having a patent with a claim that is obvious over a claim in another of the inventor's patent. To overcome this rejection, the offending claim may be amended or cancelled, the applicant can argue against obviousness, or the applicant can file a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer is a statement that the applicant disclaims to the public the terminal portion of the patent such that the patent's term does not extend beyond the patent to which it is disclaimed. For example, if patent application '002 is considered an obvious derivation of patent '001, the applicant can disclaim the additional term of patent '002 such that it is not enforceable beyond the term of patent '001. Basically, resulting patent '002 will have the same expiration date as patent '001.

Terminal disclaimers require common ownership between the disclaimed patent and the reference patent for the disclaimed patent to be enforceable. The submission of a terminal disclaimer to overcome a double patenting rejection ensures that a patent owner with multiple patents claiming obvious variations of one invention retains all of those patents together, or sells them as a group. This is in service of public policy that prevents the possibility of multiple suits against an accused infringer by different assignees of patents claiming patentably indistinct variations of the same invention.

Therefore, the requirement for common ownership for patents with terminal disclaimers must be considered when drafting exclusive licensing agreements. If licensing a patent with a terminal disclaimer, the agreement must be careful to not break common ownership. Common ownership can be broken if a licensing agreement transfers all substantial rights in the disclaimed patent such that it is a *de facto* assignment.

To determine whether or not an exclusive license is a *de facto* assignment, courts look at the intention of the parties and to the substance of what is granted. Factors considered to determine whether or not the license transfers all substantial rights are: “1) the nature and scope of the right to bring suit, 2) the exclusive right to make, use, and sell products or services under the patent, 3) the scope of the licensee’s right to sublicense, 4) the reversionary rights to the licensor following termination or expiration of the license, 5) the right of the licensor to receive a portion of the proceeds from litigating or licensing the patent, 6) the duration of the license rights, 7) the ability of the licensor to supervise and control the licensee’s activities, 8) the obligation of the licensor to continue paying maintenance fees, and 9) any limits on the licensee’s right to assign its interest in the patent.” *Azure Networks, LLC v CSR PLC*, 771 F.3d 1336, 1343 (Fed. Cir. 2014). Courts more likely to treat an exclusive license as an assignment when the licensor gives up control over enforcement, and when the license extends for the duration of the license.

In *Azure Networks*, the court determined that the license was an assignment because the license granted Azure the full right to enforce the patent and reach settlements, grant sublicenses, and control whether or not the licensor could join any related litigation. Furthermore, the license could potentially last the duration of the patent because there was no termination date.

In *Unified Messaging Solutions v. United Online, Inc.*, 2013 U.S. Dist. Ct. LEXIS 6009 (N.D. Ill. 2013) there was an agreement between two parties wherein each could individually sue for infringement. Therefore, the parties were not joint owners of undivided interests which divided ownership between the disclaimed patent and the reference patent. Terminal disclaimers were violated rendering the disclaimed patents unenforceable.

In *King Pharm., Inc v Teva Pharm, USA Inc.*, 2007 U.S. Dist LEXIS 4268 (D.C. N.J. 2007), the licensor retained all rights to manufacture and sell, and therefore King did not enjoy a right of exclusivity. Nor may King sue for infringement of those rights. Those two factors were considered dispositive and the license was not considered an assignment.

In *Immunex Corp v. Sandoz Inc.*, 395 F. Supp. 3d 366, 414-17 (D.C. N.J. 2019) all substantial rights were not transferred because the licensor retained the power to bring an infringement action, retained the right to practice the invention, and could veto any assignment of licensee’s rights to a third party.

In *Biocell Tech. LLC v. Arthro-7*, 2012 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 196044 (C.D. Ca. 2012) the license was not considered an assignment because the licensor retained the right to sue and retain damages, has an unrestricted right to bar licensee from assigning or transferring its interest in the patents, and the licensor retains some supervisory control in connection with the patents (like the right to set standards for quality).

When licensing a patent subject to a terminal disclaimer, the license should be examined to evaluate whether or not substantial rights have been granted such that the license will be deemed a *de facto* assignment breaking the common ownership requirement rendering the disclaimed patent unenforceable.

# The USPTO Releases Updated Report



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## Providing Insight into the Participation of Women in the U.S. Patent System

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) has released an updated study regarding the participation of women as inventors in the U.S. intellectual property system. The report titled “Progress and Potential: 2020 Update on U.S. Women Inventor-Patentees” (the 2020 Report) is a follow-up to the 2019 report published by the USPTO, which outlined trends in women inventors named on U.S. patents from 1976 to

2016. The 2020 Report takes into consideration an additional nearly one million issued patents and three years of new data.

As acknowledged within the 2020 Report, “For [the U.S. patent system] to be most effective, all Americans must have the opportunity to reap the personal and commercial benefits of applying for and receiving patent protection.” However, after examination of trends and characteristics of women’s participation as inventors in the patent system within the 2019 report, it was discovered that women were comparatively underrepresented. Therefore, a goal of the 2020 Report was to gain a better understanding of women’s participation within the patent system through the review of additional data and providing an analysis of entry by women into the patent system. Particularly, the 2020 Report considers the number and share of new women inventor-patentees and the degree to which those women remain active by patenting again within five years.

As published by the USPTO, the 2020 Report provides the following findings:

- More women are entering and staying active in the patent system than ever before.
- The number of patents with at least one woman inventor increased from 20.7% in 2016 to 21.9% by the end of 2019.
- The “Women Inventor Rate” (WIR)—the share of U.S. inventors receiving patents who are women—increased from 12.1% in 2016 to 12.8% in 2019.
- The share of women among new inventors on issued patents increased from 16.6% in 2016 to 17.3% by 2019.
- The gender gap in the number of women inventors who remain active by patenting again within five years is decreasing. For the most recent group of new inventors, 46% of women patented again in the next five years versus 52% of men. In 1980, the gap was 28% for women versus 38% for men.



While the 2020 Report indicates that trends continue to improve, the overall data confirm that women are still receiving patents at rates far lower than men. Further, a WIR of 12.8% is still substantially lower than other benchmarks of women's education and employment status as scientists and engineers. For example, in 2017, women accounted for about 2 million science and engineering jobs, however, only 27,000 women were named as inventor-patentees. These statistics demonstrate that there remains a huge disconnect between women holding science and engineering jobs and bringing women into the patent system.

The 2020 Report sheds light on the continued underrepresentation of women in the U.S. patent system, but provides valuable information to help develop future goals within the intellectual property community. While the underrepresentation of women has further been an issue in law firms, MVS is proud to challenge the status quo where nearly half of our partners (PLC member attorneys) are women, which is well above the average of 21.5% for equity partners at firms as reported by the American Bar Association in response to the 2019 Glass Ceiling Report by Law360. This average is even lower for intellectual property boutique firms. While there is much work to do, MVS continues to remain active by participating in committees and organizations to help promote women entrepreneurs, women business owners, and women inventors. To continue the progress made by women participating in the patent system, we must all continue our efforts in supporting women in innovation, ultimately creating a more inclusive patent system.

A copy of the 2020 Report may be found [here](#).

# Patent and Trademark Office

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## Responses to COVID-19

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by providing some limited relief from certain deadlines and fees and by providing for expedited examination of COVID-19 related patent and trademark applications. The details of these programs are set forth below. The USPTO maintains a webpage dedicated to updates regarding to its response to COVID-19 issues that is updated regularly at <https://www.uspto.gov/coronavirus>.

### PATENTS

#### *Relief from Deadlines and Fees*

Formal relief from patent deadlines has nearly expired. The final date to take advantage of delayed payments of fees, including especially any delayed maintenance fees and issue fees is **September 30, 2020**. Specifically, for small and micro entities only, any: a) basic filing fee, search fee, examination fee, and late filing surcharge due in reply to an Office notice issued during preexamination processing; b) basic national fee; c) issue fee; or d) maintenance fee; due between March 27, 2020, and September 29, 2020, will be considered timely if paid on or before September 30, 2020, provided that the payment is accompanied by a statement that the delay in payment was due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

After September 30 it is still possible to revive applications and patents under current rules when certain conditions are met, including most importantly that the deadline was missed unintentionally and was remedied promptly upon discovery. It appears from the comments of the Patent and Trademark Office that inability to make payments or response as a result of COVID-19 will be treated as unintentional, but that remains to be seen for sure.

The USPTO will permit applicants to defer payment of the provisional application filing fee for applications related to COVID-19 until the filing of a corresponding nonprovisional application. In turn, applicants must agree that the technical subject matter disclosed in their provisional applications (which is generally maintained as confidential unless and until 18-months after a corresponding nonprovisional application is filed) will be made available to the public via a searchable collaboration database maintained on the USPTO's website. To qualify for the program, the subject matter disclosed in the provisional application must concern a product or process related to COVID-19, and such product or process must be subject to an applicable Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval for COVID-19 use. This may not be a very popular program because provisional filing fees are relatively low (\$280 large entity/\$140 small entity/\$70 micro entity) and the loss of confidentiality may be undesirable.

***Expedited Processing of COVID-19 Related Inventions***

The USPTO will accept requests for prioritized examination of up to 500 qualifying patent applications without requiring payment of fees associated with prioritized examination. Under this pilot, the USPTO will advance out of turn patent applications related to COVID-19 for examination, resulting in their prioritized examination. The USPTO aims to provide final disposition of patent applications in the pilot in one year or less after it grants prioritized status. As of September 10, 2020, 169 applications have been accepted into the program, leaving 331 spots still available (updated numbers are available at <https://www.uspto.gov/initiatives/covid-19-prioritized-examination-pilot>).

To qualify for participation in the program the applications must contain one or more claims to a product or process related to COVID-19. Furthermore, such claimed product or process must be subject to an applicable Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval for COVID-19 use. The program is only available to small and micro entities. The program is not available for continuations or provisional applications. Pending applications may take advantage of the program by filing an RCE, if no prior RCE was granted prioritized examination.

Note that even if an application does not qualify to participate in the COVID-19 pilot it is still possible to obtain the same prioritized treatment by payment of applicable fees (\$4000 large entity/\$2000 small entity/\$1000 micro entity).

**TRADEMARKS*****Relief from Deadlines and Fees***

The Trademark Office has taken a more ad hoc approach to the issue, stating that it “will direct relief to those who need it on a case-by-case basis.” In particular, the Trademark Office has indicated that it will waive the petition fee for petitions to revive applications or reinstate registrations that became abandoned or expired/cancelled as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, with a statement that the delay in filing or payment was due to the COVID-19 outbreak. This waiver of the fee includes specifically: applicants who were unable to submit a timely response or fee in response to an Office communication, applicants who missed the 36-month statutory deadline for filing a Statement of Use, and registrants who missed a statutory deadline (e.g., affidavit of use, renewal), resulting in a cancelled/expired registration.

***Expedited Processing of COVID-19 Related Inventions***

The Trademark Office will accept petitions to advance initial examination of applications for marks used to identify qualifying COVID-19 medical products and services. Furthermore, the Trademark Office will waive the fee for such petitions.

To be eligible for prioritized examination under this procedure, an applicant must seek registration for one or more qualifying medical products or services. The application may include additional goods and services as well. The qualifying medical products or services are: pharmaceutical products or medical devices such as diagnostic tests, ventilators, and personal protective equipment, including surgical masks, face shields, gowns, and gloves, that prevent, diagnose, treat, or cure COVID-19 and are subject to USDA approval; and medical services or medical research services for the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, or cure for COVID-19.

# We've been and will be

## July 14, 2020

**Jill N. Link, Pharm.D.**, Patent Attorney and Chair of the **MVS Licensing Practice Group** participated in a series of webinars for the AgTech Next summit that will address issues with various risks and rewards associated with the COVID-19 world we are now living in. The first webinar was titled "AgTech NEXT Now! Pandemic Economics" and took place on May 12, 2020. Other webinars in the series include: "COVID-19 Impacts on the Food System," on June 9, 2020 and "AgTech Innovations in a Post COVID-19 World" on July 14, 2020.

## August 5, 2020

**Heidi S. Nebel**, Managing Member and Chair, **Biotechnology** and **Chemical** Practice Group presented at an AUTM Webinar on the topic of Plant Variety Protection for Sexually Propagated, Tuber Propagated and Asexually Reproduced Varieties

## August 13, 2020

**Luke T. Mohrhauser**, Patent Attorney and Co-Chair, **Mechanical-Electrical** Practice Groups attended the Ag Startup Engine Investor Virtual Meeting. MVS is the first Gold Sponsor of the Ag Startup Engine at the Iowa State University (ISU) Research Park. The **Ag Startup Engine** effort was launched over three years ago to help address two fundamental gaps that prevent agricultural startups and entrepreneurs from being more successful in Iowa: early, seed-stage investment and organized mentorship from renowned Iowan and Midwestern entrepreneurs.

## August 30, 2020

**Luke T. Mohrhauser**, Patent Attorney and Co-Chair, **Mechanical-Electrical** Practice Groups attended the ABI Executive Open where his foursome finished first in their flight.

## August 18-19, 2020

**Cassie J. Edgar**, Patent Attorney and Chair of the **MVS Regulatory Law Practice Group**, presented at the Animal Health in the Heartland Virtual Conference. Her topic was Gene Editing Technology & Regulatory Pathways for Applications in Animal Health.

## September 3, 2020

**Cassie J. Edgar**, Patent Attorney and Chair of the **MVS Regulatory Law Practice Group**, presented at the **CRISPRcon 2020: Science and Societal Narratives**. Her topic was Food labels: Science, Transparency, and

Fake News and covered, What drives and what should drive how food products produced by gene editing are labeled? Where does the need for transparency outweigh the regulatory and scientific drivers for label differentiation? What is the negative impact of "fake news" on food labels? How can this be mitigated?.

## September 21-24, 2020

**Christine Lebrón-Dykeman**, Intellectual Property Attorney and Chair, **Trademark Practice Group** moderated a panel at the **2020 IPO Virtual Annual Meeting**. The topic of the panel discussion was "Nuts & Bolts of Trademark Licensing: How To Bring Value To Your Clients."

## September 22, 2020

**Jill N. Link, Pharm.D.**, Patent Attorney and Chair of the **MVS Licensing Practice Group** participated in the **AgTech NEXT! Virtual Conference** virtual session on "The Future of Protein."

## September 30, 2020

**Luke T. Mohrhauser**, Patent Attorney and Co-Chair, **Mechanical-Electrical** Practice Groups, **Kirk Hartung**, Patent Attorney and Co-Chair, **Mechanical-Electrical** Practice Groups, **Mark Hansing**, Patent Attorney and **Gregory Lars Gunnerson**, Intellectual Property Attorney to attend the **Iowa Association of Business and Industry Advanced Manufacturing Virtual Conference**.

## October 21, 2020

**Luke T. Mohrhauser**, Patent Attorney and Co-Chair, **Mechanical-Electrical** Practice Groups to attend the **Ag Startup Engine (AES)** and **Agricultural Entrepreneurship Initiative (AGE)** Unconference.

## October 26-30, 2020

**Jill N. Link, Pharm.D.**, Patent Attorney and Chair of the **MVS Licensing Practice Group** to attend **The Women, Influence & Power in Law (WIPL) Virtual Summit**. This is the premier global forum designed to provide strategies and practical solutions for attendees and their organization.

## November 4-6, 2020

**Jill N. Link, Pharm.D.**, Patent Attorney and Chair of the **MVS Licensing Practice Group** to attend **ChIPs Virtual Global Summit** with a slate of topics and speakers that will delve into some of the most controversial and current topics impacting attendees in tech, law and policy.



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