

Trent M. Johnson

Partner

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Trent Johnson has concentrated on product distribution law since the beginning of his career at Foley and now devotes the vast majority of his practice to counseling manufacturers on many of the key facets of their resale relationships. Trent routinely advises his clients — from *Fortune 100* companies to smaller private organizations — on issues involving channel structure (including multi-channel networks), drafting key contractual provisions, state and federal antitrust law compliance, contract administration and enforcement, e-commerce issues, distributor and dealer performance, negotiating relationship modifications (both individual and system-wide), transfers of control, product or territory withdrawals, product pricing, discount and rebate programs, product repurchase disputes, and other issues.

To the extent clients need to disengage entirely from a distributor, Trent has substantial experience litigating and trying distributor terminations (including “bet-the-network” terminations) in state and federal court and in arbitration. He focuses primarily on distribution and franchise litigation and counseling, which includes counseling on related antitrust issues. Trent also has substantial experience in general commercial and complex litigation.

Key to Trent’s practice is staying ahead of statutory changes and their impact on manufacturers. Trent was the creator of the interactive version of Foley’s “Smiley Face Map,” a tool designed to assist in-house counsel in assessing their risk of liability under the panoply of state distributor and dealer protection statutes.

Trent is co-chair of the firm’s Distribution & Franchise Practice.

Awards and Recognition

- *BTI Client Service All-Star* (2024)
- Named a Thomson Reuters Stand-out Lawyer (2026)

Community Involvement

Trent is a member of several professional and charitable organizations and is a member of the board of directors of both the [Wisconsin Conservatory of Music](#) and the [Manufacturing Diversity Institute](#). Trent is a former board member of [The Milwaukee Urban League](#) and of [Bublr Bikes](#).

Thought Leadership

Trent speaks and writes frequently in the area of distribution and franchise as well as complex commercial litigation. He is a co-editor for Foley's *Product Distribution Law Guide* and the Wisconsin chapter of *Business Torts – A Fifty State Guide*, a litigation reference guide for corporate in-house counsel (Aspen Publishers, Inc.).

Sectors

- [Equipment & Industrial Product Manufacturing](#)
- [Manufacturing](#)

Practice Areas

- [Antitrust & Competition](#)
- [Commercial Litigation](#)
- [Consumer Law, Finance & Class Action Group](#)
- [Distribution & Franchise](#)
- [Litigation](#)
- [Trade Secret Noncompete Litigation](#)

Education

- University of Wisconsin Law School (J.D., cum laude, 2004)
 - Served as extern to District Judge Barbara Crabb
- Miami University (B.A., 1998)

Admissions

- Wisconsin