

Trust and Respect

An Interview with Ed Haug, Firm Chairman, Haug Partners LLP



Ed Haug

EDITORS' NOTE *Ed Haug was a founding member of Haug Partners in 1997 and is now the firm's Chairman. With offices in New York City, Boston, West Palm Beach and Washington, DC, intellectual property, antitrust, FDA and commercial litigation are among Haug Partners' specialties. Haug has been recognized by Chambers U.S.A. for his expertise in intellectual property law. He has extensive experience in bench and jury trials, having appeared before numerous district and appellate courts across the U.S., the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, and the U.S. Supreme Court. His experience extends beyond*

the U.S., having participated in cases before the United Kingdom High Court, German Federal Supreme Court, and Tokyo High Court. He served as President of the Federal Circuit Bar Association and is a frequent lecturer on varied legal issues. Haug was a Ford Merit Scholar at the University of Notre Dame, graduating with a BS in chemical engineering. He graduated from St. John's Law School and studied law in Exeter, England. Apart from his legal career, Haug is a Board Governor of the New York Metropolitan Club and Chairman of the Trustees for the One East 60th Street Historical Foundation.

FIRM BRIEF *Haug Partners (haugpartners.com) provides integrated, multi-disciplinary legal services for life science and technology businesses. Its goal is to deploy the Firm's diverse resources, technical expertise, legal acumen, and business judgment to deliver optimal outcomes for clients.*

Will you highlight the history of Haug Partners and how the firm has evolved?

When we started the firm more than 25 years ago, the founders of the firm were all, at the time, classified as patent attorneys – drafting patents and enforcing patents. It was a very technically focused practice, and all the lawyers had engineering or science backgrounds. The firm that we had originally come from had disbanded as the industry changed, and we had to decide whether to join a large, general practice firm and head up an IP group, join one of the larger patent firms that then existed, or to start our own firm. In 1997, we decided to start our own firm, and our vision was to become an intellectual property firm with high-quality lawyers with a focus on technology-related issues – using technology to support our work in drafting, enforcing, and defending all forms of intellectual property including patents, trademarks, and copyrights. We also became focused on dealing with government regulatory issues and actions, such as those involving the FDA, FTC, and ITC. We wanted to bridge the gap between what highly specialized patent firms were doing and what antitrust and FDA specialists were offering to service businesses, such as financial institutions, pharmaceutical and automotive companies, etc. Our lawyers needed to learn to think like businesspeople in addition to serving as lawyers.

We started small and have continually grown through the years. We evolved in a number of ways: we were the first IP firm to start an

FDA practice, which followed naturally from all the pharmaceutical work we were handling. We were the first IP firm to start an antitrust practice, which made sense because the main focus of the firm at that time was life sciences and we had evolved into a leader in the Hatch-Waxman arena. The vision for the firm was to expand, but not to become a general practice firm. We were focused on expanding in areas that were complementary to our core offering and expertise.

Over the last two decades, the practice has changed dramatically as technology has grown and expanded in ways that no one could have predicted. The internet came along, 5G came into being, life-changing discoveries in gene therapy and medical breakthroughs, and now we are in the midst of a major paradigm shift to artificial intelligence and how all of this technology is going to intersect with the government and industry.

How has the talent at the firm provided a competitive advantage?

It has been a great advantage and enabled us to grow and achieve great results for our clients. Our approach to growing the firm has been to do it organically from people within. We aim to bring in the best young associates we can find in the top law schools, a diverse group of associates, and then provide opportunities for them to grow in the firm. We also added lateral partners with proven experience in very specific areas – including antitrust, FDA, and litigation – each of whom is today among some of the most respected experts in their respective fields. Our size and specialization allow us to be laser-focused on honing and elevating our practice.

Will you discuss Haug Partners' approach to representing clients?

Our approach to representing clients, such as with due diligence or litigation, is to assemble a smaller team of people who are highly qualified from top to bottom, understand the issues our clients are facing, and remain focused only on addressing these issues. I like to describe us as a “Seal team” that gets meaningful results in very difficult cases as opposed to being like the Navy.

What have been the keys to Haug Partners' ability to retain its talent?

Success in what we do. We have been able to create a firm culture where everyone trusts and respects each other. This includes all of our lawyers and staff. I think that being a smaller, specialized firm has allowed us to build that culture internally which we then effectively use to serve our clients. We try to work with the decision-makers at the client – the chief IP attorneys, CEOs, managers, and business leaders – so that we can better understand their business needs. This collaborative style fosters a true partnership with our clients.

As the firm recently celebrated its 25-year anniversary, were you able to reflect and appreciate what the firm has accomplished?

Yes, I have. I have enjoyed every year of our 25-year history. I am very fortunate because of the trust and respect that I have with and among all of our Partners and our staff. Every five years we have a significant firm celebration with everyone at the firm and close friends and supporters of the firm. Haug Partners is not solely a law firm, but a family. I would not trade that for anything. ●