



Legal Counsel to the Hospitality Industry

VENABLE LLP

Venable's Hospitality team draws upon more than 50 years of dedicated industry experience to provide counsel to many of the world's largest hotel brands and management companies, as well as some of the most successful hospitality investors and REITs.

Our hospitality clients rely on our comprehensive real estate, transactional, franchise, regulatory, labor, litigation, tax, advertising, and intellectual property capabilities. We regularly represent our clients on all aspects of real estate development, financing, and construction. We also have extensive experience with structuring and negotiating all types of hospitality-focused commercial agreements involving online distribution, IP licensing and outsourcing, and brand protection.

We have represented individual hospitality companies and industry groups on every major legislative and regulatory issue affecting the industry for more than 25 years. We understand that exceptional regulatory representation extends to data privacy and security matters, where our proactive approach helps to ensure the protection of the sensitive information of our clients and their customers. For matters involving advertising and marketing, we provide advice on a wide range of issues, including brand protection, regulatory compliance, multimedia promotions, and global trademark portfolios.

Venable's recognized labor and litigation practices provide our hospitality clients with practical, effective advice on labor and employment matters, dispute resolution, litigation, and governmental investigations.

We also assist our hospitality clients with negotiating and implementing contractual agreements that affect day-to-day operations, and with structuring compliant employee benefits, health, and welfare plans that support company objectives.

We take great pride in our deep understanding and experience in the hospitality business and the dedicated, practical approach we offer our clients. We are more than legal counselors—we foresee challenges, capitalize on opportunities, and serve as trusted advisers to our clients in the pursuit of their objectives and success.

Distributions, Agreements, and Outsourcing Transactions

Our attorneys regularly advise and negotiate online distribution agreements, IP licensing agreements, technology outsourcing arrangements, and brand protection for our hospitality clients. We also regularly advise our clients on investments and partnerships with a focus on emerging technologies and platforms affecting the hospitality industry.

Real Estate

We provide counsel to our hospitality clients in all areas related to the development, financing, and construction of new hotel projects. Our attorneys also work on the acquisition of operating hotels scheduled for rebranding, the negotiation of joint venture agreements, and the purchase and sale of hotels.

Franchising and Licensing

Our work includes advice regarding relicensing, renewals, and termination of franchises in connection with acquisitions, restructurings, or refinancing of existing hotels and hotel portfolios, and the development of new hotel properties.

Advertising, Marketing, and Brand Protection

We regularly partner with iconic hospitality brands to review advertising, marketing, and promotional campaigns; manage global trademark portfolios; and bring enforcement actions in various forums, including federal court, the Patent and Trademark Office, and self-regulatory groups. We provide advice on complex promotions, including telemarketing compliance, loyalty program restructuring, challenges to competitors, and government investigations.

Data Privacy

Venable's Privacy Group addresses compliance counseling (including GDPR compliance), defense against investigations, response to data breach incidents, and cross-border data transfer.

Management Agreements

Our hospitality attorneys advise both hotel brands and management companies on structuring and negotiating hotel and other hospitality management agreements, and on restructuring ownership/management relationships.

Tax

We provide important advocacy at all levels of government on a full range of tax issues that affect our hospitality clients. Venable attorneys also provide federal, state, local, and international tax advice on a wide range of business transactions and regularly try cases in the U.S. Tax Court, the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, and other federal and state jurisdictions.

Litigation

Venable's litigation attorneys advise our hospitality clients on commercial matters, labor and employment, construction defects, advertising and unfair competition, class actions, and intellectual property disputes. We handle internal and government investigations, both in the courts and in arbitration and mediation.

Labor and Employment

Venable's labor attorneys are skilled and experienced in high-level labor relations negotiations. Our clients rely on us for advice and representation in such matters as collective bargaining, defending against unfair labor practice charges, and challenging adverse labor decisions before the NLRB and federal courts. Our employment attorneys provide pragmatic counsel to our hospitality clients in the context of an inherently dynamic employment law landscape.

State Attorney General Actions and Investigations

Attorneys in Venable's State Attorney General Practice Group routinely advise our hospitality clients in connection with state attorney general investigations and actions. The group is headed by a former U.S. senator who is also a former state attorney general.

Benefits

Our benefits attorneys work closely with our hospitality clients on identifying, structuring, and implementing compliant employee benefit plans. On a daily basis, we counsel plan sponsors and their third-party administrators on operational issues, annual compliance requirements, and participant inquiries. We also regularly advise our hospitality clients on health and welfare benefit plans of all types.

Operations

We regularly counsel hospitality clients regarding all types of contractual agreements affecting day-to-day hotel operations. We have experience in almost every operational aspect of the hotel business.

Compliance

Working closely with our hospitality clients' treasury and internal control functions, we develop client-responsive policies, procedures, and internal control and training regimes (both in-house and external); assist with risk assessment audits and internal investigations; and respond to regulatory and law enforcement inquiries.

Meet Our Hotel and Lodging Legal Summit Team

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