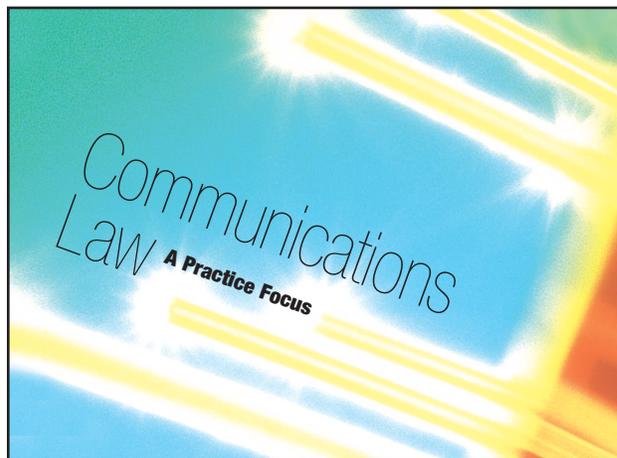


Identifying 10 Leading Communications Lawyers

This is the fifth year that *Legal Times* has prepared our Leading Lawyer lists, and we've learned a few things along the way. For example, most practice areas are not small worlds. Attorneys don't cross each other's path nearly as often as reporters seeking comparisons, invidious or otherwise, might wish. So when a lot of communications law experts started pointing fingers in the same direction, we sat up and took notice: Him and him. Him. Oh, and him. Got it.

The next step was to make sure that we weren't receiving old news. None of the 10 lawyers made it onto *Legal Times*' list based on their illustrious achievements of 20 years ago. Their clients are not asking what has been done for them lately. Indeed, the tally of what all these lawyers have accomplished in recent years is positively exhausting.

Fortunately, freelancer Jenna Greene is not easily tired. After the nominations came rolling in, Greene



hit the phones to interview private practitioners, in-house counsel, and other longtime observers of the communications bar. The result is this list of 10 top-notch attorneys.

To learn more about *Legal Times*' Leading Lawyers series, you can visit www.legaltimes.com. One more report is planned for this year: Nominations for the best in international trade law are due July 20.

Leading LAWYERS

Ten of the D.C. Area's Top Communications Lawyers

Cheryl Tritt

Morrison & Foerster

"I've had a checkered past," jokes Cheryl Tritt, describing her background as a newspaper reporter, labor lawyer, in-house counsel, and the first woman to head the common carrier bureau at the Federal Communications Commission.

These days, Tritt, 60, has settled down as head of Morrison & Foerster's communications practice. She is recognized for her work in the wireless arena as well as her expertise in the complexities of international transactions.

She's representing Alltel Corp., which is being bought by private equity firms TPG Capital and GS Capital Partners for \$27.5 billion. The deal is likely to close by the end of the year. In the past, she has assisted Alltel in acquiring wireless licenses, including its 2006 purchase of Midwest Wireless Holdings for \$1 billion.

"She's just the best," says Stephanie Johanns, senior vice president of federal government affairs for Alltel. "She's extremely responsive, a good strategist, and she's very easy to work with." And she gets the job done: "The results have always been what we're looking for."

Another steady wireless client has been T-Mobile USA Inc., a subsidiary of Deutsche Telekom AG. Tritt advised T-Mobile predecessor VoiceStream Wireless Corp. when it was bought by Deutsche Telekom for \$35 billion in 2001.

At the time, the German government owned about 45 percent of Deutsche Telekom. FCC regulations require additional agency review when a foreign entity will own more than 25 percent of a company that holds an FCC radio license.

The transaction also triggered concern from members of Congress, led by then-Sen. Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.), who felt it was a national security risk and unfair to domestic companies. Hollings unsuccessfully attempted to derail the deal via a rider on an appropriations bill. Ultimately the FCC approved the merger, concluding that it was beneficial to consumers.

In the years since, Tritt has helped T-Mobile build its network via FCC spectrum auctions and through strategic alliances with other telecom operators and investors.

She faced similar foreign ownership issues, minus the interest from Congress, when she represented Japanese mobile communications giant NTT DoCoMo Inc. in its acquisition of two Guam wireless companies last year. The \$72 million transaction marked DoCoMo's first entry into the U.S. market as a controlling party.

Tritt also counsels ICO Global Communications Ltd., a Reston, Va.-based satellite operator, on regulatory and legislative matters, including satellite licensing, market access, and spectrum policy.

"After a long struggle, they're on the verge of launching a satellite that will serve the U.S. market. I'm delighted," she says, noting that she has worked with the company since its inception in the mid-1990s.

"She has a unique combination of being incredibly intelligent and hard working, and she has great legal skills," says R. Gerald Salemme, who is both a member of ICO's board of directors and executive vice president of another of Tritt's clients, Clearwire Corp. "But more importantly, she analyzes the entire issue and creatively applies the law to get the client the best results."

Another current assignment, which Tritt describes as "one of the most exciting things I've ever worked on," falls outside the usual scope of the telecom industry. She's representing the Alfred Mann Foundation before the FCC. The nonprofit medical research foundation has developed a potentially revolutionary treatment for stroke patients and

others with partially paralyzed limbs, using a system of injectable micro stimulators and micro sensors. The stimulators, which give the patient full use of the paralyzed limb, are controlled and monitored about 100 times per second via radio signals.

But first the foundation needs FCC approval to use the spectrum, explains Tritt, and only a limited bandwidth is suitable for these transmissions. That bandwidth is now used primarily by the government, and Tritt is hopeful it will agree to share.

Tritt began her career as a journalist, but soon came to realize that she would "rather be more active in pursuing issues, than passively reporting them," she says. So she went to law school, graduating from Northwestern University School of Law in 1976.

Her first job as a lawyer was with the National Labor Relations Board; she tried labor cases in Chicago. In 1979, she moved to GTE Corp. (now part of Verizon Communications Inc.) as an in-house labor counsel. But when she had the opportunity to work as an executive assistant to the company chairman, she recalls, "I got completely hooked on telecom."

In 1989, she moved to the FCC, where she served as an adviser to then-Chairman Alfred Sikes. In 1992, she was named head of the common carrier bureau, the first woman to hold that job. The experience, says Tritt, "was enormously helpful." Plus, "it's a wonderful place to work."

The following year she joined the D.C. office of Morrison & Foerster, where prominent telecom colleagues include William Maher.

