

# Ryan B. Jacobson

Chicago, IL

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## PARTNER

### Overview

Ryan Jacobson's client roster reads like a who's who list of leaders in the entertainment, media and hospitality industries. His loyalists cite a common theme when describing how he has become an invaluable asset to their success, and a reliable confidante when faced with challenging business decisions: He is conscientious, persuasive and a tenacious advocate for those who have placed their trust in his hands.

**Entertainment & Fashion:** As chair of the firm's Entertainment, Sports & Media Service Group, Ryan serves the legal needs of the industry's most creative minds so they can focus on making us laugh, cry, dance or look our best. He is often retained by authors, filmmakers, producers and talent to protect their interests and ideas. Ryan offers a noteworthy perspective to his clients, having graduated Second City's improvisation and acting training program, and having performed on stage, television and in film. Ryan's fashion practice involves counseling business owners and creative directors in the areas of high-end apparel, swimwear, footwear and cosmetics. He also counsels talent agencies, event planners, and advertisers relative to fashion shows and related publicity. Inspired by his mother, a fashion designer, and his father, a 40+ year veteran in apparel merchandising, Ryan has a keen understanding of what it takes to flourish in the industry.

**Media & Privacy:** Warren Buffet once said, "[i]t takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it." As the public becomes increasingly reliant on the Internet as a primary news source, and social media for guidance on where to travel, stay, eat and with whom to do business, we are seeing an influx of defamation and commercial disparagement lawsuits. Ryan's niche litigation practice centers on two types of clientele. The first are media clients -- such as journalists, on-air personalities and publishers -- scrutinized for inaccurate reporting. He defends the media against libel suits and subpoenas seeking disclosure of their work product and sources, and he advises his clients at the pre-publication and pre-broadcast stages to minimize risk. The balance of his

### SERVICES

Entertainment, Sports & Media

Reputation & Crisis Management

Hospitality, Leisure & Tourism

Outside General Counsel

### EDUCATION

IIT/Chicago-Kent College of Law, J.D., 1999

Indiana University, B.A., 1996

### ADMISSIONS

Illinois

practice involves advising corporations, their officers and communication departments to minimize reputational harm, prevent advertising injury and defend right of publicity and privacy-related claims. Political figureheads, celebrities and even private individuals demand his counsel when faced with public, debilitating accusations and crisis management.

**Reputation and Crisis Management:** For more than two decades Ryan has represented clients in various industries with reputation and crisis management, mitigation and preservation. He knows the terms of use, algorithms of social media and the various tactics people use to exploit these platforms in order to disparage businesses and individuals. Ryan drafts statements, press releases and acts as a liaison to the press or naysayers in order to control the narrative and reduce further damage. He represents clients seeking recourse for unlawful attacks on their reputation, as well those who are defending their right to express their opinions.

**Hospitality:** Ryan has served the restaurant, tavern and hotel industries for well over a decade. From convenience store to grocery store, hot dog stand to restaurant group, bed-and-breakfast to hotel chain, leaders in the industry rely on his team's ability to handle transactional and risk-related issues unique to hospitality. In fact, Ryan is often appointed to act as their "outside" General Counsel charged with managing his clients' legal needs in the areas of Corporate, Real Estate, Labor & Employment, Intellectual Property and Litigation. His team is well versed in entity formation, private placement and finance, brand and liquor licensing, commercial leasing and zoning, insurance and franchising. They also routinely draft handbooks and training guides, and will counsel management, staff and security to minimize liability and prevent harassment and discrimination claims. Ryan and his team regularly collaborate with human resources and payroll to ensure compliance with local and federal laws, as well as personnel-related challenges. If litigation is inevitable, Ryan has a proven track record and pragmatic approach with an eye toward early, cost-effective resolution.

Ryan brings his practical experience and dynamic personality to the classroom as an adjunct professor of hospitality & tourism law and liability at NLU-Kendall College.

## Experience

Granted Summary Judgment for a Nightclub After a Plaintiff Patron Injured Her Knee

Advised an International Equipment Manufacturer on Corporate and Employment Advice

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Helps a National Multi-Line Insurance Company With Multiple Areas of Representation and Business Operations

Acts As General Counsel to Better Business Bureau of Chicago and Northern Illinois

Serves as Outside Counsel to Media and Marketing Solutions Company

Regularly Defend Public Figures' First Amendment Right to Free Speech

Defended and Prosecuted Counterclaims on Behalf of a Client in a Dispute Against Business Partner

Represented a Woman After Her Ex-Boyfriend Publicly Shared Explicit Images of Her

\$7.6 Million Dollar Verdict for a Chicago Executive after an Ex-Girlfriend Shared Explicit Images on Social Media

Obtained Swift Dismissal with Prejudice on Behalf of its Restaurant/Bar Client

### Membership & Involvement

- Amundsen Davis Executive Committee
- Member: DRI, Retail and Hospitality Law Committee; Illinois Restaurant Association
- American Bar Association: Communications Committee; Forum on the Entertainment & Sports Industries

### Honors

- Recognized as "40 Illinois Attorney Under 40 to Watch" by the Law Bulletin in 2007
- Recipient of the Chicago-Kent College of Law 2009 Young Alumni Award
- Selected to the Illinois Super Lawyers list: 2016, 2017, 2018
- Selected to the Illinois Super Lawyers "Rising Stars" list: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014
- Member: Herman Kogan Media Awards Committee
- Board of Directors: Giordano Dance Company

### Firm News

Ryan Jacobson Joins 13th Annual "Dancing With The Giordano Stars" Benefit *Chicago Patch*, October 4, 2018

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Daily Mail Article Quotes Ryan Jacobson  
*Daily Mail*, February 22, 2018

24 Amundsen Davis Attorneys Included on 2017 Illinois Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists  
Firm News, January 13, 2017

Amundsen Davis Selected as Outside General Counsel to the Better Business Bureau of Chicago and Northern Illinois  
Firm News, October 27, 2016

17 Amundsen Davis Attorneys Included on 2016 Illinois Super Lawyers and 2016 Illinois Rising Stars Lists  
Firm News, January 8, 2016

Illinois Super Lawyers & Illinois Rising Stars Names 12 Amundsen Davis Attorneys to 2013 List  
January 3, 2013

### In the Media

Ryan Jacobson Interviewed for *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* on Recently Dismissed Justin Bieber Lawsuit

Ryan Jacobson's Work Highlighted in *Chicago-Kent Magazine*

Max Goodman and Ryan Jacobson Recognized for Representation and Victory in Online Defamation Case

Deployment Won't Pause Candidate's Defamation Suit -- *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* Quotes Ryan Jacobson

"Federal Fraud & Breach of Contract Lawsuit," Ryan Jacobson Quoted in *Crain's Chicago Business* Article

Ryan Jacobson Quoted in *The Chicago Tribune*

*Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* Quotes Ryan Jacobson in "Appeal Panel Denies Defamation Suit"

Ryan Jacobson Quoted in *The News-Gazette*

Ryan Jacobson Obtains \$7.6 Million Judgment for Client in Defamation Case

Ryan Jacobson Quoted in the *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin*

In an era when everything is political, is any Metro ad noncontroversial? -- Ryan Jacobson Quoted in *The Washington Post*

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Chicago Sun Times Quotes Ryan Jacobson Regarding Pending Lawsuit Against a Chinatown Lounge

Entertainment Lawyer Says “Yes, and” to Launching His Own Cinematic Career – Chicago Daily Law Bulletin Features Ryan Jacobson

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### Alerts

Responding to Negative Online Posts about Your Business

Fake Reservations, Real Damages: Chicago Restaurants Left Holding the Bill After OpenTable Employee Sabotages Its Competitor

### Speaking Engagements

Corporate Risk Management Series: Brand Under Fire: How to Extinguish Threats to Your Business’s Reputation

Event, Amundsen Davis, Webcast, November 5, 2025

Defamation Nation: Taking the Pain out of Campaigning

Speaking Engagement, Chicago Bar Association, Seminar & Live Webcast;

Chicago, IL, May 8, 2025

Charles Evans Hughes Moot Court Competition

Event, Chicago-Kent College of Law, Competition, Chicago, IL, April 18, 2025

Defamation, Disinformation, and Digital Speech: Legal Approaches to Protecting and Promoting Reputation

Speaking Engagement, MyLawCLE; Webcast, April 17, 2025

Diffusing Negative Press and Publicity: A Legal Perspective on Crisis Management

Speaking Engagement, State Farm, Webcast, October 11, 2023

Protect Your Reputation from Bad Publicity: Cancelling Cancel Culture

Speaking Engagement, Illinois Chamber of Commerce, Webcast, May 10, 2023

Cancelling Cancel Culture: How to Safeguard Your Reputation

Event, Amundsen Davis, Webcast, September 15, 2021

Deconstructing Cancel Culture: A New Look at Crisis Management

Better Business Bureau, Webcast, May 11, 2021

Cancelling Cancel Culture: How to Safeguard Your Reputation from Bad Publicity

Speaking Engagement, Illinois Chamber of Commerce, Webcast, April 6, 2021

Fall 2020 Entertainment Law Panel

Chicago-Kent College of Law, Webcast, December 2, 2020

## Published Works

Fueling Solutions Without Fanning the Flames  
Publication, *Better Business Magazine*, Fall 2024

Puffery, Promises or Propoganda? Don't Believe the Hype  
Publication, *Better Business Magazine*, Fall 2023

Mentoring Your Successor  
Publication, *Better Business Magazine*, Fall 2022

The Golden Rule of Business Ethics  
Publication, *Better Business Magazine*, Fall 2021

Negotiating a Win for Both Sides  
*Better Business Magazine*, April 2021

A Guide to Being Media Savvy – Best Practices to Safeguard Your Public Image  
*Better Business Magazine*, Summer 2020

Combating Negative Publicity: Pitfalls & Best Practices  
*The Illinois Manufacturer*, July 2020

Float Like A Butterfly, Sting Like A \$30 Million Lawsuit: Muhammad Ali Enterprises  
Throws a Haymaker at Fox with a Right of Publicity Claim  
*American Bar Association Forum Newsletter on the Entertainment and Sports  
Industries*, Fall 2018

## Blog Posts

How to Combat Negative Publicity During COVID-19  
*Labor & Employment Law Update*, September 9, 2020

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