

Craig Sperling

Partner

 202.719.3239
 csperling@wiley.law



Craig represents clients on a wide variety of complex licensing, technology, commercial, and strategic transactions, with extensive experience working on matters at the convergence of media, entertainment, and technology.

Craig advises media industry clients on content acquisition and distribution, licensing, and strategic partnerships and joint ventures. His experience includes leading clients through digital transformations, from legacy to cutting-edge, digital-first models.

Craig works with a broad range of established and emerging growth companies across multiple industries on technology, commercial, and corporate transactions. He advises clients on intellectual property licensing, development, and commercialization, including the licensing of content for training artificial intelligence (AI) models and generating and displaying AI output. Craig also counsels on corporate transactions, including mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, and financings.

In addition to his work at leading law firms, Craig served in high-level positions at two prominent media companies. As Deputy General Counsel at PBS, Craig managed the legal and business affairs teams, counseled senior management and the Board of Directors on legal and business matters, and led teams working on the most impactful projects and issues in media. At Discovery, Craig partnered with the Affiliate Sales team to negotiate deals for distribution of the Discovery Channel, TLC, Animal Planet, and other networks. This diverse in-house experience provides Craig with a unique perspective to help his clients navigate their legal and business challenges.

Practice Areas

Telecom, Media & Technology
Content Licensing and Distribution
Corporate
Technology Transactions
Media
Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Credentials

Education
J.D., New York University School of Law
B.A., Cornell University

Bar and Court Memberships
District of Columbia Bar
New Jersey Bar
New York Bar
Virginia Bar

Representative Matters

- Represents developers of generative AI products in negotiations with publishers, news organizations, and other content owners for access to their books, news articles, photos, audiovisual media, and other content to train AI models and to generate and display AI outputs.
- Represents content owners and distributors on the licensing and distribution of television and cable channels and other content across all platforms, including linear and on-demand via cable, satellite, digital multicast, and streaming over vMVPDs, AVOD, FAST, connected TVs, and other over-the-top (OTT) platforms.
- Structures, negotiates, and drafts a variety of agreements for content production, development, acquisition, digital advertising, licensing, music rights, and branding.
- Counsels on the structure and launch of new services, such as the launch of a nationally distributed multicast channel and a video-on-demand service, including program acquisition, rights clearances, and distribution strategy.
- Represents clients on strategic partnerships and joint ventures.
- Advises media, technology, software, biotech, transportation, financial services, and government contracts clients on complex technology and commercial transactions, including software-as-a-service (SaaS) agreements, trademark licenses, master service agreements, statements of work, value added reseller agreements, original equipment manufacturer (OEM) agreements, vendor agreements, and outsourcing transactions.

Professional Experience

- Vice President & Deputy General Counsel, Public Broadcasting Service (PBS)
- Director, Legal Affairs, Discovery Inc.

Affiliations

- Federal Communications Bar Association (FCBA)
 - Co-Chair, Transactional Practice Committee (2024-Present)
 - Co-Chair, Mass Media Committee (2023-2024)
- District of Columbia Bar, Arts, Entertainment, Media and Sports Law Section
 - Co-Chair, Steering Committee (2013-2019)
- Greater Washington Board of Trade

- Executive Leadership Roundtable (2017-2022)

Recognitions

- Included in *The Best Lawyers in America* directory for Media Law (2025-2026)
- Named to *Law360*'s Media & Entertainment Editorial Advisory Board (2024)
- Recognized in *The Legal 500 US* in Telecom and Broadcast: Regulatory and Telecom and Broadcast: Transactional (2023)