



Angela C. Agrusa

Partner

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Over the past several decades, Angela has been hired in some of the most high-profile cases filed across the country. Angela and her team are strategic and aggressive client advocates. Angela fiercely defends those whose image is challenged by courtroom allegations – many of whom have invested millions in their brand; reputation integrity is critical and she has a proven track record of preserving this vital asset. Angela also tactically navigates the role politics play in the courtroom and in the court of public opinion, and often works with clients in finding administrative or legislative alternatives and strategies in addressing multi party and class litigation. As a trial attorney, Angela obtains winning verdicts and successfully defeats cases in their nascent stages. In the last five years alone, she has successfully defended brand holders in over 50 putative class actions with combined potential exposure over US\$100 billion.

She is ranked as one of California's top lawyers. The *Los Angeles Daily Journal* consistently names her among the "Top Women Lawyers" in California, and *Los Angeles Magazine* consistently ranks her as a "Top 100 Lawyer." In 2019, the *Los Angeles Business Journal* honored her as Los Angeles' Litigator of the Year.

Angela is a member of DLA Piper's Executive Committee.

EXPERIENCE

- Leading the defense of Danone in first of its kind lawsuit attempting to hold big corporations, such as Danone, The Clorox Company, Proctor & Gamble, PepsiCo, and others, responsible for plastic pollution
- As lead counsel to WhiteWave Foods in multi-district class actions regarding label claims on Horizon Organic Milk filed in Florida, Illinois, Missouri, Arizona, Arkansas and California, with over \$550 million of potential damages at stake, Angela led in

RELATED SERVICES

- Intellectual Property and Technology
- Litigation, Arbitration and Investigations

RELATED SECTORS

- Media, Sport and Entertainment
- Consumer Goods, Food and Retail

negotiating a settlement that preserved the client's ability to continue making its label claims

- In a New York false advertising class action affecting the labelling and identification of all nut-based milks sold in the US, as lead counsel to WhiteWave Foods, Angela obtained the dismissal of all claims against the Silk brand
- As lead trial counsel for investors in a highly publicized lawsuit against the State of California over a \$2.3 billion sales contract entered into by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger; Angela negotiated a \$24 million settlement from the state after two months of trial
- As lead counsel to Hilton Hotels, winning the dismissal of two nationwide privacy actions filed in California seeking statutory penalties aggregating hundreds of millions of dollars. Angela obtained substantially similar outcomes in privacy class actions against clients Best Western Hotels and Vantage Hotels
- As lead counsel to Hilton Grand Vacations, defeating class certification in a nationwide privacy class action filed in California with exposure ranging from \$18 billion - \$54 billion
- As lead counsel to The Cosmopolitan Hotel of Las Vegas, settling a privacy class action filed in California with over \$2 billion in damages at stake, for \$14.5 million
- Brought in as lead counsel to Hilton Worldwide, replacing prior counsel in four class action cases pending in Hawaii, after classes were certified and with over \$50 million in claimed damages. Having won summary judgement and other pretrial motions, she led in the settlement of all the actions for less than 10 percent of damages sought
- As lead counsel to Bai Brands, and after defeating injunctive relief, securing the dismissal of a nationwide class action filed in California for alleged false advertising
- Defending NeuroBrands when the company was faced with investigation by the City of Los Angeles and City of Santa Monica, with over \$150 million in exposure for alleged false advertising, and arriving at a settlement that protected the popular brand's rights to bring new products to the marketplace and to advertise them
- Following years of litigation maneuvers, settling a privacy class action filed in California against Omni Hotels with damage exposure of over \$65 million, for no attorney fees paid and less than \$10,000 in consideration to the class
- Obtaining Hilton Worldwide's dismissal from a putative nationwide class actions filed in Hawaii and Connecticut alleging deceptive online pricing practices in the hotel industry
- For 10 years, defending Exxon Corporation as a principal trial lawyer in a series of three antitrust crude oil pricing actions brought by the State of California and City of Long Beach, with over \$750 million in alleged damages at stake in each of the trials. The actions spanned conduct that occurred over a 30-year time period, and the months-long trial of each of the three cases resulted in defense verdicts for all three matters
- Lead trial counsel to Rip Curl International, winning a defense verdict for allegations involving trademark, licensing and franchise law
- Lead counsel to Peter Frampton in a trademark infringement dispute brought against Billabong International which ended in a confidential monetary settlement for the rock star
- Lead counsel to the makers of Pirate's Booty, defeating class certification in a putative nationwide false labeling class action
- Lead counsel to a high-profile prominent individual in five separate multi-party actions, pending in federal and state courts across the country, arising from highly sensitive and defamatory claims that transcended the domestic convertible securities market and impacted major holding companies in Bermuda
- Lead California counsel to Corning, the shareholder of a large manufacturer of breast implants, in over 1,000 California actions, winning summary judgment that defeated direct liability claims and corporate liability allegations

CREDENTIALS

Admissions

- California

Recognitions

- *Los Angeles Business Journal: Leaders of Influence: Litigators & Trial Lawyers (2020)*

- *The Legal 500 United States* (2019)
- *The Recorder's California Trailblazers* (2019)
- *Los Angeles Business Journal's Most Influential Women Attorneys* (2018-2019)
- Century City Bar Association - Trial Lawyer of the Year (2019)
- *Los Angeles Business Journal Top Litigators and Trial Lawyers* (2018-2019)
- *Super Lawyers - Top List Achievement* (2017)
- *Los Angeles Daily Journal's Top 100 Lawyers in California* (2017)
- Top Entertainment Attorney, *Variety's Legal Impact Report*, 2017
- *Los Angeles Daily Journal's Top Women Lawyers in California* (2014 - 2018)
- *Southern California Super Lawyers - Top 100* (2007-2018)
- *Southern California Super Lawyers - Top 50 Woman* (2007 - 2018)
- *Best of Los Angeles Women's Business Award* (2012)

Education

- Loyola Law School Los Angeles
cum laude
- University of California, Los Angeles

INSIGHTS

Publications

[UPDATED] New stay at home orders in California and Los Angeles: key highlights

23 March 2020

The orders all exempt various businesses from compliance, but the orders have different scopes.

COVID-19 and food – FDA position (United States)

19 March 2020

For help considering potential impacts of FDA touchpoints.

***Los Angeles Business Journal* names two DLA Piper partners to 2019 list of Top Litigators and Trial Lawyers**

October 2019

Two prominent DLA Piper lawyers – Angela Agrusa and Michael Garfinkel – have been named to the *Los Angeles Business Journal's* 2019 list of Top Litigators and Trial Lawyers.

Events

- "Food Marketing Claims: Menu Labeling; Health Related; Nutrient Content; Caloric Content," CLE international's Understanding This Rapidly Evolving Area of Food Law Conference, March 18, 2016

- "Social Entrepreneurship in the Food Sector: Is the Law a Barrier to Innovation?," UCLA School of Law: Innovation Round Table, March 8, 2016
- "Dissecting the Class Certification Requirement of Commonality - What Guidance Can You Glean From The Tyson Foods Supreme Court Case?," American Conference Institute's 4th Annual Summit on Defending Food & Beverage Consumer Fraud Litigation, January 26, 2016
- "Hot Topics in Food Litigation - How to Avoid Pitfalls That Could Lead to Costly Litigation," American Conference Institute's FDA & USDA Boot Camp, September 28, 2015
- "Labeling Litigation and Navigating Class Actions," Omics Group Conferences 2nd International Conference and Exhibition on Food Processing & Technology, October 28, 2013
- "The Explosion of Litigation and Enforcement in the Food & Beverage Industry - How Non-Compliance Can Lead to Costly Litigation and How to Minimize Risks," American Conference Institute's 2nd Annual FDA & USDA Compliance Boot Camp, October 1, 2013
- "The California Update: Class Actions," Nutrition Industry Association 2013 Spring Forum, May 30, 2013
- "The California Update: Class Actions," Nutrition Industry Association Fall Conference 2012, November 2, 2012

NEWS

MEDIA MENTIONS

- Featured, "Danone Dodges Deceptive Ad Suit Over Coconut Milk," *Law360*, August 15, 2019
- Featured, "Hilton Says Autodialer Not At Play In 11th Circ. Robocall Case," *Law360*, April 5, 2019
- Featured, "Hilton Calling System Isn't An Autodialer, Court Says," *Law360*, September 24, 2018
- Featured, "Top 100 Lawyers in California 2017," *Daily Journal*, September 20, 2017
- Featured, "Top Women Lawyers in California," *Daily Journal*, May 24, 2017
- "Hilton Says Vacationers Stole Expert In Telemarketing Suit," *Law360*, April 25, 2017
- Featured, "Variety's 2017 Legal Impact Report," *Variety*, April 4, 2017
- "Almond Milk Co. Calls False Ad Suit A Wasteful Attack," *Law360*, March 23, 2017
- "LA's \$70M Deal Ending Power Billing Suits Gets OK At Last," *Law360*, December 16, 2016
- "Liner LLP Recognized Among National Law Journal's 'Midsize Hot List'," *The National Law Journal*, May 23, 2016
- "Angela Agrusa: Top Women Lawyers," *The Daily Journal*, April 20, 2016
- "'Neuro' Energy-Drink Maker Settles Calif. False Ad Row," *Law360*, April 15, 2016
- "9th Circuit Can Fix Food Labeling Split," *Los Angeles Daily Journal*, April 12, 2016
- "The continuing conundrum of the California food fight," *Inside Counsel*, January 26, 2016
- "Priceline Can't Escape Resort Fee Suit, Class Says," *Law360*, October 26, 2015
- "Almond Milk Makers Duck Drinkers' Bid For Label Change," *Law360*, October 21, 2015
- "9th Circ. Asked To Again Revive Hilton Call-Recording Suit," *Law360*, September 24, 2015
- "LA Reaches \$44M Deal In Suits Over PwC Billing System," *Law360*, August 17, 2015
- "LADWP Reaches Tentative Settlement In Customer Billing Class-Action Litigation," *CBS*, August 17, 2015
- "Omni Can't Force Return Of Sprint Docs In Privacy Class Action," *Law360*, August 13, 2015
- "Omni Says Class Must Return Sprint Customers' Records," *Law360*, July 21, 2015
- "Class Says Omni Can't Cite Privacy To Block Sprint Records," *Law360*, July 14, 2015
- "Omni Callers Denied Quick Appeal Of Cell Discovery Order," *Law360*, June 23, 2015
- "Omni Hotels Blasts Bid For Discovery Appeal In Privacy Action," *Law360*, June 9, 2015
- "Top Women Lawyers in California," *Los Angeles Daily Journal*, May 13, 2015
- "Agrusa leads trial team in \$2.3 billion California First case," *Inside Counsel*, April 14, 2015

- "State Settles Suit Over Aborted Sale of Court Buildings," *The Recorder*, February 24, 2015
- "California pays \$24M to settle lawsuit over building sales," *ABC*, February 22, 2015
- "California, investors square off over \$2.3B sale," *The Washington Times*, December 2, 2014
- "Jilted Bidders Seek State Sites," *Los Angeles Business Journal*, November 24, 2014
- "Work/Life Balance: Angela Agrusa," *Los Angeles Business Journal*, November 12, 2014
- "Dispute Over State-Owned Buildings Heads to Trial," *Sacramento Business Journal*, October 24, 2014
- "Trial date set for dispute over canceled sale of state-owned buildings," *LA Times*, October 19, 2014
- "Class Certified in Omni Hotels Phone Recording Suit," *Law360*, September 15, 2014
- "The Biggest Hospitality Cases of 2014: Midyear Report," *Law360*, July 15, 2014
- "Hilton Escapes Calif. Call-Recording Class Action," *Law360*, July 15, 2014
- "Attys React To High Court's Pom v. Coke Lanham Act Ruling," *Law360*, June 12, 2014
- "Hilton Says Customer Call Recordings Don't Invade Privacy," *Law360*, May 20, 2014
- "100 Leading Women Lawyers in California," *Los Angeles Daily Journal*, May 7, 2014