



Strategic Union Campaigns

Strategic union campaigns are *global* and *coordinated*.

Dramatic shifts have occurred in how labor unions engage the world's multinational companies. The expansion of businesses across borders has motivated the world's largest unions to form international coalitions and affiliations, enhancing their scope and capabilities. Unions across the globe are cooperating on an unprecedented scale, sharing strategies and resources, and coordinating efforts to target multinationals as well as entire industry sectors.

The Global Strategic Union Campaigns team assists companies subject to global and national union strategic campaigns by coordinating DLA Piper's global resources and executing a comprehensive response on a national and global basis. The team helps clients develop and execute coordinated and innovative strategies to manage such campaigns by identifying and evaluating campaign-related conduct, directing a response, engaging with shareholders and government policymakers, implementing effective media strategies, advising companies on the application of various international documents, conventions, and guidelines, and using local laws and litigation to combat disruptive activity.

CAPABILITES

New Rules of Engagement

Unions now seek decisive market shares in order to control the labor supply to major industry sectors. Union operatives and allies hold key leadership positions on various international organizations, shaping emerging policy in a way that favors their strategic campaigns. Unions spend hundreds of millions on international activities, leveraging the overseas campaigns to gain footholds domestically. Unions conduct years of intense research on target companies and industry sectors.

Unions then exploit weak points and other levers as themes in the campaign. Unions employ an array of tactics: shareholder initiatives; leveraging relationships with human rights organizations; political and regulatory action; control of EWCs; litigation; negative publicity that can intimidate the company as well as its customers, suppliers and other important stakeholders. Unions seek to impose enforceable global agreements that incorporate the pro-union tenets of international labor organizations, with core rights for workers and the right to bargain collectively for the employees.

One of the greatest challenges for target companies is recognizing the campaign in the first place. Unlike more traditional attacks, strategic campaigns are long term, sophisticated and very difficult to identify early on. What appears to be a series of random acts is, beneath the surface, really a strategic union campaign aimed at the company. By the time a company realizes that it's a target, it is often too late to respond effectively.

As part of DLA Piper's Employment group, the Global Strategic Union Campaign team combines the global resources of the world's largest law firm with more than two decades of know-how and experience handling global strategic campaigns. The team is able to identify and understand the pieces of a global campaign puzzle, helping targeted companies develop and execute multi-level, multi-jurisdictional strategies to manage the campaign.

- We exhaustively track and monitor domestic and international resources to uncover what action the unions are taking, wherever it occurs.
- We can evaluate events to determine when they are (and are not) part of an orchestrated campaign.
- We coordinate the company's response and communications within a consistent strategy.
- We use local laws to combat disruptive union activity and are able to bring our own lawyers together to craft unique defense strategies.
- We work laterally across DLA Piper's global practice groups and develop comprehensive strategies to defend against a wide range of litigation.

INSIGHTS

Publications

Top 10 trends for US employers – Mid-year update

24 August 2021

We recap key developments over the last six months and look at the potential changes ahead related to the top 2021 trends we identified at the start of the year.

Year in review and 2021 preview – Top 10 trends for US employers

2 February 2021

We identify the top 10 trends impacting US businesses as we close out 2020 and enter 2021.

The US-Mexico-Canada Agreement: A summary of changes in Mexico's laws

6 August 2020

Mexico makes sweeping changes to an array of laws.

NLRB overturns restrictions on employee discipline for profane or abusive outbursts

31 July 2020

Another reflection of a labor law landscape undergoing dramatic change.

The new US-Mexico-Canada trade agreement goes live today

1 July 2020

USMCA is the first treaty in which complaints of noncompliance by a Mexican facility may be reported to a US government agency for the purpose of investigation and, if appropriate, remediation.

NLRB starts holidays early, demands employers gift their email systems to employees and unions

15 DEC 2014

A decision greatly expanding the rights of employees in the use of employer-provided communications

