
Kluwer Trademark Blog

The INTA Annual Meeting and a year in the life of a trademark practitioner

Verena von Bomhard (BomhardIP) · Tuesday, May 31st, 2016

The life of a trademark practitioner has three seasons – pre-INTA, INTA, and post-INTA. Similarly to Christmas, every year it appears that the pre-INTA season starts sooner and INTA arrives more quickly (even though this year it was later than in recent years!). The week of the INTA Annual Meeting itself, while incredibly busy, is probably the quietest trademark law week of the year, with those instructing and those receiving instructions focusing on their main activity at INTA, which is networking. Someone suggested that the INTA week should be declared an official trademark holiday, which seems an awfully good idea.

10,115 registered participants just had the pleasure of running to and fro for five + days in the heat of Orlando, Florida, this year's site of the Annual Meeting of the International Trademark Association. Surely the actual participants were many more, given the habit of many companies and law firms only to register a small proportion of those who are actually in attendance. Unfortunately, as long as INTA does not grant any discounts on multiple registrants from the same firm, this is unlikely to change, so we will never know real numbers.

INTA's programming this year started already on the Saturday. The Grand Opening Ceremonies took place on Sunday afternoon, featuring a keynote speech by and interview with Diane Nelson of DC Entertainment and Warner Bros., a tour d'horizon of last year's activities and achievements of the association by INTA's CEO Etienne Sanz de Acedo, and welcome addresses by this year's President Ronald van Tuijl (JT International S.A.) and Program Co-Chairs Peter Dernbach of Winkler Partners and Rick McMurtry of Turner Broadcasting System, with the latter offering a taste of his singing talent.

Of all the many educational sessions, the one that always attracts the best attendance is the Annual Review of U.S. Federal Case Law and TTAB Developments offered by Ted Davis of Kilpatrick Townsend and John Welch of Wolf, Greenfield & Sacks. In recent times and following years of EU practitioners requesting that, a similar annual session is now offered for EU case law, this year presented by Guy Heath of Nabarro LLP (UK) and Georg Jahn of Noerr LLP (Germany).

Back to the more social side of things, the 2016 Annual Meeting was also a first in that the traditional Gala on the Saturday evening was replaced by a concert by **Kool & The Gang**. This blogger did not make it there but heard only good things. It is to be seen what the organisers come up with for 2017, and whether the pricing for the Saturday evening social event will be a little more accessible.

Another remarkable development this year was that, for the first time, representatives from **Cuba** were able to attend the meeting. The world is growing together and INTA is a reflection of that. In any event, most trademark practitioners mention the international nature of their business among what they most like about their field.

So now – the post-INTA season has started. Many dive right back into work while others diligently follow-up on meetings, enter business card details into their systems, write friendly nice-to-see-you emails and start the process of hunting out reception venues and generally getting prepared for the next round. The **2017 INTA Annual Meeting** will be held on **20 – 24 May in Barcelona, Spain**, and while, as experience shows, attendance from the US is likely to go down a notch, this may well be compensated by the many more Europeans who will be able to attend. Stay tuned – the first Save-The-Date messages for social events are likely to arrive before the turn of the year and just after the ever-growing **Leadership Meeting** on **15 – 18 November 2016** in **Hollywood**, but not the well-known one – again in **Florida**.

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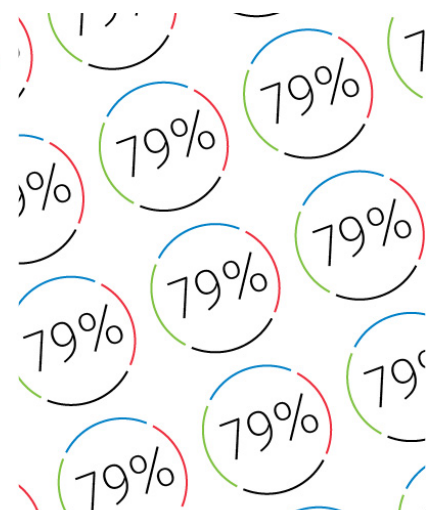
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