



Kirk A. Damman

Member

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Kirk Damman helps companies of all sizes and across a wide spectrum of technologies and industries to protect and leverage their innovations.

Kirk practices across all areas of intellectual property (IP) law, focusing on innovation protection strategies that enhance the value of clients' creations—whether through direct manufacturing or licensing. His work includes filing and guiding patent, trademark, and copyright applications through government review, as well as drafting and reviewing trade secret policies and innovation-related contracts involving licensing, financing, management, and strategic portfolio development. He also advises on IP disputes when they arise.

With a degree in physics and more than 25 years of experience before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Kirk has helped patent technologies across a wide range of industries, including medical devices, software applications, military systems, IoT technologies, heavy industrial equipment, toys and games, infrastructure innovations, jewelry and luxury goods, blockchain applications, clean and alternative energy systems, consumer products, and artificial intelligence (AI) systems.

He is the co-author of two books and a frequent speaker on IP topics, delivering presentations that range from foundational legal principles to advanced discussions on patent law, both in academic settings and to the broader community.

Kirk also co-hosts the podcast *Lawyer's Guide to the Galaxy* with [Ben Siders](#), where legal topics intersect with geek culture. The show offers a fun, accessible way to explore legal issues and gives Kirk a great excuse to keep up with the latest *Star Wars* releases and paint far too many wargame miniatures.

Education

- Harvard University School of Law (J.D., 1999)
 - *Harvard Journal of Law and Technology*, line editor
 - Harvard Law School Drama Society, technical director
- Carleton College (B.A., *magna cum laude*, 1996)

Services

- Intellectual Property
- Media & Communications
- Information Technology
- Opportunity Zones
- Early-Stage Companies
- Artificial Intelligence

- Physics and Economics
- Kings College, Cambridge, UK (1995)
 - Foreign Study Program, Economics

Legal Background

- Director, Patent Agency Program, Webster University (August 2008-2012)
- Professor of patent law, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office - Ongoing Examiner Education Program (2007-2012)
- Adjunct professor of patent law and patent drafting, Webster University (2006-2016)
- Associate, Foley, Hoag & Eliot, Boston, MA (1999-2001)

Professional Affiliations

- American Intellectual Property Law Association (AIPLA) (Chairman, Committee for Emerging Technologies 2011-2013; Vice Chairman, 2009-2011, Chair, Subcommittee on Alternative Fuels, (2007-2008)
- American Bar Association, Intellectual Property Law (IPL) Section
- Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) (Intellectual Property Committee (IPC) and Intellectual Property Professionals Committee (IPPC))
- Industrial Design Society of America (IDSA)
- Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis

Admissions

- Registered to practice before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Federal Circuit
- Eastern District of Missouri, U.S. District Court
- District of Massachusetts, U.S. District Court
- Supreme Judicial Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- Missouri Bar

Charitable & Civic Involvement

- Chairman, Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Committee (later known as StXL) (2012-2020)

Special Honors

- *Missouri Lawyers Media's* Power List in IP Law (2022)
- *Missouri Lawyer's Media's* Top Legal Innovation Award (2018)
- *St. Louis Small Business Monthly* Top Patent Attorneys (2016-2025)
- *St. Louis Small Business Monthly* Top Small Business Lawyers (January 2015)

Supporting the Patent System

Kirk is an active contributor to the intellectual property (IP) and patent law communities, both locally in St. Louis and nationally. He participates in numerous bar and industry associations that promote IP protection and advocate for the rights of innovators, inventors, and designers. A selection of these affiliations is listed below.

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office - Pro Bono Advisory Council (PBAC) - Board of Directors

In 2014, Kirk founded the research committee that supported the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in establishing a regional patent pro bono hub in St. Louis. Under his guidance, the hub was recently transitioned to Oklahoma City University and continues to provide patent representation to individuals with limited financial resources across Missouri, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Nebraska, and Kansas. Kirk was also invited to join the Board of Directors of the USPTO's Pro Bono Advisory Council (PBAC), where he contributes to shaping national policy for pro bono patent representation of under-resourced inventors. He currently serves as Secretary of the organization and is a member of its Executive Committee.

American Intellectual Property Law Association (AIPLA)

AIPLA is a global leader in intellectual property, supporting its members as they grow within the profession. Kirk has been actively involved with AIPLA's Emerging Technology Committee, which explores new technologies from both scientific and legal perspectives and advocates for the interests of small inventors within the organization. He is currently working with the Pro Bono Committee to strengthen the efforts of both AIPLA and the USPTO's Pro Bono Advisory Council (PBAC) in expanding access to patent services for under-resourced inventors. Kirk has also organized several educational programs at AIPLA meetings to help members stay informed on emerging technologies. His roles with AIPLA include:

- **Presenter**, *City Mouse, Country Mouse, Steamboat Mouse – Character Copyright and Evolving Characters*, AIPLA Copyright Committee Educational Session (February 2024)
- **Presenter**, *How the Application Data Sheet Can be a Blessing and a Curse*, AIPLA Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C. (2019)
- **Chairman**, Committee for Emerging Technologies (2011–2013); **Vice Chairman** (2009–2011)
- **Chairman**, Subcommittee on Alternative Fuels (2007–2008)
- **Moderator and Organizer**, *Copyright and 3D Printing – Emerging Issues*, AIPLA Annual Meeting (2012)
- **Moderator and Organizer**, *New Issues from the AIA: Effects on Financing*, AIPLA Mid-Winter Meeting (2012)
- **Moderator**, *Representing the Emerging Technology Company*, AIPLA Mid-Winter Meeting (2011)
- **Presenter**, *Patent Issues in Alternative Fuel Technologies*, AIPLA Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C. (2008)

Supporting the Business Community

Trade and Business Organizations

In addition to supporting intellectual property protection within the legal community, Kirk recognizes that a strong IP system depends on the strength of the businesses it serves. For this reason, he is also active in several business and trade organizations that promote economic development across the region. His efforts support business leaders—whether or not they rely on patent protection—as they work to grow and innovate within their industries.

St. Louis Makes

St. Louis Makes is committed to supporting local manufacturing and growing the region's small business manufacturing sector. The organization connects and educates manufacturers, inventors, makers, entrepreneurs, and other innovators to help them develop new products, improve profit margins, and increase sales. Kirk has been an active member of St. Louis Makes for many years, regularly attending and helping organize factory tours and events.

Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)

The IEEE is the world's largest professional association dedicated to the advancement of technology. Through publications, conferences, technology standards, and professional and educational activities, the IEEE fosters a global community of innovators. A member since 2000, Kirk serves as a full member of the Intellectual Property Committee, which educates IEEE members on IP issues and advises leadership on amicus briefs and legislative initiatives related to intellectual property. He is also a founding member of the Intellectual Property Professionals Committee, which supports IEEE members working in the legal field. In addition, Kirk has lectured on IP topics at local IEEE meetings, including his presentation "Intellectual Property Fundamentals for an Engineer" at the MPSE and IEEE joint meeting in St. Louis in 2011.

BRE (StXL)

The BRE (formerly the Business Retention and Expansion Committee) was a group of dedicated local business leaders and civil servants focused on promoting St. Louis as a destination for growing or relocating businesses. It hosted a variety of social events designed to connect business leaders with community economic support resources and to position St. Louis as a thriving business hub. Kirk worked with the BRE for many years, helping organize events and develop content. As chair, he led its reorganization and rebranding as StXL to enhance its ability to deliver high-quality, independent programming. When the COVID-19 pandemic reduced demand for in-person events, Kirk also oversaw the group's formal dissolution in 2020.

PixelPop

Kirk was the original lead sponsor of the PixelPop Festival from its launch in 2014 until 2017, when the firm assumed his sponsorship role. PixelPop was a showcase for independent game developers and quickly grew into one of the Midwest's premier events for indie game development. The festival continued to thrive until the COVID-19 pandemic led to its shutdown in 2020.

Entrepreneurship

Kirk has long been committed to the entrepreneur, startup, and small business communities. He grew up in a family where running your own business was the norm. His

great-grandfather operated a small mining business on his farm, and his grandfather founded and expanded D&J Gravel, a gravel pit that supplied concrete, sand, and gravel in and around Fowlerville, Michigan until its sale at retirement. Kirk's father helped launch several small businesses in HVAC services, financial services, law firm management, motor oil, and even a regional airline.

Kirk has continued this entrepreneurial tradition. He is an inventor on four issued U.S. patents (Patent Numbers: 9,078,103; 8,678,623; 8,469,553; and 8,220,972) and co-founded Preemie Pacer, a company developing a baby bottle designed specifically for premature infants who have not yet mastered the suck-swallow-breathe coordination needed for safe feeding. Preemie Pacer holds its own patent portfolio and was awarded a Phase I Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in 2017, followed by a Phase II SBIR Grant in 2021.

Carleton College Impact Challenge and ConFab

Kirk maintains a strong connection with his alma mater, serving as a team mentor and coach for participants in the school's annual startup competition. While he hasn't coached a first-place team yet, he remains optimistic that success is just around the corner. When Kirk was a student, Carleton had no formal entrepreneurship programs, so he has enjoyed watching those initiatives grow over time. He has also been involved with the college's new *Entrepreneurship & the Liberal Arts* course and the Carleton Innovation Center (CIC).

Local Startup Competitions

Kirk has volunteered for many years as a judge for a variety of local startup competitions, including Startup Challenge, Startup Connection, and Build4STL. In this role, he has awarded more than \$10,000 in prize money to promising local businesses and has had the opportunity to witness the earliest stages of many of St. Louis's emerging entrepreneurs.

Patenting Across a Breadth of Industries

Kirk has worked with inventors across a wide range of industries and technologies, and he understands that intellectual property needs vary depending on the business landscape. Factors such as specialized consumer markets, competitive dynamics, barriers to entry, and uneven resources among competitors can all influence how IP strategies should be developed. Kirk helps clients create tailored approaches that align with these unique industry demands.

Toys and Games

There is a common misconception that entertainment-focused products are not patentable. Kirk knows that innovation in the toy and game industry is not only essential for market visibility but also protectable. While many products rely on branding and trademark rights to stand out, others introduce new gameplay mechanics, mechanisms, or game pieces that qualify for patent protection. Kirk works within the specific needs of this industry to identify opportunities for safeguarding unique play and educational features. He also collaborates with the Code and Lore group to explore IP protection at the intersection of creativity and technology.

Building and Municipal Infrastructure

From construction tools and smart building systems to technologies that shape urban movement and interaction, innovation is embedded in the spaces where people live and work. These advancements often address accessibility, safety, comfort, and convenience, yet IP protection is frequently overlooked in favor of securing contracts. Kirk helps companies in this space develop patent strategies that support competitive bidding, government contracting, and project funding.

Luxury Goods

Luxury products often derive their value from craftsmanship, material quality, and design. While branding plays a key role in consumer demand, many luxury goods also incorporate unique innovations that can be protected through patents. Kirk works with the Design & Luxury group (DeLux) to identify how design elements contribute both aesthetic and functional value, and he helps manufacturers protect these features as part of a comprehensive IP portfolio.

Military, Emergency Response, and Personal Security

Innovation in these sectors often involves incremental improvements to existing technologies rather than classified systems. Because these technologies are highly specialized and focused on reliability under extreme conditions, their value is sometimes measured in terms of risk reduction or operational efficiency rather than novelty. Kirk understands how small design changes can deliver significant benefits and helps clients recognize, protect, and leverage these innovations—even when they are part of a larger system or serve a niche purpose.

Speaker

Kirk is committed to sharing his knowledge of intellectual property law with both his clients and the broader community. He regularly serves as a resource for local entrepreneurs and business owners, and speaks to audiences across the country on a wide range of IP topics.

To see where Kirk is speaking next, visit the Upcoming Events tab.

If you have an event, or a venue with an interested audience, and would like Kirk to speak on an IP-related legal topic, feel free to reach out directly.

Prior Educational Presentations

- Presenter, *It's all Fun and Games Until...* Washington University in St. Louis Intellectual Property Law Society's Signature Event, Toys and Games (March 2026)
- Presenter, *I'm Sorry, [A] Can't Do That. Legal Implications of Artificial Intelligence* SCORE National Webinar (February 2026)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property* SCORE St. Louis (November 2025)
- Presenter, *Trademark Law 101 - Legal Ethics in IP* National Business Institute (October 2025)
- Panelist, *Designing High Impact Solutions (AKA Product Development with Customer in Mind)* SQ1 Bootcamp (September 2025)

- Presenter, *I'm Sorry, [AI] Can't Do That. Legal Implications of Artificial Intelligence* SCORE St. Louis (August 2025)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property* SCORE St. Louis (May 2025)
- Presenter, IP, Marketing, and Patents OH MY: Taking Ideas from Conception to the NICU National Association of Neonatal Therapists NANT-15 Conference, Indianapolis, IN (March 2025)
- Presenter, *I'm Sorry, [AI] Can't Do That. Legal Implications of Artificial Intelligence* SCORE St. Louis (February 2025)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property* SCORE St. Louis (November 2024)
- Presenter, *I'm Sorry, [AI] Can't Do That. Legal Implications of Artificial Intelligence* SCORE St. Louis (August 2024)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property* SCORE St. Louis (May 2024)
- Presenter, *City Mouse, Country Mouse, Steamboat Mouse - Character Copyright and Evolving Characters*, AIPLA Copyright Committee Educational Session (February 2024)
- Presenter, *Intellectual Property Law 2023-2024: SCOTUS Updates, ChatGPT, and More* National Business Institute (November 2023)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property* SCORE St. Louis (August 2023)
- Panelist, *Non-compete Agreements & Intellectual Property Venture Café* (March 2023)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property* SCORE St. Louis (February 2023)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property* SCORE St. Louis (February 2022)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property* SCORE St. Louis (May 2021)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property* SCORE St. Louis (December 2020)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property* SCORE St. Louis (February 2020)
- Presenter, *Intellectual Property Licensing Agreements: Intellectual Property Agreement Introduction and First Steps* National Business Institute (November 2019)
- Presenter, *Intellectual Property Licensing Agreements: Drafting Deficiencies: Avoiding Deficiencies* National Business Institute (November 2019)
- Presenter, *Intellectual Property Licensing Agreements: The Grant: Determining Scope and Nature* National Business Institute (November 2019)
- Presenter, *How the Application Data Sheet Can be a Blessing and a Curse* American Intellectual Property Law Association (AIPLA) Annual Meeting (October 2019)
- Presenter, *Intellectual Property Start to Finish: Patents: Searching, Applying, Patenting* National Business Institute (October 2019)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property* SCORE St. Louis (August 2019)
- Presenter, *Intellectual Property: What To Do When You Don't Know What To Do* MyLaw CLE (June 2019)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property* SCORE St. Louis (May 2019)
- Presenter, *Top 30 Intellectual Property Mistakes: 7 Copyright Mistakes* National Business Institute (April 2019)
- Presenter, *Top 30 Intellectual Property Mistakes: Trade Secrets and Non-Disclosure Agreements: 7 Legal Traps* National Business Institute (April 2019)
- Presenter, *Protecting Your Inventions and Ideas: Intellectual Property Fundamentals for*

an Engineer St. Louis Chapter of the Missouri Society of Professional Engineers, St. Louis Section of the IEEE (January 2019)

- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property* SCORE St. Louis (January 2019)
- Presenter, *Coffee & Core Concepts: Obtaining a Patent* MoBar CLE (September 2018)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property* SCORE St. Louis (August 2018)
- Presenter, *Next Steps after Invention* Venture Cafe, St. Louis (July 2018)
- Presenter, *Getting the IP House in Order* AGS Conclave, Nashville, TN (April 2018)
- Presenter, *Intellectual Property and Games* PixelPop Festival (August 2017)
- Presenter, *Copyright Law: Top Mistakes* National Business Institute (2017)
- Presenter, *A Paralegal's Guide to Intellectual Property; 2017 Update for Paralegals* National Business Institute (2017)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property* SCORE St. Louis (May 2017)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property* SCORE St. Louis (February 2017)
- Presenter, *The 3 W's of Patents (What, When and Why) in View of Recent Events* ITE/GVMS Pro Training (November 2016)
- Presenter, *End User License Agreements*, SQ1 Ignite (2016)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property*, SCORE St. Louis (October 2016)
- Presenter, *Intellectual Property in the Game Industry*, PixelPop (October 2016)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property*, SCORE St. Louis (July 2016)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property*, SCORE St. Louis (February 2016)
- Presenter, *The Do's and Don'ts of Social Media for Small Businesses*, Legal Services of Eastern Missouri (December 2015)
- Presenter, *Practical Intellectual Property Law for Game Development*, Pixel Pop Festival, St. Louis, MO (September 2015)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property*, SCORE St. Louis (August 2015)
- Panelist, *IP and Brand Protection in a Highly Competitive Technical Landscape*, OSA Optics & Photonics: Imaging and Applied Optics Congress, Arlington, VA (June 2015)
- Moderator, *Music Innovation - World IP Day Celebration*, StartLouis (April 2015)
- Presenter, *How to Learn Patent Strategy by Playing Video Games*, StartLouis (February 2015)
- Panelist, *Identifying Patent Examiner Biases and Making Them Work Using Legal Analytics*, The American Lawyer: Legal Analytics and the Business of Law Summit, New York, NY (November 2014)
- Presenter, *Protecting Intellectual Property*, SCORE St. Louis (September 2014)
- Organizer and Panelist, *Protection of Industrial Designs*, International Design Society of America (IDSA) St. Louis May Meeting (May 2014)
- Presenter, *Copyright 101*, National Business Institute prerecorded webcast (April 2013)
- Presenter, *Developing a Patent Strategy*, Bio Entrepreneur Development Program (February 2013)
- Presenter, *The Busy Attorney's Toolkit to "Mobile" Success*, National Business Institute,

Inc., St. Louis, MO (2012)

- Moderator, *Computer Forensics*, Missouri Bar Association LexPort 2013 Tech Expo (October 2013)
- Moderator, *eDiscovery*, Missouri Bar Association LexPort 2013 Tech Expo (October 2013)
- Moderator, *ALL IN - Winning Litigation Strategies*, MOBar (November 2012)
- Presenter, *Emerging IP Challenges: In the Cloud and on the Net*, Missouri Bar Association, Webinar (2012)
- Presenter, *Protecting Industrial Designs*, IDSA Midwest District Conference, St. Louis, MO (2011)
- Presenter, *Intellectual Property Fundamentals for an Engineer*, MPSE and IEEE joint meeting, St. Louis, MO (2011)
- Presenter, *Developing a Patent Strategy*, Bio Entrepreneur Development Program, St. Louis, MO (2011)
- Presenter, *The Jewel of Your Good Name - Intellectual Property in the Jewelry Industry*, AGS Conclave, San Francisco, CA (2011)
- Presenter, *Patent Issues in Alternative Fuel Technologies*, AIPLA Annual Meeting, Washington, DC (2008)
- Presenter, *Patent Law for Engineers*, Saint Louis University (2008)
- Presenter, *Litigating a Patent Infringement Case*, National Business Institute, Inc., St. Louis, MO (2008)
- Presenter, *Patents outside the Patent Office: An In-Depth Inquiry into Litigation and Business Strategies*, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (2007, 2008)

Case Studies

Lewis Rice Represents Pressline Services, Inc. and Defeats Attempted European Patent Cancellation

Lewis Rice has represented St. Louis-based Pressline Services, Inc. in intellectual property matters since shortly after its founding. Pressline Services grew out of a single project involving two of its founders, but the company now has more than 35 full-time employees. Pressline provides a variety of services for newspaper printing presses, including web reductions, upgrades, installations, and reconfigurations, and replacement parts.

One of Pressline Services' signature offerings is its 3Volution (or 3V®) conversion system, which creates a compact sectional newspaper format by modifying existing equipment to print more pages per rotation than it was previously capable of doing. This can result in substantial additional value and cost savings to a publisher.

Working closely with Pressline's engineers, Lewis Rice patent attorney Kirk Damman was able to obtain patent protection for Pressline for the 3V® conversion methods in more than 15 countries, including multiple issued patents in the US.

However, in October of 2014, Manroland Web Systems GmbH, a large manufacturer of

printing press systems headquartered in Germany, requested that Pressline Services' European patent be cancelled, asserting that the 3V® methodology of Pressline lacked an inventive step over existing press installations. Working closely with European local counsel, Damman leveraged the technical expertise of Lewis Rice's Intellectual Property Practice Group to respond to the opposition at every stage. The case culminated in a multi-lingual oral hearing at the European Patent Office (EPO) in Munich, Germany in late September 2016, at which Damman attended to present arguments in conjunction with Pressline's European counsel.

In a written opinion published October 28, 2016, which details the initial findings of the review board in September, the EPO board rejected Manroland's challenge completely, leaving intact Pressline's original European patent rights.

Lewis Rice's Entrepreneur Law Group Negotiates Key Royalty Agreement for St. Louis Startup

Lewis Rice has represented St. Louis-based technology startup Pixel Press Technology LLC in intellectual property matters since its inception. Pixel Press specializes in educational toys and games, notably the Bloxels® game board and tablet computer application. Bloxels allows children to build their own video games by placing colored blocks on a 13x13-grid board and then using the tablet camera to take a picture of the board. The Bloxels software then converts the picture into a playable video game.

Overcoming initial resistance from the U.S. Patent Office, Lewis Rice startup attorneys Ben Siders and Kirk Damman distinguished the Pixel Press system from prior-art optical character recognition systems and video game editors, thereby obtaining for Pixel Press a patent on its system.

Bloxels received favorable press coverage at Toy Fair 2016, winning praise from USA Today, Yahoo! Tech, and Scientific American, among others. When global toy-and-game distributors expressed interest, Pixel Press turned to Lewis Rice to negotiate a license and royalty agreement for its patented technology.

Lewis Rice attorney Al Ludwig, leveraging the technical expertise and creativity of Lewis Rice's Entrepreneurship and Startup Practice Group, negotiated with a Fortune 500 toy and game company an agreement that protected Pixel Press and met the business needs of both parties. This first-of-its-kind agreement will put Bloxels on store shelves across the globe and position Pixel Press to develop the next generation of its innovative technology.

For recent press on this agreement, click under "Resources" below.