

Chad R. Fitzgerald

Partner

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Litigation Partner Chad Fitzgerald is one of the entertainment industry's leading profit participation and distribution litigators, focusing on disputes involving audits, vertical integration, and streaming in both film and television.

His profit participation audit matters alone have resulted in \$500 million in settlements, judgments, and awards for his clients. Lawdragon describes Chad as representing "the glitterati of Los Angeles – as well as the power players behind the scenes" and "the man to call for television profit participation audits."

Chad's broader practice includes litigation involving copyright, trademark, trade secrets, fraud, rights of privacy, defamation, and business disputes, as well as transactions for select entertainment industry clients. He represents showrunners, producers, writers, directors, actors, musicians, professional athletes, production and distribution companies, clients in the fitness, apparel, art, toy, and gaming industries, the entertainment guilds, talent and business managers, and the major talent agencies.

Repeatedly recognized in both litigation and entertainment, Chad has been named to *The Hollywood Reporter's* "Power Lawyers" list and *Variety's* "Legal Impact Report" multiple times, and to both Lawdragon's "500 Leading Litigators in America" and "500 Leading Global Entertainment, Sports & Media Lawyers" lists.

Chad has written numerous articles on legal issues in the entertainment industry, regularly appears on panels and seminars discussing entertainment law, and is frequently quoted in media outlets such as *Puck*, *The Hollywood Reporter*, *Variety*, *Deadline*, and the *Daily Journal*. He also teaches entertainment law classes at the UCLA School of Law and sits on the Advisory Board for UCLA's Ziffren Institute for Media, Entertainment, Technology and Sports Law.

Services

- Litigation
- Entertainment Litigation
- Intellectual Property Litigation
- General Commercial Litigation
- Appellate Litigation
- High Net Worth & Probate Litigation

Chad began his legal career as an entertainment litigation associate at a prominent Los Angeles firm, worked in legal affairs at Universal Pictures, and practiced for almost 20 years at an entertainment litigation boutique before joining Greenberg Glusker. During law school, Chad externed for the Honorable J. Spencer Letts of the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California and volunteered with the HIV/AIDS Legal Services Alliance (HALSA).

Professional Affiliations

- Ziffren Institute for Media, Entertainment, Technology and Sports Law, UCLA School of Law (Board Member)

Community and Charitable Organizations

- weSPARK Cancer Support Center, Sherman Oaks (Board of Directors, Past President)
- St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Santa Monica (member, former President of Congregation Council)

Awards

- "500 Leading Litigators in America," *Lawdragon* (2027)
- "500 Leading Global Entertainment, Sports & Media Lawyers," *Lawdragon* (2026)
- "The Best Lawyers in America," *Best Lawyers* (2021-Present)
- "Legal Impact Report," *Variety* (2025, 2022, 2019)
- "Power Lawyers," *The Hollywood Reporter* (2022, 2019)
- "Leaders of Influence: Thriving in Their 40s," *Los Angeles Business Journal* (2022)
- "Hollywood's New Leaders: Law & Finance," *Variety* (2015)
- "Super Lawyer," *Southern California Super Lawyers Magazine* (2015-Present)

Bar Admissions

- California

Court Admissions

- Northern, Eastern, Central, and Southern District Courts of California

Education

- University of California, Los Angeles School of Law (J.D., 2001)
- Yale University (B.A., 1998)
 - With distinction in English

Representative Matters

- Represents filmmaker Guy Ritchie in audits of Miramax.
- Represents film and television producer Scott Steindorff and Stone Village Films in

various litigation and transactional matters.

- Represents a prolific and acclaimed showrunner in dealings with and audits of Warner Bros. regarding his numerous hit shows.
- Represents Creative Artists Agency and its agents in various matters, including a dispute with a filmmaker's former agent over commissions, a dispute over claimed representation, and a dispute with a music venue.
- Represented the creator, writer, and executive producer of the worldwide hit television series *The Walking Dead*, and talent agency CAA, in a suit against AMC in New York. The plaintiffs alleged that AMC produced the show and licensed it for broadcast to itself for license fees well below market rates, resulting in diminished profits for the show and its participants. After defeating two of AMC's motions for summary judgment and several key motions in limine, the case settled for \$200 million plus future revenue sharing related to streaming exhibition of *The Walking Dead* and *Fear the Walking Dead*.
- Represented the executive producer of the hit television series *Bones* in a lawsuit against 20th Century Fox Television, the Fox network and affiliated companies. The plaintiff alleged that 20th Century Fox Television cheated him out of his share of profits from the show, and that network executives threatened to cancel the series if he did not accept a lower licensing fee from Fox. The arbitration resulted in a \$179 million award for the plaintiffs. The case settled pending appeal of the award.
- Represents the creators of the famous series *Cheers* and *Frasier* in audits of CBS.
- Successfully represented New Republic Pictures in a month-long jury trial brought by its former president.
- Represented the author of an iconic song from an iconic 80s film to recover his rights to the song from the film studio.
- Represented the creator of the play on which the hit Netflix series *Heartbreak High* was based in a dispute over credit and profits.
- Represented a famous director/producer whose blockbuster film was released straight to the studio's affiliated streaming service rather than theatrically, as contemplated by the parties. The matter settled shortly after Chad filed a demand for arbitration with JAMS.
- Represented the estate of Sam Simon in profit participation audits of Twentieth Century Fox regarding *The Simpsons*.
- Represented television creator/showrunner Darren Star in a dispute regarding *Emily in Paris*.
- Represented the producer of the classic "Spaghetti Westerns" *The Good, The Bad & The Ugly* and *For a Few Dollars More* in a lawsuit against MGM over profits. The case settled shortly after Chad defeated MGM's motion for summary judgment and two key motions in limine.
- Represented national insurance brokerage USI in disputes regarding trade secrets and solicitation of clients and employees. Served as lead trial counsel in a jury trial held in Los Angeles Superior Court against a former USI producer for breaching her duty of loyalty. The jury returned a verdict in favor of Chad's client.
- Represented the creators, writers, and executive producers of the hit television series *Smallville* in a suit against Warner Bros. Television (the studio that produced the series), The CW network (the network that broadcast the series) and related entities. The plaintiffs alleged that Warner Bros. Television licensed the show for broadcast on its affiliated "sister" network The WB (which later became The CW) for fees well below market rate, resulting in diminished profits for the show. The case settled after Chad defeated two Warner Bros. motions for summary judgment.