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Top 20 Under 40



S. Todd Rogers / Daily Journal

CAROLYN HOECKER LUEDTKE

Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP
San Francisco

Practice type: Litigation

Practice specialty: Intellectual property, employment, commercial disputes

Age: 39

In 2009, Luedtke began representing Playdom, a purveyor of social media games, and everything fell into place.

"Social gaming was just starting to take off, and it represented an amazing opportunity for me," Luedtke, 39, said, "to be thrust into this new and exciting industry nobody really new."

Since then, Playdom has been acquired by the Walt Disney Co., in a deal valued at up to \$760 million, and Luedtke has gone on to position herself as a leading authority on online social gaming.

In addition to Playdom, she has lead representations for Green Patch, which was acquired by Playdom prior to the Disney acquisition; and Vostu, Brazil's largest social gaming company.

The three were embroiled in litigation against the mighty Zynga in the now-settled, high-profile disputes over intellectual property.

The dispute in Brazil was especially challenging, Luedtke said. *Zynga Inc. v. Vostu USA Inc.*, 2011 WL 3516164 (N.D. Cal., filed Aug. 11, 2011).

At one point in that copyright infringement

case Zynga obtained an injunction, shutting down Vostu's most popular games. Before it took effect, Luedtke successfully obtained a temporary restraining order in the North District of California enjoining Zynga from enforcing its injunction in Brazil. This allowed time for Vostu's Brazilian counsel, working with Luedtke, to obtain a stay of the injunction from the Brazilian court of appeals.

"That was a wild ride," she said. "Vostu is an amazing company."

Formed in 2007 by three students at Harvard, the company launched its first game in June 2009, and now has 35 million users and 600 employees.

"Then they find themselves in the middle of a litigation war," Luedtke said. "It was a life and death situation, with Zynga coming at them with all guns blazing. They needed to fight back."

The still evolving nature of online social gaming, along with its global aspects and trade secret disputes, demands a continual learning curve.

"You really have to dive in and learn your

client's business," Luedtke said. "If you've never played a social game, you don't know what is secret and what is not. I got to learn individual games and how they were designed."

She also has honed her skills in trying to get judges up to speed on social gaming.

"I've never had a judge who has played a game," Luedtke said. "They really do need to be educated."

In another significant case, Luedtke represented the Motion Picture Association of America in securing a preliminary injunction against the operators of Zediva, an unlicensed video-on-demand service that transmitted performances of copyrighted motion pictures to Zediva customers through the Internet. *Warner Brothers Entertainment Inc. v. WTV Systems Inc.*, 2011 WL 6148942 (C.D. Cal., filed Aug. 15, 2011).

Six of the MPAA member studios sued WTV Systems, Zediva's parent company, and Venkatesh Srinivasan, Zediva's founder and CEO, in federal court, alleging that Zediva violated the studios' exclusive right to publicly perform their works under the Copyright Act.

In an Aug. 1, decision, Judge John Walter of the Central District agreed.

"Zediva was a wonderful experience," Luedtke said. "I learned everything I need to learn about Netflix and streaming movies and worked with all of the major studios, and then we won. This was a very ground-breaking case, and a lot of people were watching. I think that we'll be cited by a lot of people in the future."

— Pat Broderick