

LOS ANGELES

Daily Journal

JUNE 25, 2008

Leading Southern California Litigation Firms

As the economy slides, litigation soars, from backdating to bankruptcy cases.

« TOP SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA LAW FIRMS »

Hennigan, Bennett & Dorman

There was little downtime over the past year for Hennigan, Bennett & Dorman attorneys, who juggled high-stakes cases spanning complex litigation, bankruptcy and patent law.

No client garnered more work — or attention — for the firm than the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles, which was battling claims by 508 people, who said the archdiocese failed to protect them when they were children from sexual abuse by its clergy. Under the leadership of name partner Michael Hennigan, the firm orchestrated a landmark \$660 million settlement with plaintiffs in July 2007, putting an end to the large-scale litigation. It was the largest single payout by a U.S. archdiocese since the church was rocked by the scandal in 2000.

The firm also represented Hawaiian Airlines in its lawsuit against Mesa Air Group, alleging misuse of confidential information obtained by Mesa during Hawaiian's Chapter 11 case. Following trial in October 2007, the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Hawaii entered an \$80 million judgment against

Mesa and awarded the Hennigan firm an additional \$3.9 million in attorney's fees. The case recently reached a settlement, in which Hawaiian will receive a \$52.5 million cash payment, and Mesa will drop its appeal.

Also in 2007, name partner Roderick Dorman and his team reached a confidential settlement to end one of world's largest copyright infringement suits, brought by the recording and motion picture industries against Hennigan client Sharman Networks. Sharman distributed the peer-to-peer program Kazaa, which allowed users to exchange files of movies and music.

In mid-2003, Sharman's Kazaa Media Desktop had become the most downloaded software of all time, prompting recording and motion picture industries to sue Sharman for massive copyright infringement. The firm reached settlements with the motion picture and recording studios, as well as with songwriters and music publishers.

— Cortney Fielding