



HUGH Q. GOTTSCHALK

Partner

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Hugh Gottschalk has taken more than 75 trials to verdict and over 20 arbitrations to award, delivering outstanding results for sophisticated clients. Hugh represents companies and individuals across diverse industries in complex commercial, torts, and intellectual property lawsuits. Hugh is a Fellow and past Colorado State Chair of the American College of Trial Lawyers, and he is ranked in Band 1 in *Chambers USA*. For three straight years, *Super Lawyers* has ranked Hugh in the Top 10 in Colorado based on input from his colleagues and peers.

"He brings calm to the chaos of high-stakes litigation."

—Client comment to Chambers USA

EDUCATION

University of Colorado Law School,
J.D., 1979
University of Colorado Law Review,
Articles Editor

Northwestern University, B.S.,
1975, Biochemistry

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Otten, Johnson, Robinson, Neff &
Ragonetti, P.C.
Holland & Hart LLP
Town of Bow Mar
City Attorney

ADMISSIONS

Colorado

HIGHLIGHTS

- Affirmed on appeal our team's jury verdict for DISH Wireless in a contract dispute worth hundreds of millions of dollars.
- Succeeded at the Colorado Court of Appeals in an 8-figure dispute for LivWell—a subsidiary of PharmaCann, the country's largest vertically integrated cannabis company. The Court of Appeals affirmed the trial court's terminating sanctions, issued after the WTO team proved that the plaintiff fabricated evidence.
- Won a jury verdict for DISH Wireless in a 9-figure contract dispute.
- Secured a civil rights settlement in a pro bono case for a child with autism.
- Won a jury verdict in a \$12 million commercial dispute involving breach of fiduciary duty, corporate waste, and embezzlement claims in a two-week trial in Los Angeles Superior Court. WTO won dismissal of the corporate waste claim before the jury began deliberations, and the jury found that WTO's client did not embezzle money.
- Won a groundbreaking appeal vacating a \$150 million arbitration award.
- Successfully represented a party in a \$2 billion dispute surrounding the future ownership of the Broncos NFL franchise and family trust.

INDUSTRIES

- Energy
- Construction & Engineering
- Financial Services
- Medical Devices & Pharmaceuticals
- Oil & Gas
- Professional Services
- Real Estate
- Cannabis

PRACTICE AREAS

- Antitrust & Competition
- Commercial Litigation
- Environmental Litigation
- Franchise & Distribution
- Intellectual Property
- Mass Torts
- Catastrophic Injury Defense
- Product Liability

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- Professional Liability
- Pro Bono

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BIOGRAPHY

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Hugh's commercial litigation experience is extensive. He has represented clients in numerous disputes involving alleged breaches of contracts, fraud and misrepresentation, securities, franchise matters, and intellectual property infringements. Hugh has served as national or regional trial counsel to several large and well-known companies in industries as diverse as oil and gas, automotive, information technology, manufacturing, and consumer and professional services.

In 2010, Hugh led the WTO team that managed the response to 418 dealer arbitration requests and the litigation of 187 of the Section 747 arbitrations for Chrysler Group. WTO was one of only two law firms in the country representing Chrysler in these matters. Over a four-month period, Hugh himself tried nine of these arbitrations and won eight of them.

Chambers USA describes Hugh as "an excellent strategist and trial lawyer," and ranks him among the top commercial litigators in Colorado. "He brings calm to the chaos of high-stakes litigation," *Chambers* quotes a client as reporting. Hugh has been selected by his peers for inclusion in the business litigation category in *Colorado Super Lawyers* since its inception in 2006, including twice in a row being listed in the Top 10 (2019, 2018, and also 2008) and multiple years on its top 50 list. Hugh has also been selected for inclusion in *Benchmark Litigation*, *Best Lawyers*, and *The Legal 500 U.S.*

CASES

- Affirmed on appeal our team's jury verdict for DISH Wireless in a contract dispute worth hundreds of millions of dollars.
- Succeeded at the Colorado Court of Appeals in an 8-figure dispute for LivWell—a subsidiary of PharmaCann, the country's largest vertically integrated cannabis company. The Court of Appeals affirmed the trial court's terminating sanctions, issued after the WTO team proved that the plaintiff fabricated evidence.
- Won a jury verdict for DISH Wireless in a cell tower contract dispute worth hundreds of millions of dollars.
- Secured a civil rights settlement in a pro bono case for a child with autism.

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- Won a jury verdict in a \$12 million commercial dispute involving breach of fiduciary duty, corporate waste, and embezzlement claims in a two-week trial in Los Angeles Superior Court. WTO won dismissal of the corporate waste claim before the jury began deliberations, and the jury found that WTO's client did not embezzle money.
- Won a groundbreaking appeal successfully arguing a motion to vacate a \$150 million arbitration award on behalf of the majority owner of Colorado cannabis corporation.
- Successfully represented a party in a \$2 billion dispute surrounding the future ownership of the Broncos NFL franchise and family trust.
- Won the appeal to end a bitter ownership fight for a \$1B oil and gas company.
- Obtained preliminary injunction for a television provider against a large Middle Eastern media company that violated an exclusive distribution agreement.
- Won affirmance of WTO's trial victory for IBM Corp. in a \$6.1 million municipal tax dispute.
- Won a defense verdict as co-counsel to defeat claims that WTO's oil and gas client owed \$400 million to a stakeholder.
- Won a defense verdict as co-counsel to defeat \$800 million claims in a bet-the-company shareholder dispute involving an oil and gas client.
- Won a pair of rare, permanent injunctions against a major distributor that infringed on WTO's client's exclusive distribution territory. The ongoing litigation involves bet-the-company stakes and may have far-reaching repercussions in the industry.
- Won a defense verdict in a highly public, multi-week jury trial alleging a wrongful death claim against a recreation industry client following the tragic death of a minor. Successfully defended the appeal.
- Won a trial verdict for IBM as plaintiff in a \$6.1 million tax dispute against the City of Golden involving sales and use taxes assessed over a seven-year span.
- Argued and won for FCA (fka Chrysler) in the Sixth Circuit in a case involving the question of whether federal legislation enacted following the Chrysler bankruptcy preempted Ohio state dealer laws.
- Won an arbitration ruling for \$2.9 million, including punitive damages, for an investment fund misled into overpaying for an oil field services company based on misrepresentations made during the sale and omissions made during settlement negotiations regarding the sale.

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- Obtained a preliminary injunction for a \$1 billion oil and gas client involved in bet-the-company litigation against an executive.
- Won a directed verdict in a trade secrets trial for an oil and gas company. The plaintiff claimed theft of its technical geological data that allegedly had allowed the defendant to improperly acquire several hundred thousand acres of oil and gas leases in northeastern Nevada. The plaintiff's expert opined that the misappropriation of the trade secrets had caused more than \$1 billion dollars in damages.
- Won an arbitration award for future oil and gas royalties valued between \$70,000,000 and \$100,000,000 in a *David v. Goliath* case against a multinational oil company.
- Represented Phoenix Children's Hospital in a claim asserted by Banner Health that a merger between PCH and another healthcare entity triggered a termination clause in a lease of PCH's neonatal ICU. Following a two-week trial, the arbitrator terminated the lease.
- Represented Chrysler in a case in which several Chrysler dealers asserted Chrysler failed to comply with an obligation to provide new dealerships following its bankruptcy. Following trial, the court entered judgment for Chrysler.
- Successfully defended Chrysler against an automobile dealership's allegations of oppressive and unreasonable terms in a letter of intent to enter into a franchise agreement after Chrysler's bankruptcy in a franchise case of national significance.
- Defended an investment advisory firm in Cook County, IL against a \$10 million professional negligence claim. After a two-week trial, the jury found for the defendant.
- Represented plaintiffs challenging the constitutionality of increasing copyright protection by 20 years and Section 514 of Uruguay Round Agreements Act extending copyright protection to foreign works. The United States Supreme Court ruled the statutes were constitutional.
- Represented a managing partner in a \$5 million suit between law firm partners with respect to claims of fraud and mismanagement. After a two-week trial, WTO's client prevailed on fraud and mismanagement claims, and the Court ordered an accounting and liquidation of the firm.
- Briefed an appeal in the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, resulting in full affirmance of a verdict in favor of WTO's client, Chrysler Group, on a federal statutory issue of first impression stemming from Congress's enactment of Section 747 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2010.

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- Co-managed with one other law firm the response to requests from 418 dealers for arbitration relating to the bankruptcy of Chrysler Group LLC and following Chrysler's termination of those dealerships. WTO litigated 187 of these Section 747 arbitrations, and, as directed by Congress, resolved all of the litigation within seven months--with a 96% success rate.
- Defended a franchisor against fraud claims made by franchisees, who sought tens of millions of dollars in actual and punitive damages. After a five-week trial, WTO won judgment for our client. The court awarded \$2 million in attorneys' fees against the franchisees.
- Won a jury defense verdict for a limited liability company whose members claimed the distribution of funds made in 2001 violated the company's operating agreement.
- Defended Silverton Mountain against claims brought by an adjacent landowner/competitor. The plaintiff sought damages and an injunction to shut down the ski area based on allegations of trespasses caused by WTO's client's avalanche control work. WTO won a defense verdict.
- Won a jury defense verdict for Conoco following a six-week trial involving claims by the town of Castle Rock, Colorado that a leaking Conoco underground storage tank had contaminated the town's municipal drinking water.
- Represented BDO Seidman in shareholder suit that claimed securities fraud and a negligent audit by the company's accountants. Persuaded the plaintiffs the audit process could not have uncovered the manipulation, and plaintiffs dismissed their claims.
- Won Fifth Circuit affirmation of the lower court's granting of summary judgment in a case alleging unfair monopolization against FMC Corporation and involving the company's aircraft boarding bridges.
- Represented Conoco in the favorable settlement of toxic tort litigation brought by the City and County of Denver regarding the contamination and cleanup of Denver's former airport.
- Represented Coors in the settlement of CERCLA litigation brought by the City and County of Denver regarding the Lowry Landfill.
- Settled trademark/antitrust litigation regarding nationwide market for distribution of greeting cards.
- Defended Conoco against toxic tort litigation brought by an oil refinery and relating to the joint remediation of the two companies' adjacent refineries.

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- Defended Conoco against personal injury claims relating to an accident at one of its refineries. The plaintiff prevailed in a seven-day jury trial, but the case was later reversed by the Colorado Court of Appeals.
- Settled accounting malpractice litigation relating to the embezzlement of \$10 million by a company's president.
- Won an injunction for Newark Paper Products following a three-week trial asserting that Sonoco and its employee had misappropriated trade secrets from Newark.
- Defended Conoco in a series of arbitrations in which Flying J claimed that the ConocoPhillips merger triggered a provision in the Conoco-Flying J joint venture agreement that would have allowed Flying J to acquire Conoco's interest at book value, which was approximately \$1 billion less than the market value of the interest. The arbitrator found in Conoco's favor, concluding that market value was the proper way to value Conoco's interest.
- Represented Conoco in cost-recovery and cost-allocation litigation relating to the parties' environmental clean-up of adjacent properties.
- Represented Conoco in breach-of-contract litigation between the parties relating to the environmental clean-up of the parties' contaminated property.
- Handled arbitrations in cost-sharing disputes over environmental clean-up at a gasoline refinery in Denver.

TEACHING POSITIONS

- National Institute for Trial Advocacy
University of Colorado Trial Advocacy Program, 1985-1986

REPRESENTATIVE CLIENTS

- ConocoPhillips
FMC - Regional Trial Counsel

BAR & COURT ADMISSIONS

- Colorado
U.S. Supreme Court
U.S. Court of Appeals, 10th Circuit
U.S. Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit
U.S. District Court, D. Colorado
U.S. District Court, E.D. Michigan

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LEGAL MEMBERSHIPS, ACTIVITIES & HONORS

HUGH Q. GOTTSCHALK

- American College of Trial Lawyers
 - Fellow
 - Chair, Colorado State Committee, 2016-2018
- American Board of Trial Advocates
 - Member
- Chambers USA
 - Commercial Litigation - Colorado, 2005-2025
 - Band 1 - 2018-2025
 - Band 2 - 2007-2017
- University of Colorado Law School
 - 2017 Distinguished Alumni Award - Private Practice
- Law Week Colorado
 - "People's Choice" Best Intellectual Property Lawyer, 2010
 - Lawyer of the Year, 2010
- The Best Lawyers in America
 - Personal Injury Litigation Lawyer of the Year, 2025
 - Denver Bet-the-Company Lawyer of the Year, 2016, 2020
 - Denver Intellectual Property Litigation Lawyer of the Year, 2014
 - Bet-the-Company Litigation, 2008-2024, 2026
 - Commercial Litigation, 2008-2026
 - Intellectual Property Litigation, 2016-2026
 - Oil & Gas Law, 2022-2023
 - Personal Injury Litigation, 2018-2026
 - Product Liability Litigation, 2008-2026
- The Legal 500 United States
 - Litigation: Product Liability and Mass Tort Defense, 2009-2011
- Benchmark Litigation
 - Litigation Star, 2020-2026
 - Insurance Litigation - Colorado, 2016
 - Commercial Litigation - Colorado, 2011-2015, 2017-2018
- 5280 Magazine
 - Top Lawyer
 - Civil Litigation, 2020-2021, 2023
 - Commercial Litigation, 2025
- Colorado Super Lawyers
 - Super Lawyers, Business Litigation, 2006-2025
 - Top 10, 2018-2020; 2008, 2021
 - Top 50, 2009-2011
 - Top 100, 2012-2017, 2022-2023
- International Who's Who of Product Liability Defense Lawyers, 2010, 2016-2017
- Martindale-Hubbell AV® Peer Review Rated

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Colorado Corporate Counsel Black Book
Product Liability, 2007
Denver Business Journal Who's Who in Energy, 2015
Selected among top 28 energy-industry lawyers in Denver
Best of the Bar, Denver Business Journal, 2005
Defense Research Institute
American Bar Association
Litigation Section
Colorado Bar Association
Patent, Trademark, and Copyright Section
Denver Bar Association
National Institute for Trial Advocacy
Faculty
Product Liability Advisory Council
Sustaining Member, 1988-1992
Executive Committee, 1991-1992
American Civil Liberties Union of Colorado
Board of Directors
Legal Aid Foundation
Chairperson, 2011-2012
Rothgerber Moot Court Competition
Finalist
University of Colorado School of Law's National Moot Court Team
Member
BTI Consulting
Client Service All Star, 2025

ARTICLES & PRESENTATIONS

Articles

- "Automatic Disclosure in Discovery: The Rush to Reform," 27 Ga. L. Rev. 1, (1992).

Presentations

- Presenter, "Taking and Defending Depositions," CLE credit to assistant U.S. attorneys and other federal agency counsel at the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Colorado, (December 3, 2014).
- Presenter, "Cross Examination - Perfecting an Effective Cross and Handling Difficult Witnesses and Experts," The Winning at Trial: Tactics and Skills for 2011, sponsored by the American College of Trial Lawyers, (November 11, 2011).
- Presenter, "Tips from the Bench," Association of Corporate Counsel Colorado Chapter, (February 2008).

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