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On 2nd April 2025, Hong Kong-based legal magazine China Business Law Journal (CBLJ) releases the winners of its "Deals of the Year Award 2024".

Four deals of Wanhuida Intellectual Property are selected by the magazine to be included in the section of "INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY". The firm has been a winner of the magazine's "Deals of the Year" awards since 2012.

In the winning deal "*Decathlon defends retail store designs*" (INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY 09), the firm represented Decathlon in securing permanent injunction and damages of RMB 2 million in the unfair competition suit against Chinese outdoor sports store Outcool, which copied the client's store design. The court of appeal affirmed that the Anti-Unfair Competition Law does not prohibit business operators from drawing experience from each other, however, where the borrowing goes beyond the reasonable boundary and escalates into a full-scale imitation of other's distinctive trade dress and packaging that serves as a source identifier, such act shall be deemed as free-riding and malicious, and unfair competition could be established.

In the winning deal "*Michelin, Mi Zhi Lian trademark dispute*" (INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY 26), the firm represented Michelin in winning the civil suit against Shanghai Mi Zhi Lian Catering Management Ltd. et al., which used the Chinese transliteration of the Cantonese pronunciation of Michelin in business operation and as registered trade name. The Wuhan Intermediate Court and the Hubei High Court found that a single foreign name may have two or more transliterations or pronunciations within the territory of one country. Both courts affirmed trademark infringement and unfair competition, ordered cessation and awarded damages of RMB 10 million. This case has also been selected by the SPC for its *Annual 50 Exemplary IP Cases of 2023*.

In the winning deal "*Xiaomi protects voice assistant trademarks*" (INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY 41), the firm represented Xiaomi in winning the unfair competition suit against the infringers that pre-emptively registered its voice activation command prompt, brazenly sent cease and desist letter to Xiaomi and sold infringing products. The court found unfair competition, ordered cessation and awarded Xiaomi damages of RMB 1.2 million. The case has also been selected as SPC's *Top 10 IP Cases in 2023*.

In the winning deal "*YETI sues counterfeiters Zhan and Liu*" (INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY 42), the firm represented YETI in suing the ringleader counterfeiters from a major criminal prosecution proceeding in a trademark infringement civil suit, obtained court cessation and damages of RMB 20 million.

The winning deals have been chosen by the magazine's editorial team based on a number of factors including deal size, industry impact, structural innovation, judicial precedent setting, and social contribution. Eligible transactions or cases must have been completed or achieved significant milestones between 1 November 2023 and 31 October 2024.

China Business Law Journal's independent editorial team made its own choices on the deals they felt were the shining stars for the year. The winning deals and cases are presented in 12 sections: Equity capital markets; Debt capital markets; ABS/Reits; Mergers and acquisitions; Private equity and venture capital; Projects; General corporate matters; Liquidation, bankruptcy and restructuring; Intellectual property; International trade investigations; Domestic dispute resolution and Cross-border dispute resolution. This year, a total of 263 standout deals and cases are selected from thousands of submissions in the past year.

For more information of the Wanhuida winning deals, please refer to:

https://law.asia/china/china-deals-of-the-year-2024/#IP_9
https://law.asia/china/china-deals-of-the-year-2024/#IP_26
https://law.asia/china/china-deals-of-the-year-2024/#IP_41
https://law.asia/china/china-deals-of-the-year-2024/#IP_42

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ニュース > 榮誉と実績

