

Unpacking business affairs with Lindsay Paquette

Jayme Alter 00:04

Welcome back to the Entertainment and Media Law Signal Podcast brought to you by Dentons. My name is Jayme Alter and I'm a Partner in the Media, Entertainment and Sports group here in the Toronto office. I'm joined today by my friend and colleague, Lindsay Paquette, who recently rejoined us after almost a three year hiatus as a senior manager of business affairs in our media and entertainment group, and we are so thrilled to have her back. So, welcome Lindsay.

Lindsay Paquette 00:29

Thanks, Jayme. Good to be here.

Jayme Alter 00:31

So as many people may know, Lindsay is not actually a lawyer, but she is yet one of the most valued members of our team, and each of us in the group works very, very closely with her. So, some people may be confused by her title, because it's a very unique and special role that you normally don't find in the legal community or in a law firm, let alone in big law. So perhaps Lindsay can delve into it and explain what it is that she does on a day to day basis. So, Lindsay over to you.

Lindsay Paquette 01:00

Thanks again, Jayme. So a good way of conceptualizing my role within the entertainment group is to think of a traditional in-house business and legal affairs team where business affairs works together with legal on a show file. Similarly, I work with you guys, the lawyers on client matters, particularly relating to development and production matters. Now although no two days are ever really the same at a law firm, my day-to-day can consist of research, be it regulatory or legal research, or research relating to industry, guilds or collective agreements, also providing in depth guidance to clients on a myriad of topics, complex topics, such as navigating Canadian financing incentives and instructors, preparing and applying for tax credits and other funding applications. So for example, CMF for telefilm, drafting with precedent driven documents, chain of title review, you know, really the list goes on.

Jayme Alter 01:58

So you really do all the things, all the things. And well, anyone who has had the pleasure of working with you can attest to that. And as you said, our practice is so varied and every day is different. So the fact that you come in at a lower price point, the fact that you have this unique perspective and unique experience that you bring to the job and just the way that you deal with clients just makes you such a valued member. And you know, we can take a step back and just understand how this role really came to be, because it was a model that has been adopted from, actually, from the UK, and I know at least one, if not two, firms that we've worked with before had someone like you who brought a breadth of experience to the job in this very unique role, and comes with it a very unique skill set. So perhaps you

can explain how you got to be here and what led you to your path to where you are today. Because, as we said before, you are not a lawyer, but yet you have your Masters of Law, your LLM, which to be clear, is a higher level of legal education than I myself have as a partner of a law firm. And I know right now you are pursuing your PhD in copyright. So, you know, I think the sum of it is, you are a copyright nerd at heart, and that's what makes you the unicorn that you are. So maybe you can just explain to everyone what your previous path was to get here.

Lindsay Paquette 03:27

Yeah, so it's interesting, because I really started in the entertainment industry in live event production, so working for notable companies such as Just For Laughs, TIFF, and the City of Toronto with their cultural events team. From there, I transitioned into film and television production, working with the amazing business and legal affairs team at Insight Productions, where I really learned the business side of the industry from the ground up. From insight, I came here to Dentons and then worked at Nelvana courses animation studio for a few months, and eventually made my way back to Dentons, and here I am. Truthfully, I love what I do. I'm a curious person, so business affairs for me is a great way to learn something new every day and to sharpen my skills. Now, when it comes to my educational background, it's also very interesting, because I really didn't know much about copyright or intellectual property law before starting in my first business affairs role. It was only when I began reading and contracts and tax credit rules and regulations and really started asking questions that I started to get interested in it, so much so that I completed my master's in IP law at Osgood. And as you mentioned, now I'm working through a PhD program also at Osgood. What's most exciting for me pursuing academia and copyright law and also working and interacting with copyright law on a daily basis is this opportunity to experience both the theoretical side of IP as well as the practical side of it, so understanding how theory is actually applied in real time, and particularly in our industry, and recognizing, you know, what works or what doesn't work and some of the benefits or challenges, especially when dealing with, you know, things like cross border transactions with the US, for instance. So to answer your question, yes, I am a nerd.

Jayme Alter 05:25

It's actually so funny watching you and Bob Tarantino just geek out over copyright. And it's truly astonishing to see.

Lindsay Paquette 05:35

I'm a fangirl of Bob's, and he just doesn't know it.

Jayme Alter 05:38

He's the best. But no, I absolutely understand and agree with what you're saying. The theory is so different than actually putting it into practice. And I remember that from law school, going into articles, and then going into actually the day-to-day job, how different it is, and especially in an industry like ours, where things are constantly evolving. Different types of technology are coming out. And you know, I'm sure every industry is whether plagued or benefiting from the advent of AI. There are just so many unknowns with nascent technology, and it's fun to work through things and look at the bigger picture and how it's affecting the industry writ large. So it's great to have you here and to work on

problems with you, and I think is, suffice it to say, you and I speak at least 20 times a day. Is that, is that pretty accurate?

Lindsay Paquette 06:31

I think that's a slow day for us. But yes.

Jayme Alter 06:34

Fair enough. Well, ultimately, we do recognize that the buck ultimately stops with the lawyers, and while we work very closely together, obviously everything has our eyes on it and our supervision before it goes out. So once again, it's so great to have you back, and I'm so looking forward to clients getting to know you better, and having the opportunity to meet you if they haven't already, and understanding what it is you do day in and day out. So thank you for joining me on this podcast, and I look forward to many more years of working very closely together.

Lindsay Paquette 07:06

Absolutely, thanks for having me.

Jayme Alter 07:09

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