



A Fool for a Client

You Know the Old Saying “A Fool for a Client”..... What are some of the craziest lawsuits you’ve ever heard? I’m sure you all remember the \$54 million dollar suit brought by a judge when a small mom-and-pop dry cleaner lost his “lucky” pants, but did you hear the one about the man who sued Arm & Hammer baking soda because they didn’t forewarn customers that using their product to cut cocaine could lead to jail time for distributing crack? Or how about the woman who sued Bank of America for \$5 Billion (yes, with a “B”!) after the bank lost a \$200 check? Now, the Buzz agrees that attorneys have filed some really crazy lawsuits over the years, but those three above were all brought by plaintiff’s acting as their own attorneys. While a lot of “pro se” litigants have genuine claims, a growing number of people are taking their conspiracy theories and paranoid delusions to court and the defendant companies have to spend millions of dollars defending or settling these wacky claims! Bank of America finally settled with the woman above after she brought over 219 different lawsuits against the company over the course of four years, while the dry cleaner owners spent over \$100,000 defending themselves against the angry, pants-less judge. Every person is entitled to their day in court but we’re glad that someone else has to read over those filings, although they probably would make for good dinner table fodder! Can you say, “vexatious litigant...?”

Court Order: You’re fired!

A White Plains, New York federal judge has now fired Mark Papermaster. Papermaster was recruited by Apple to run its iPod and iPhone divisions. Last time we checked IBM didn’t offer any mp3 players or cell phones, but they see Papermaster’s joining Apple as some sort of competitive nightmare. The judge recently said that Papermaster “will immediately cease his employment with Apple, Inc. until further order of this court.” The Buzz thinks that New York law must be at work here since hizzoner apparently does not know much about the dynamic California job market, nor how unenforceable most non-competes are here. There is likely a published opinion coming. Watch this space.

(More) CEO Jail Time

G. K. Chesterton said that when you ignore the big laws (tell the truth, be kind, help your neighbor) you don’t get anarchy, you get small laws. Well Congress is again examining some small laws that would jail biotech execs who certify false information about a drug or device. Since drug, therapy, and device development is so massively regulated already we guess this is an admission that the FDA is doing a poor job. Why else would we need to send biotech execs to jail for 20 years for signing a certification that is required by the current regulatory regime? The Buzz admits that there are (increasingly, sadly) those who will lie about anything for the right price. But complete career destruction is usually a pretty good disincentive and if we start imprisoning biotech execs, we are sure to catch some dolphins in that tuna net. If the goal is to ensure that smart people don’t work in biotech this might work, but we think when John Adams said that a republic is “an empire of laws and not men,” he wasn’t considering this law.

BizBuzz Jazzz 🎵🎵

Fun Facebook Facts

Last week a Federal Judge in San Jose awarded Facebook \$873 million in a judgment against a Canadian man for “sending sleazy messages to our users.” Apparently the Canadian was fraudulently using various Facebook members’ accounts in sending out spam email that promoted some sleazy stuff. Facebook executives were happy with the judgment, although they admitted they “wouldn’t be shocked if [they] didn’t recover the entire amount.” The Buzz will be shocked if they recover even 10%. Just when you thought all is well in Facebook email land – not so fast. It seems Facebook also managed to lose the email settings for a large portion of its users last week. The company was quick to apologize and email the affected users: “Unfortunately, your email notification settings have been lost. You can reset them on the Notifications page. We’re sorry for the inconvenience.” Perhaps Facebook can use some of the \$873 million it recovers to do what most of us have been doing for years – backing up our data!

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Wiki-Giving

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