

McKool Smith Adds Telecom IP Pro From Quinn Emanuel

By **Adrian Cruz**

Law360 (February 17, 2021, 9:14 AM EST) -- Trial firm McKool Smith PC expanded its intellectual property coverage Tuesday, bringing on an experienced patent attorney who specializes in telecommunications as a principal in Washington, D.C., the firm announced.

Alan Whitehurst joined McKool Smith on Tuesday after spending the last 10 years at Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan LLP. Whitehurst told Law360 Pulse he had always been an admirer of the firm, citing an early-career experience that left a positive impression on him, ultimately influencing his decision to join.



Alan Whitehurst

"I did my first patent trial back in 2002 with McKool Smith and I've been a fan ever since," he said. "I've always been impressed with their track record of winning high-stakes patent disputes and the quality of their work."

Whitehurst said he's looking forward to expanding McKool Smith's D.C. office, also noting the firm's presence in the patent hotbeds of Texas as another reason he decided to join.

"I'm really excited because they have an established practice in the Eastern and Western Districts of Texas, which are two of the hottest patent dockets in the country," he said. "Joining their D.C. office will allow me to continue focusing on cases at the International Trade Commission and representing clients before the United States Patent and Trademark Office."

Whitehurst, a graduate of Duke University School of Law brings a patent practice specializing in a number of telecom fields, including 5G, LTE, WCDMA, CDMA, Wi-Fi, speech coding and video compression, where he advises clients on patent portfolios, IP monetization, damages and licensing, according to the firm.

"Alan has decades of experience guiding industry-leading companies through a broad range of complex patent disputes involving cutting-edge technologies in and outside of the telecom sector," McKool Smith managing principal David Sochia said in a statement. "Our clients will benefit significantly from his technical skills and deep trial experience. We are very happy to have him on board."

Along with his law studies, Whitehurst also graduated from Duke with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering and a master's degree in computer and electrical engineering, experience he says has

helped him extensively over the years, working on high-tech cases involving technologies such as wireless communication and semiconductors.

Over the past 20 years, Whitehurst has worked on a number of major telecom disputes, most notably leading electric car charging company SemaConnect to a patent dispute win in front of the Federal Circuit in 2019 and representing Samsung in a 2013 U.S. International Trade Commission suit alleging Apple Inc.'s iPad and iPhone infringed one of its patents.

"It was a complete victory for SemaConnect and this suit was a 'bet the company' litigation for them," he said. "If they had lost, it probably would've led to shutting down the company, so I'm thrilled that I was able to help SemaConnect prevail in the litigation."

Whitehurst's arrival comes only a few months after McKool Smith added former USPTO acting general counsel Nicholas Matich to its IP practice as a principal. The firm currently features 135 attorneys in seven offices across the U.S.

--Editing by Alyssa Miller.