

Press Release

Four Akerman Lawyers Recognized as *Franchise Times* 2021 Legal Eagles

April 1, 2021

Franchise and Licensing Practice Co-Chair Warren Lewis, along with Partner Robert A. Smith, Partner William W. Sentell and Special Counsel Trish MacAskill have been selected by *Franchise Times* as part of its 2021 class of Legal Eagles. According to *Franchise Times*, “[t]hese attorneys live and breathe franchising and understand the nuances of this unique business model at a deep level.” *Franchise Times* has compiled a nationwide list of lawyers based on nominations and recommendations from clients, peers, and other legal professionals.

Lewis serves as co-chair of Akerman’s Franchise and Licensing Practice, a highly experienced team that handles U.S. and international franchising, licensing, dealership and trademark counseling, registration and litigation matters for franchisors, licensors, subfranchisors, dealers and other business clients. In the field of franchising, Warren has authored books, studies, articles and regulatory comments, frequently speaks at U.S. and international franchise conferences, and has testified before Congress. The U.S. Federal Trade Commission and the Committee on Small Business of the U.S. House of Representatives have cited his studies and regulatory comments.

Smith focuses his practice on representing U.S. franchisors expanding internationally and serving as franchise counsel in a variety of complex

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Trish Barrett MacAskill
William W. Sentell

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transactions. Bob, who recently joined the firm in February, is ranked nationally by *Chambers USA* as among the premier franchise lawyers in the United States. Smith's international franchise experience spans more than 80 countries and encompasses counseling franchisors on a continuous stream of projects, including new master franchise, development and area representative agreements, joint ventures, franchise terminations, ownership changes, and regulatory compliance.

Sentell focuses his practice on franchise dispute resolution and related corporate, regulatory, and compliance matters. His combination of litigation and transactional experience allows him to provide holistic legal representation to brand owners, distributors, licensors, manufacturers and other franchise stakeholders.

MacAskill focuses her practice on franchise and business transactions. Trish applies her in-house experience when counseling clients on business, franchising, and licensing issues. She has experience counseling clients on franchise regulatory compliance and negotiating commercial leases and contracts in a broad range of industries, products, and services.

About Akerman

Akerman LLP is a top 100 U.S. law firm recognized among the most forward thinking firms in the industry by *Financial Times*. Its more than 700 lawyers and business professionals collaborate with the world's most successful enterprises and entrepreneurs to navigate change, seize opportunities, and help drive innovation and growth. Akerman is known for its results in middle market M&A and complex disputes, and for helping clients achieve their most important business objectives in the financial services, real estate and other dynamic sectors across the United States and Latin America.

Akerman's Franchise and Licensing team assists start-up, regional, national, and international franchisors and licensors, as well as subfranchisors and other businesses, on a wide range of matters, including structuring, acquiring, and selling franchise and licensing systems, handling state franchise registrations, counseling on state, federal, and international legal compliance matters, and resolving and litigating disputes. Their client roster includes businesses in a wide range of consumer-oriented and business-to-business sectors.