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February 22, 2010 1:41 PM CST

Kenneth J. Abdo - Lommen Abdo Cole King Stageberg P.A.



Few lawyers obtain the regional dominance of their niche area to the degree that Ken Abdo has with entertainment law. From his Minnesota hub, he has built from the ground up a national practice on par with those in entertainment industry centers such as New York, Los Angeles, Atlanta and Nashville.

"I scratched a practice out of the cold frozen Minnesota earth," Abdo said, adding that "big fish grow slower in cold waters."

However, Abdo, a principal at Lommen Abdo Cole King Stageberg, says he has no regrets about not relocating. He believes he's now got the best of both worlds — the Minnesota quality of life coupled with a first-class entertainment practice.

Abdo had a remarkable year in 2009. Among his many professional accomplishments were:

- negotiating a recording agreement for local music group Owl City that helped it top the charts with a #1 single, #1 video and #1 download;
- helping well-known musician Jonny Lang start his own independent record company;



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- successfully renegotiating the entire recorded music catalog rights for Three Dog Night; and
- negotiating a recording agreement for Jim Brickman, which resulted in a hit song that reached #1 on the New Age chart and a concert televised on PBS.

All told, Abdo worked on recording projects for various music artists, including Lang, Brickman, Booker T. Jones and Hall & Oates, that resulted in six Grammy nominations last year.

Abdo is also a leader both in the entertainment bar and industry. He recently completed a term as chair of the 5,000-member American Bar Association Forum on the

Entertainment and Sports Industries. He also presided as CLE Program Chair at South by Southwest in Austin, Texas — the largest music festival in the United States. Additionally, he served as national chair for Grammy Foundation's Entertainment Law Initiative.

Locally, Abdo has been a driving force behind the Entertainment Law Symposium in Minneapolis, an annual event started in 2008. The 2009 symposium drew a near capacity crowd.

Working with entertainers comes naturally to Abdo, who has played the drums, guitar, keyboard and performed vocals in various bands, including one composed of attorneys from his firm. Combining the entertainment industry with his law practice has proved the perfect gig for him.

Three Abdo children perform in their own local band, named Lynhurst after a local park. Abdo also proudly reports that he has a teenage daughter who is interested in learning the business side of the music industry.

- Mark A. Cohen

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