

Welcome

Our office is located in Kalamazoo, Michigan. We are a boutique law firm that provides a range of services relating to patents, trademarks, and all other intellectual property matters. Comprising multiple attorneys, each of whom is a trained scientist or engineer, our firm is well equipped to handle all of your intellectual property needs in all fields of technology. Our clients are located worldwide, and range from individual inventors to Fortune 500 companies.



We strive to provide quality and cost-effective service for all clients, both large and small, domestic and foreign. Most of our attorneys have extensive experience providing service to large-scale companies having worldwide intellectual property needs.

Philosophy

Flynn, Thiel, Boutell & Tanis strives to provide each client, large or small, domestic or foreign, with a high level of technical and legal experience, and a strong work ethic to achieve a successful result in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Fields of Technology

The attorneys at Flynn, Thiel, Boutell & Tanis all have science or engineering backgrounds which enables the firm to handle virtually all areas of technology, including:

- mechanical
- electro-mechanical
- electrical/electronics
- electromagnetics
- computer sciences
- software
- business methods
- chemical/chemistry
- pharmaceutical
- process engineering
- physics
- plants

Our firm is responsible for hundreds of patents issued every year by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Many of these patent applications we prepare and prosecute on behalf of our clients. Additionally, we are also responsible for filing patent applications in the U.S. that are initially prepared by our foreign clients, which we then prosecute on their behalf. This exposes our attorneys to a wide range of technical fields, enabling them to readily adapt to new and expanding technologies.

Practice Areas

Flynn, Thiel, Boutell & Tanis strives to provide its clients, from large corporations to individuals, domestic and foreign, with a comprehensive range of intellectual property services. Our primary intellectual property service areas include:

- patentability investigations including database searches, searches at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, and searches through foreign patent offices and agencies
- patent application preparation and prosecution for both the United States and international (PCT and foreign country-specific), including utility, provisional and design applications
- patent infringement investigations
- patent validity/invalidity investigations
- patent litigation support
- trademark clearance investigations
- trademark application preparation and prosecution for both the United States (federal and state) and international (community and foreign country-specific)
- trademark infringement investigations
- maintenance and renewal services for patents and trademarks (U.S. and foreign)
- competitive patent/trademark tracking services
- copyrights
- licensing and IP contracts/agreements
- trade secrets, unfair competition

International Services

To address our clients' foreign intellectual property needs, Flynn, Thiel, Boutell & Tanis maintains a worldwide network of foreign associates (patent/trademark attorneys and agents) whom we work closely with to assure that our clients receive quality representation and cost-efficient services in all of their overseas intellectual property matters. Many of these foreign associates have longstanding ties with our firm, working with us for more than 20 years to meet our clients' foreign intellectual property needs.

Firm Overview

MORE THAN 50 YEARS OF PRACTICING INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW

Flynn, Thiel, Boutell & Tanis has its origin in Kalamazoo, Michigan in the late 1940's when Attorney Robert Woodhams focused his law practice on intellectual property. In 1955, Mr. Woodhams entered into a partnership with Attorneys Raywood Blanchard and L. Martin Flynn and established our predecessor law firm of Woodhams, Blanchard & Flynn. This law firm had its offices in downtown Kalamazoo, and practiced solely intellectual property law.

In the early 1960's, the Woodhams, Blanchard & Flynn firm moved into its own office building located west of downtown Kalamazoo. This location is close to downtown Kalamazoo and Western Michigan University, and is also readily accessible to interstate highways serving Kalamazoo.

Attorneys Dale Thiel, David Boutell and Ronald Tanis all joined the firm in the mid-1960's, and became partners in the firm in 1971. After the retirement of Attorney Robert Woodhams in 1977, the firm was renamed Blanchard, Flynn, Thiel, Boutell & Tanis. Following the retirement of Attorney Raywood Blanchard in 1982, the firm was renamed Flynn, Thiel, Boutell & Tanis, P.C. Attorney L. Martin Flynn, the remaining original founder, retired in 1991. Attorney Ronald Tanis retired in 2006. After 36 years of full-time practice with the firm, attorney Dale Thiel changed his status to "of counsel" in 2007. David Boutell changed his status to "of counsel" in 2010 after having practiced full time with the firm for 45 years.

Today's senior attorneys at Flynn, Thiel, Boutell & Tanis are Terryence Chapman (partner since 1991), Mark Maki (partner since 1999) and Liane Churney (partner since 2001).

More than 50 years after its founding, Flynn, Thiel, Boutell & Tanis continues to firmly adhere to its founding principles by focusing its law practice to patents, trademarks and other intellectual property matters.

David G. Boutell

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David has a wide range of experience in the prosecution of patents directed to mechanical, electro-mechanical and electrical inventions. David's work also involves assisting clients in the selection of trademarks, securing trademark registrations and trademark enforcement. His practice includes counseling clients regarding technology and trademark licensing and providing opinions regarding patent validity and patent and trademark infringement issues. David also provides clients assistance regarding their copyright concerns. He joined the firm in 1965.

Education:

- B.S. in Electrical Engineering, University of Michigan
- Juris Doctorate, Wayne State University

Licenses/Memberships:

- State Bar of Michigan
- Registered Attorney - U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
- Federal District Court, Western District of Michigan
- American Intellectual Property Law Association

Terryence F. Chapman

Shareholder

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Terry worked as a process engineer in both chemical and plastic production facilities and in an industrial waste treatment facility before practicing law. He worked as a patent examiner in the field of electrochemistry at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office for approximately five years. At the time he left the Patent and Trademark Office, he was a primary (patent) examiner. Terry also has had electronics and biotechnology training from the Patent and Trademark Office and the National Institutes of Health. Terry's practice includes securing patents for clients for inventions that relate to electrochemistry, inorganic and organic chemistry, ceramics, biotechnology, chemical processes, electronics and metallurgy. He joined the firm in 1987.

Education:

- B.S. in Chemical Engineering, Wayne State University
- Juris Doctorate, Wayne State University

Licenses/Memberships:

- State Bar of Michigan
- Registered Attorney - U.S. Patent and Trademark office
- Federal District Court, Western District of Michigan
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Liane has a range of experience in patents, including preparing and prosecuting domestic and foreign patents in a wide variety of mechanical and electro-mechanical technologies, patent investigations including patentability, infringement and invalidity opinions, and litigation support. Liane also provides counseling relative to trademark/service mark selection, registration and enforcement, licensing and other intellectual property-related contracts. Liane began her career in intellectual property law in 1993 at a law firm in Pennsylvania before joining the firm in 1997.

Education:

- B.A. in Chemistry, Washington and Jefferson College
- Juris Doctorate, Dickinson School of Law

Licenses/Memberships:

- State Bar of Michigan
- Registered Attorney - U.S. Patent and Trademark office
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Heon Jekal

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Before obtaining his law degree, Heon worked as an engineer in Korea for Daewoo Electronics in the areas of cable modems and decoding systems for high-definition television, and for LG Information & Communications in digital wireless communications. Heon also worked for Samsung Securities in Korea as an equity research analyst. Heon joined the firm in 2006, and his practice includes prosecution of domestic and foreign patents related to electrical, software, electromechanical and mechanical inventions.

Education:

- B.S. in Electrical Engineering, Seoul National University
- M.B.A., University of Virginia
- Juris Doctorate, The Ohio State University

Licenses/Memberships:

- State Bar of Michigan
- State Bar of New Jersey
- Registered Attorney - U.S. Patent and Trademark office
- American Intellectual Property Law Association
- American Bar Association

Mark L. Maki

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Mark has a range of experience in patents, trademarks and copyrights, including: preparation and prosecution of domestic and foreign patents; preparing patentability and infringement opinions; trademark/service mark selection, registration and enforcement; evaluation of computer/Internet issues; licensing and related contracts; and litigation support. His patent practice is primarily directed to the mechanical and electro-mechanical arts. Mark previously practiced in Chicago before joining the firm in 1994.

Education:

- B.S in Mechanical Engineering, Michigan Technological University
- Juris Doctorate, John Marshall Law School

Licenses/Memberships:

- State Bar of Michigan
- State Bar of Illinois
- Registered Attorney - U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
- Federal District Court, Western District of Michigan
- Federal District Court, Northern District of Illinois

Dale H. Thiel

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Dale was an instructor in machine dynamics at the University of Michigan for two years, and a research engineer at Battelle Memorial Institute in Columbus, Ohio for about three years. Dale subsequently worked as a patent examiner in mechanical and electro-mechanical arts at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office for more than three years. While at the Patent and Trademark Office, he taught special courses in physics and dynamics to patent assistants. He has extensive experience in patents and trademarks, including patentability and infringement opinions, preparation and prosecution of U.S. and foreign patents, licensing and related contracts, and litigation support. Several patents that he has secured have been successfully litigated in the U.S. courts, and resulted in one of the largest damage awards in patent litigation history at that time. Dale joined the firm in 1966.

Education:

- B.S. in Mechanical Engineering, University of Michigan
- M.S. in Mechanical Engineering, University of Michigan
- Juris Doctorate, George Washington University

Licenses/Memberships:

- State Bar of Michigan
- Registered Attorney - U.S. Patent and Trademark office
- Federal District Court, Eastern District of Michigan
- Federal District Court, Western District of Michigan
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit
- American Intellectual Property Law Association

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Brian's areas of practice include the prosecution of patents related to electrical, software and mechanical inventions. He also is experienced in providing counseling with regard to trademark matters. Before joining the firm, he worked as a patent examiner at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office for 10 years, handling primarily electrical and electro-mechanical technologies. He was subsequently a patent attorney for the U.S. Department of Energy and thereafter in private practice in Wisconsin. He joined the firm in 1998.

Education:

- B.S. in Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of Wisconsin
- Juris Doctorate, George Washington University

Licenses/Memberships:

- State Bar of Michigan
- Registered Attorney - U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
- Federal District Court, Western District of Michigan
- American Intellectual Property Law Association
- Government Intellectual Property Law Association

Sidney B. Williams

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Sid was a patent examiner at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office prior to spending 29 years in various administrative and legal positions with the Upjohn Company. Sid completed his career at Upjohn as Executive Director of Domestic Patents and Worldwide Trademark Operations. In addition to specializing in pharmaceutical intellectual property law, he has expertise in the protection of plants under the Plant Patent and Plant Variety Protection Acts. Sid served on United States delegations to the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants in 1981, 1983, 1985, 1986, 1988 and 1989. He has served as an officer and committee chair of the Intellectual Property Section of the American Bar Association, the American Intellectual Property Law Association and the National Council of Intellectual Property Law Associations. In 1987-1988 he was president of the National Inventors Hall of Fame. He became associated with the firm in 1995.

Education:

- B.S. in Chemical Engineering, University of Wisconsin
- Juris Doctorate, George Washington University

Licenses/Memberships:

- State Bar of Michigan
- Registered Attorney - U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
- Federal District Court, Western District of Michigan
- Fellow of the American Intellectual Property Law Association
- American Bar Association

Eugene J. Rath III

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Gene's practice includes the preparation and prosecution of patents in a variety of mechanical and chemical technologies; patent investigations including patentability, non-infringement, and invalidity opinions; trademark registration and trademark selection counseling; copyright registration and counseling; and related licensing and contract preparation. Gene also has extensive experience in all phases of intellectual property litigation. Prior to joining the firm in 2009, Gene practiced intellectual property law in Grand Rapids for 13 years.

Education:

- B.S. in Chemical Engineering, Iowa State University
- Juris Doctorate, Drake University

Licenses/Memberships:

- State Bar of Michigan
- Registered Attorney – U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Federal Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit
- Federal District Court, Western District of Michigan
- Federal District Court, Eastern District of Michigan
- American Intellectual Property Law Association