Shumaker

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Shumaker Names Three Ohio Attorneys to Lead Fast-Growing Hospitality and Transportation Business Sectors

INDUSTRY SECTOR

Sports, Entertainment & Hospitality
Transportation, Advanced Mobility & Logistics

RELATED PROFESSIONALS

Michael E. Dockins
Austin K. Irving
Bennett H. Speyer

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TOLEDO AND COLUMBUS, OH – Three Ohio attorneys will step into legal leadership roles in rapidly evolving industries that power large portions of the U.S. economy. Shumaker has named Michael Dockins Chair and Bennett Speyer Co-Chair of the firm's Hospitality, Leisure and Sports Business Sector and Austin Irving Co-Chair of the Transportation and Distribution Business Sector.

As partners in Shumaker's Ohio offices—Mike and Austin in Toledo and Bennett in both Toledo and Columbus—the three attorneys will guide the legal work in their business sectors for the entire nationwide firm of more than 270 lawyers and advisors.

"We've elevated these three tremendous people as we expand Shumaker's premier position in these business sectors," Shumaker Chairman Tom Dillon said. "These sectors of the American economy are shifting daily, and Mike, Bennett, and Austin have the skills and proven records to stay out in front on behalf of our clients."

Known as the "Gimmick Attorney®," **Michael Dockins** is a renowned intellectual property (IP) counsel for elite pro wrestlers and host of the "Wrestling with the Law" podcast. Coaches, broadcasters, and others in the sports and entertainment worlds turn to Mike to protect their livelihoods and plan for their futures. Mike is also a chemical engineer and has served on advisory boards for organizations that produce sustainable food and packaging.

Bennett Speyer has built a legal practice counseling elite level college and professional coaches, athletic directors, and conference commissioners, as well as executives in the sports and entertainment industry. His

work also encompasses benefits law (ERISA) and executive compensation. As a thought leader in these fields, Bennett has been active in the American Bar Association's Entertainment and Sports Industry Forum, the Sports Lawyers Association, and the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans.

Austin Irving regularly counsels shippers, brokers, and logistics companies in the transportation and distribution industry, as well as clients in manufacturing, automotive, professional services, commercial banking, and finance. Representing a broad range of public and private companies, Austin often serves in the role of outside general counsel. In the community, Austin serves as a board trustee for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Toledo and a trustee for the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation.

- Transformed by the global pandemic, the hospitality and sports industries are reemerging with uncertain futures. The leisure and hospitality sector employs one out of every 20 Americans, but it has yet to recover to pre-COVID levels.
- With the emergence of Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) deals that deliver income for college student-athletes and a booming legalized sports betting industry that doubled in 2021, the business of sports is experiencing profound changes.
- Supply chain struggles and logistics lockdowns have put a worldwide spotlight on massive changes in the transportation sector—one example: the time to ship a newly made toy from China to the U.S. shot up more than 650 percent during the pandemic, going from 21 days to 159 days.

"By organizing into business sector teams, and then positioning top-flight lawyers like Mike, Bennett, and Austin as leaders, we can bring our entire range of experiences from across our 10 offices to bear on any issue a client encounters," said Shumaker Management Committee Co-Chair Jennifer Compton. "We're here to make sure our clients succeed, and naming these new leaders is key to that success."

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