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10169 | [www.law360.com](http://www.law360.com)  
Phone: +1 646 783 7100 | Fax: +1 646 783 7161 |  
[customerservice@law360.com](mailto:customerservice@law360.com)

## Fla. Firm Trenam Law Absorbs Patent Firm Smith & Hopen

By **Madison Arnold**

Law360 (November 7, 2025, 3:14 PM EST) -- Patent and trademark law firm Smith & Hopen — along with two shareholders, a registered patent agent and an associate — is joining Trenam Law in Tampa.

Trenam Law has tapped shareholders Anton Hopen and Nicholas Pfeifer to lead its patent practice, a key piece of the firm's business transactions practice group, the firm



Anton Hopen

announced Monday. They're joined by registered patent agent Molly Sauter and associate Andrew Behrens.

"We are excited for the exceptional patent and trademark team at Smith & Hopen to be joining the firm as leading practitioners in the area of high-technology intellectual property

development," said Nelson Castellano, managing shareholder at Trenam, in a statement.



Nicholas Pfeifer

He added "As we continue to grow our presence in the greater Tampa Bay area, we aim to satisfy the specific needs of our clientele and acquire top talent that brings innovation and professional prowess to the table just as in the case of Smith & Hopen."

Trenam Law's patent practice will work with the trademark, technology transactions, corporate healthcare, privacy and litigation teams to help its clients with intellectual property needs, the firm said.

"Over years of collaboration we saw not only results, but how Trenam operates, professional, transparent, and respectful. Integrating our teams aligns people, process, and technology so we can protect IP,

support transactions, and move business forward on one coordinated platform," Hopen said in a statement.

The team helps clients with securing rights, preparing portfolios for financing or exit, and pairs with other firm colleagues on brand protection, regulatory compliance, employment and intellectual property assignments, data and privacy and dispute resolution, according to Monday's announcement. All practitioners have science and engineering degrees and are admitted to practice before the United States Patent & Trademark Office.

"Our aim is to be able to serve as outside general counsel for all our clients' needs which is why the addition of Anton, Nicholas, Molly, and Andrew adds significant value to our clients," said Diana Hayes, co-leader of the business transactions practice group at Trenam Law, in a statement.

She added: "Patents and trademarks are significant business assets, and the addition of the Smith & Hopen team provides clients with access to expert counsel on how they can be leveraged advantageously in business transactions and other opportunities."

Hopen advises universities, technology companies and founders on building, defending and monetizing patent portfolios, the firm said. He has decades of experience working across biotechnology, software, telecommunications and engineered systems.

Often, Hopen handles appeals and administrative litigation before the USPTO's Patent Trial and Appeal Board and Trademark Trial and Appeal Board. He is also admitted to all federal district courts in Florida and to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, according to the announcement.

Hopen is also Florida Bar Board-certified in intellectual property, the firm said. A graduate of the University of Florida Levin College of Law, Hopen earned an undergraduate degree in interdisciplinary science from the University of South Florida.

Pfeifer focuses his work on patent prosecution, portfolio strategy and intellectual property counseling for universities, companies and entrepreneurs. He has a background in mechanical and aerospace engineering and experience working in medical devices, biotechnology and software, the firm said.

He can help clients with domestic and international filings, advises on patentability and freedom to operate and coordinates postgrant strategy. Pfeifer administrative litigation experience in adversarial matters before the USPTO PTAB for patent litigation and TTAB for trademark litigation and appeals.

Pfeifer is also a graduate of the University of Florida Levin College of Law and his undergraduate degree in aerospace engineering from the University of Florida.

Sauter is a USPTO-registered patent agent with

experience in preparing and prosecuting patent applications in the electrical and engineering sciences. She helps clients with communications technologies, power systems, environmental solutions and information systems, the firm said. She holds both a master's and an undergraduate degree in electrical engineering from the University of South Florida.

Behrens has experience drafting and prosecuting patents in a range of technological fields for both private clients and public universities and research institutions. He also has experience in federal trademark prosecution and counseling, the firm said. A graduate of the University of Missouri School of Law, Behrens holds an undergraduate degree in mechanical engineering from Saint Louis University.

--Editing by Amy French.

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