

# Virtual Law Firm Unites Lawyers From 5 Law Firms

By **Larry Bodine**, a Business Development Consultant based in Glen Ellyn, IL. He advises law firms on marketing strategy, individual lawyer marketing plans and Web site plans. He can be reached at [www.LarryBodine.com](http://www.LarryBodine.com) and **630.942.0977**.

In one of the hippest, coolest collections of talent, the virtual law firm **XDL Group** combines the skills of lawyers from 5 separate law firms, which have joined forces to litigate IP cases for individuals, corporations and universities. The firm exists online and in the creative minds of the eight far-flung lawyers who can be seen rotating in a circle in a flash graphic at [www.xdlgroup.com/who.we.are.php](http://www.xdlgroup.com/who.we.are.php).

“X” is for multi. “D” is for dimensional. “The multidimensional in XDL refers to the group’s diverse legal and technical backgrounds, different geographical locations, and the fact that IP litigation is like a multidimensional chess game in which various strategies and tactics are employed simultaneously to achieve an optimal outcome for the client.”

“L” is for litigation. This produces the tagline, Multidimensional IP Advocates. The coalition makes one of the best uses of technology to combine lawyers with similar skills to go to market as “your IP light cavalry.” And who says Generation X has all the new ideas? The virtual law firm is the brainchild of Wyatt B. Durette, Jr., the 70-year-old Director and founder of DuretteBradshaw in Richmond, Virginia. Durette enlisted the help of his own Marketing Director, Amy Smith-Pike, a veteran with 14 years of professional legal marketing experience, to make the idea a reality.



## Marketing at a whole ‘nother level’

There are other firms that have lawyers commute remotely to the office, like Traverse Legal, [www.traverselegal.com](http://www.traverselegal.com), a 3-lawyer firm based in Traverse City, MI, but XDL takes the idea to a “whole ‘nother’ level.” United under a 21-st century logo, the cyberlawyers include:

- **Richard L. Coffman**, a CPA and lawyer, who is a commercial litigator in Beaumont, TX.
- **Charles M. Allen**, founding member and managing partner of the law firm of Goodman Allen & Filetti in Richmond, VA.
- **Christine A. Williams**, an associate at DuretteBradshaw in Richmond, VA, who is included in Virginia’s “Legal Elite,” according to Virginia Business Magazine.
- **Curtis Hogue**, a patent agent with Hogue Intellectual Property, LLC, in Durham, NC. His firm also handles patent preparation & prosecution, litigation support, IP strategy & management, and valuation.
- **Dale C. Hogue, Sr.**, a patent attorney in Hilton Head, SC, who has more than 30 years of experience.
- **Kenneth Olsen**, an IP lawyer in Pound Ridge, NY. He was the VP for Intellectual Property Avaya and former Counsel to the Howrey law firm.
- **James Creekmore**, an IP, business tort and contracts lawyer in Daleville, VA, named to Virginia’s Legal Elite for Intellectual Property.
- **Wyatt B. Durette, Jr.**, a three-term member of Virginia General Assembly, Editor of Civil Discovery in Virginia, and a member of the Executive Committee guiding three major class actions.

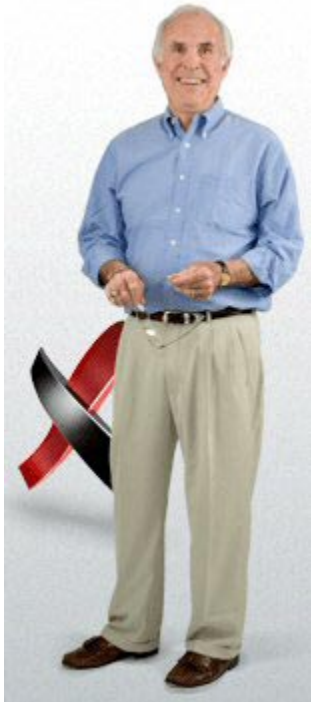


Each lawyer's bio includes a link to their separate law firm web site bio. The charismatic Durette explained how he assembled XDL, saying "Each lawyer is different. Dale is a friend and colleague of 30 years. We worked together before and stayed in touch. In talking one day last fall he mentioned that he was looking for a way to team up with others and include his son Curtis. Curtis and I met to discuss his background. One day later I learned that large numbers of patent cases were being filed in the Eastern District of Texas and realizing Richard was there and I was in the Eastern District of Virginia, it struck me that a "firm" that had offices in both districts would offer something unique."

"And for whatever reason I then had the idea of a 'virtual firm,' existing only on the internet and composed of separate firms as independent profit centers coming together to work on cases originated by the combined marketing strength of the 'virtual firm.' It's the same concept as our professional liability corporation, really. So, I spoke to Dale and he liked it. Then Richard, and he liked it. Amy Smith-Pike, our marketing director, suggested James Creekmore. She had worked with James at WoodsRogers. The concept fit exactly what he was looking for—being part of something where he could maintain his independence and small firm benefits, but combine with others to work on large cases beyond what he could handle alone."



Amy Smith-Pike



"Chuck Allen is a long time friend and the idea appealed to him too, for reasons similar to James, and there you have it. A critical ingredient here, as with almost all successful ventures (note the assumed success here!) is the chemistry among the participants. For XDL it is tremendous!" he said.

XDL handles litigation involving patents, the International Trade Commission, trademarks, trade dress, unfair competition, copyrights and trade secrets. They have a technical background in business methods, computer software and the internet, biotechnology, telecommunications, mechanical engineering, and structural engineering.

Their home page sets out the concept: "The XDL Group is unique in the world of intellectual property litigation. We are not a traditional law firm. In fact, we are not a law firm at all, but rather, a national collaboration of trial lawyers and IP professionals – a virtual alliance – dedicated to creatively solving your intellectual property problems, or, if need be, going to war at the courthouse."

"The business development advantages are that we present the equivalent of a major firm's intellectual assets in IP litigation and their geographic diversity, but with the overhead of a small firm, coupled with enormous flexibility to move quickly, avoid conflicts and raise no fears about 'stealing' a client from a referring firm," Durette said. "We litigate only and do not prosecute patents in the USPTO. While we are not without potential conflicts, there is nowhere near the problem of the large firms. And we offer multiple offices and particularly locations in the two hottest areas for patent litigation in the country—the Eastern Districts of Texas and Virginia."

The high tech site offers several articles, all available in printable Word, PDF and Macromedia Flash Paper formats. The site features modern pull-down menus, crosslinks galore and animation. For a peek at the future of law, look no further than the XDL Group.



this article can be  
read online at

<http://www.lawmarketing.com/pages/articles.asp?Action=Article&ArticleID=664>