



Esports and Video Gaming

Industry Contact

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We pride ourselves in knowing the esports and gaming industry as well as our clients do. Serving as strategic partners, we guide our esports clients as they navigate the legal issues and business opportunities in the evolving esports industry.

We Love esports and Gaming

We have been gaming since Half-Life and Counter-Strike took over the scene in the early 2000s (yes, we're old). We have watched with excitement and pride as the esports industry has taken off and caught the attention of the world community. Now, we want to use our knowledge and expertise to help your esports business thrive.

Deep Legal Experience; Thoughtful and Efficient Service

We love to help our clients succeed. In addition to being esports lawyers, we are leaders in the areas of law that are most critical to esports organizations. Vorys lawyers love to put on our thinking caps to provide thoughtful and clear advice. We can't wait to use our skills to help you grow and improve your business.

Highest Level of Integrity

We practice law and do business with the highest level of ethical integrity, because it's the right way to be. If you are an organization with talented and driven employees who want to make a difference in the esports industry, let's work together!

Our Experience

We work with esports teams and organizations, investors, game developers, endemic and non-endemic sponsors and commercial partners, and colleges and universities in the following areas:

Business Formation

How you set up your esports organization will have a lasting impact on how you do business. We want to understand your legal, tax and business objectives (as well as your personal hopes and dreams) to help you implement the most effective legal and tax structure for your business.

Raising Capital

Investors are taking note of esports businesses and pouring millions of dollars into esports teams and other businesses that support the industry. Vorys understands how to navigate the legal aspects of capital raising to help you finance the formation or growth of your esports business.

Outside General Counsel

Exciting new business opportunities and legal issues pop up every day in the esports industry. Vorys has a full-service team of lawyers ready to help you navigate whatever issues come your way. We frequently serve as outside general counsel to companies without legal departments. We are ready and willing to help you understand the business impact and potential risks and benefits of ordinary-course business opportunities and make informed decisions.

Contracts & Licensing

You are likely to have endorsement and sponsorship agreements, player contracts, franchising, merchandising, streaming and technology agreements and other commercial agreements coming your way. Your contracts should accomplish your business goals, maximize efficiency, minimize cost, and appropriately address and allocate risk—all on your timeframe and budget. Vorys lawyers have significant experience getting contracts done. We negotiate multi-million dollar licensing and sponsorship deals for internationally known brands in transactions involving clothing, footwear, technology, patents, proprietary and open-source software, internet applications and trade secrets. We can help you get the most out of these agreements.

Business Transactions

Mergers, acquisitions and other business transactions are becoming commonplace in the esports world, and our team of veteran deal makers provides the leadership necessary to ensure a smooth transaction process. We advise clients in strategic and financial mergers and acquisitions, venture capital and private equity investments, joint ventures and divestitures, as well as spin-offs, leveraged recapitalizations and other transactions. Our deep bench of talented M&A lawyers allows us to provide advice on both large and small transactions for established companies and startups.

[Click here](#) for more information on our extensive M&A experience and a list of representative transactions.

Privacy and Data Security

Online revenue streams constitute a material source of revenue for many esports organizations, and Vorys can help your organization navigate the complex (and expanding) network of regulations on personal data. Our privacy team has more than 15 years of experience helping clients craft appropriate policies for collecting, storing and sharing sensitive data, conducting privacy audits, conducting customized data-breach workshops and assisting with payment card security standards (such as PCI DSS and PA-DSS). In the unfortunate event of a data breach, we are here to help coach you through the appropriate remedial steps and defend any resulting litigation.

IP Protection and Compliance

Whether you are a game developer, sponsor, esports team or esports athlete, the integrity of your brand identity and other intellectual property is critical to unlocking and maintaining revenue streams. We will help you develop, protect and police your intellectual property – including copyrights, patents, data domains, designs, and “trade dress” or the “look and feel” of your brand – to help you maximize its value. Vorys can also help you work with other industry participants to ensure you are not violating their intellectual property rights.

IT & eCommerce

The hardware and software tools you use and license are the lifeblood of your esports company. Vorys has extensive experience in IT and eCommerce contracting and we can help you with eCommerce hosting and fulfillment; software, hardware and services acquisition and implementation; ERP licensing, implementation and services and to planning, forecasting and merchandising licensing and implementation.

Advertising, Marketing and Sponsorships

Marketing and sponsorships are a critical revenue source for esports organizations, and give both endemic and non-endemic sponsors access to key demographics for their products and services. We advise esports organizations and sponsors in structuring and implementing sponsorship deals, marketing campaigns and other promotional activities in compliance with the statutory and regulatory obligations of the FTC, FCC, the Lanham Act, and state law regulations and guidelines that affect advertising, text messaging, email marketing, apps, social networks and similar consumer protection issues.

Employment Counseling

Attracting and retaining multi-talented esports athletes, streamers and personalities who can generate buzz and drive revenue is becoming a “must” for esports teams. Vorys’ nationwide employment law practice can help you draft and negotiate player contracts, develop and implement employment policies, and establish employee benefits plans and programs to help you attract the best talent and comply with your legal obligations as an employer.

Franchising

Game developers, gaming centers and others in the esports and gaming industries are exploring and, in many cases adopting, a franchise business model. The franchise business model is tried and true, but its application to gaming and esports is novel. Vorys' nationally recognized franchise experts can help you navigate the complexities of franchising law and practice, whether you are considering adopting a franchise model or considering buying in to a franchise business. We are experienced in negotiating franchise relationships, state franchise law compliance, and acquisitions and dispositions of franchise businesses.

Connect With Us

However you fit into the esports and video gaming industry, we would love the opportunity to connect with you, learn about your goals and objectives, and share our knowledge! We think we could add real value to your esports efforts if you are any of the following:

- esports team
- Other esports product or service company
- Sponsor, advertiser or marketer interested in the esports industry
- Angel, venture capital or private equity investor or family office interested in the esports industry
- Video game or app developer
- University or school district starting or growing an esports program
- Advisor/service provider to the esports industry

Please reach out to [Frank Zonars](#) for a free consultation, or just to say hello!

News

[News, 8.18.2022](#)

115 Vorys Attorneys Named to the 29th Edition of The Best Lawyers in America® List; 33 Vorys Attorneys Named to Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in America List

[News, 1.12.2022](#)

Special Episode of the Vorys IP Podcast Focuses on Key IP Cases from 2021 & What to Look Out for in 2022

[News, 1.5.2021](#)

Vorys Elevates Nine to Partner

Publications

Client alert, 1.13.2023

FTC Proposes Rule to Ban Non-Compete Agreements

Speaking Engagements

2.25.2021

2021 Esports Investment Summit