



# Power Lawyers 2011

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The quiet (and sometimes not so quiet) forces behind every deal, dispute and decision in Hollywood are honored in The Hollywood Reporter's fifth annual list.



Joe Pugliese

In early 2007 when the idea first surfaced here to do a power list of the top Hollywood lawyers, I called up one of the town's most respected talent attorneys to see what he thought. "Great idea," he said. "But no one will talk to you." After all, the inner circle of entertainment lawyers had always been an impenetrable cabal that -- unlike studio executives, agents and managers -- hated seeing their names in print. It took hundreds of phone calls (and, yes,

some begging), but nearly everyone in that first Power Lawyers issue agreed to be interviewed, and most showed up (some from New York and Nashville) for our breakfast, now an annual tradition.

Five years later, with the franchise fully formed and a true resource for the top names in litigation, corporate and talent dealmaking, I called up that same attorney to spitball ideas for this issue.

Perhaps, I wondered, we could get the three feuding lawyers on the Charlie Sheen case to pose for a photo together. "Great idea," he said. "But they'll never do it." (See above.) Even amid an unresolved and often rancorous arbitration, they all said yes. Case closed.

The Hollywood Reporter's Power Lawyers 2011 list is broken down into the following categories:

**Talent Dealmakers:** Gross points, rich backends and franchise hunting: These attorneys for A-list stars keep them in the stratosphere.

**Litigation Specialists:** These hired guns can go all the way to trial to right a wrong in an industry where the rules are not always black, white or even fair.

**The Troubleshooters:** Plenty of Los Angeles lawyers handle high-stakes criminal cases and rich divorces, but it takes a special skill to expertly navigate both the legal issues and the glare of a rapturous media.

**Corporate Dealmakers:** The men and women behind the big-ticket transactions that keep money flowing to Hollywood.

**METHODOLOGY:** For a fifth year, *THR* canvassed the showbiz landscape to determine the attorneys behind the year's biggest deals and cases. Candidates are evaluated against their peers (litigators vs. litigators, dealmakers vs. dealmakers), and we added a category this year for "troubleshooters," those handling criminal and divorce cases. Studio, network and music label lawyers were not considered, with the exception of Jonathan Anshell, the Raising the Bar honoree, an in-house executive who was chosen in consultation with several top attorneys on the Power Lawyers list.