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Volunteer Spotlight: Kowit Somwaiya

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Ms. Ehtesham is a member of the INTA Bulletins—Association News Subcommittee.

Kowit Somwaiya is the Founder and Managing Partner of Law Plus Ltd. in Thailand and LawPlus Myanmar Ltd. He currently serves on the INTA Board of Directors and has been practicing in the field of intellectual property (IP) law for more than 30 years. What he enjoys the most about working in IP, particularly trademarks, is that it is filled with challenges that stem from frequent changes in the law and practice.

From his early years as an INTA member, he recalls hosting Table Topics at the Annual Meetings. He enjoys the challenge of identifying interesting topics, developing strategies for effectively leading the discussions, and then witnessing an exchange of diverse views. “I was lucky, as INTA allowed me to lead a topic discussion every year I proposed to host one,” he says.

Over the years, Mr. Somwaiya has been actively involved with many INTA committees and subcommittees in various capacities, including as chair, member, and volunteer. He recalls that it was challenging and rewarding to volunteer for extra work with a cross-committee task force comprising leaders and members of other committees or subcommittees with mutual interests and overlapping objectives. He points out that “the challenges of reviewing a lot of documents and making comments and submissions and participating in conference calls with the task force colleagues in all regions of the world were quite acute, but also enjoyable.”

With the rapid growth of the Internet, e-commerce, online trade, and social media, Mr. Somwaiya believes that online counterfeiting poses a significant challenge to all parties concerned with brands. He feels that it is important for all stakeholders, including brand owners, search engines, trading platforms, social media sites, domain name registrars and registries, and logistic companies to collaborate among themselves and work actively with enforcement authorities and legislative and judicial systems to suppress counterfeiting. He adds that, in the coming years, INTA should continue its efforts to understand technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, and blockchain and their implications for brands on trademarks and related IP.

Some of Mr. Somwaiya's favorite brands are RED BULL and M-150. He notes that many people do not know that M-150, RED BULL, SHARK, and many other global leading brands of energy drinks originated from Thailand and are still ultimately owned by Thai companies.

When he's not busy with work and managing his firms, Mr. Somwaiya enjoys gardening, biking,



Kowit Somwaiya (Law Plus Ltd., Thailand)

swimming, and spending time with his family.

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