

# When Lawsuits Make Headlines

H/Advisors Proprietary Research

November 2025

# Contents

## 01 Introduction

---

## 02 Location, location: Courts that received the most coverage

---

## 03 Cases and claims

---

## 04 By sector

---

## 05 Article content: Headlines and statements

---

## 06 Protecting corporate reputation and value when litigation looms

---

## 07 Methodology

---

## 08 About H/Advisors

---

# 01 Introduction

**Litigation isn't just fought in courtrooms.** For many companies, the court of public opinion coalesces well in advance of any legal verdict and is equally paramount. This report analyzes media coverage of corporate litigation in select top-tier publications to help companies understand what to prepare for and how they can leverage the media to their advantage in shaping the court of public opinion.

## Key Takeaways

- **Plaintiffs hold the first mover advantage, as media interest often peaks at the initial legal filing:** In our research, initial filings generated far more media coverage than responses to complaints, settlements or rulings (representing 33% of media coverage versus 16% and 7%, respectively).
- **Legal filings shape coverage and should be drafted with this opportunity in mind:** Most articles (77%) about corporate litigation quoted legal filings.
- **On-the-record statements, which allow either party to double down on or rebut allegations put forth in the case, are underutilized:** Just 35% of plaintiffs and 45% of defendants had an on-the-record media statement quoted in coverage.

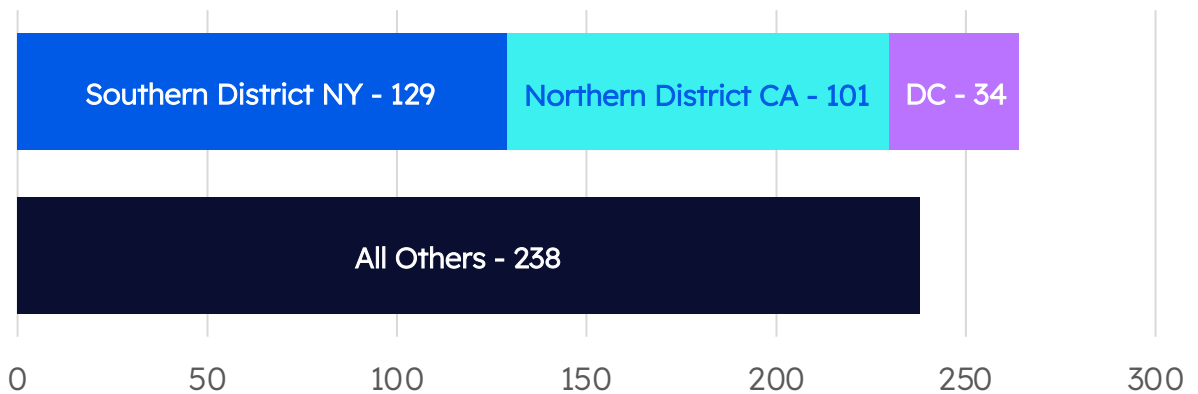
These findings underscore the strategic importance of litigation communications in shaping public perception from the moment a lawsuit is filed. Engaging specialized communications support early in the litigation lifecycle is key to ensure legal filings are media-ready, on-the-record statements are carefully and effectively leveraged, and reputational risks are proactively managed. H/Advisors's experience navigating high-profile cases and our data-backed insights position us to help clients influence and shape the narrative, not just react to it.

## 02 Location, location: Courts that received the most coverage

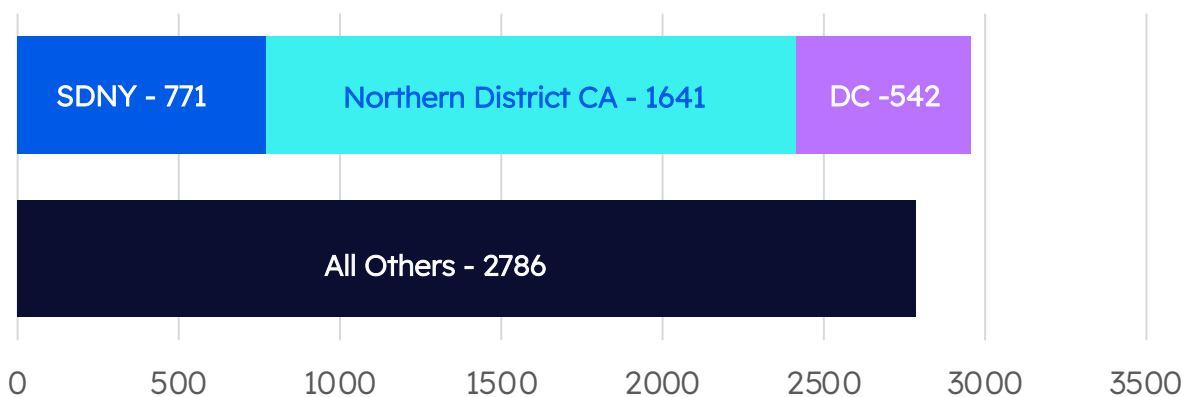
The U.S. District Courts of the Northern District of California, Southern District of New York, and District of Columbia generated the most articles, driven by cases involving high-profile defendants operating largely in the heavily scrutinized tech and financial services industries.

### Courts that received the most coverage

Number of Cases



Number of Articles



## U.S. District Court, Northern District of California

The Northern District of California represented the second-highest number of cases (12.9%) but generated the most coverage (26%).

Notable cases in the research period included:

1. [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission v. Tesla, Inc.](#)  
The EEOC alleged widespread racial harassment against Black employees at Tesla's Fremont, California factory
2. [FTC v. Meta Platforms Inc., et al](#)  
The FTC lost its challenge to Meta's acquisition of virtual-reality startup Within Unlimited
3. [Jones et al v. PGA Tour, Inc.](#)  
Saudi-backed LIV Golf and the PGA Tour agreed to dismiss their antitrust lawsuit and countersuits as part of a merger agreement

**12.9%**

Number of cases

**26%**

Coverage generated

## U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York

The Southern District of New York represented the most cases (16.4%) and the second-highest number of articles (12%).

Notable cases in the research period included:

1. [Palin v. The New York Times Company](#)  
A jury rejected Sarah Palin's libel suit against The New York Times
2. [SEC v. Coinbase, Inc. et al](#)  
The SEC sued Coinbase for operating an unregistered exchange that sold unregistered securities
3. [Doe 1 v. JPMorgan Chase & Co.](#)  
JPMorgan Chase reached a \$290 million class action settlement with Jeffrey Epstein's accusers
4. [Chen-Oster et al v. Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC. et al](#)  
Goldman Sachs agreed to pay \$215 million to settle a class action lawsuit that claimed the bank discriminated against women

**16.4%**

Number of cases

**12%**

Coverage generated

## U.S. District Court, District of Columbia

The District of Columbia was ranked fifth in terms of number of cases (4.3%) but third in terms of articles (9%).

Notable cases in the research period included:

1. [SEC v. Binance Holdings Limited et al](#)  
The SEC accused Binance of artificially inflating trading volumes, diverting customer funds and misleading investors about its surveillance controls
2. [U.S. et al v. UnitedHealth Group Incorporated et al](#)  
The DOJ's lawsuit to block UnitedHealth Group's proposed acquisition of Change Healthcare was dismissed
3. [FTC vs. Meta Platforms, Inc.](#)  
Meta's motion to dismiss the FTC's case challenging its acquisitions of Instagram and WhatsApp was denied and the case moved forward to trial

4.3%

Number of cases

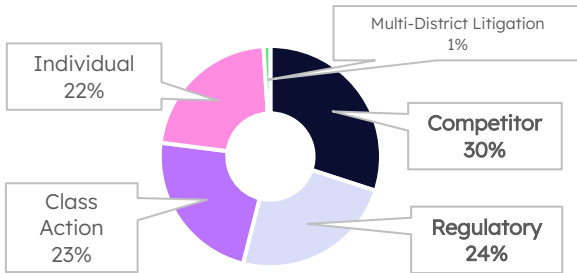
9%

Coverage generated

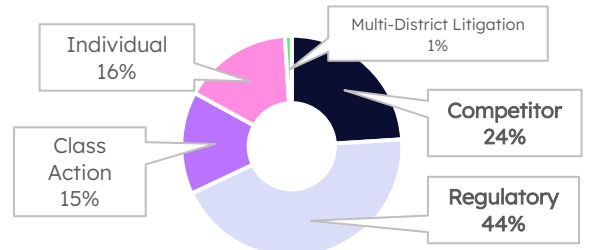
## 03 Cases and claims

While competitor disputes and fraud claims are the most common in court, regulatory and antitrust lawsuits—particularly monopolization cases—dominate media coverage, amplifying their reputational impact.

### Type of lawsuit

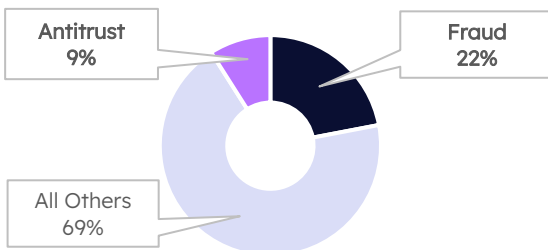


By number of cases

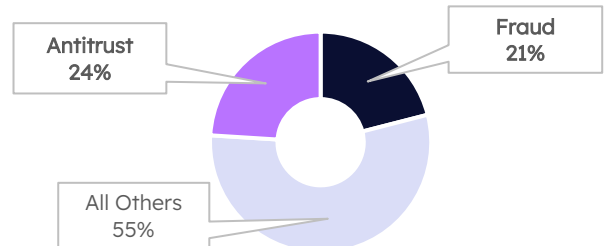


By number of articles

### Nature of lawsuit



By number of cases



By number of articles

### Monopolization cases

**3%**

Of lawsuits

**18%**

Of articles

## 04 By sector

Financial services companies faced the greatest legal exposure, but tech companies' lawsuits tended to attract far more public and media scrutiny.

### Top Plaintiff Industries

*(by number of cases)*

1. Financial Services (73)
2. Retail/service (28)
3. Media/entertainment (26)

### Top Plaintiff Industries

*(by number of articles)*

1. Tech (332)
2. Gaming (285)
3. Automobile (247)

### Top Defendant Industries

*(by number of cases)*

1. Financial Services (183)
2. Tech (123)
3. Retail/service (107)

### Top Defendant Industries

*(by number of articles)*

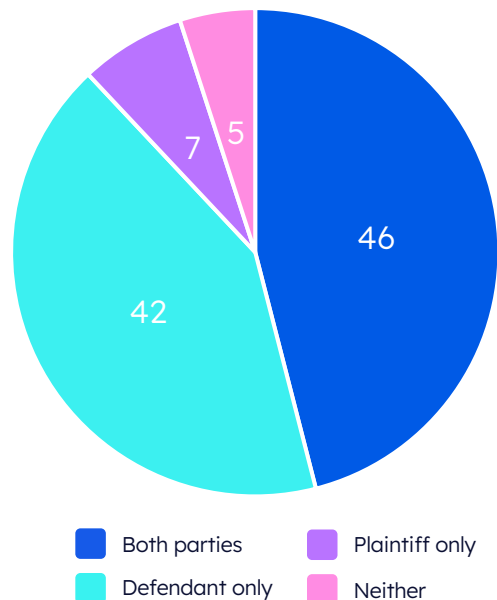
1. Tech (1912)
2. Media/entertainment (526)
3. Financial services (453)

## 05 Article content: Headlines and statements

Defendants should be prepared for disproportionate scrutiny, given that it is nearly as likely for only the defendant to be named in a headline as it is for both parties to be named.

Plaintiffs tended to attribute their statements to lawyers, who can reinforce legal claims and highlight broader implications of defendants' alleged actions. In contrast, defendants tended to attribute their statements to company spokespeople, who can explain actions their company is taking in response to the claims and reaffirm its values, particularly if they are called into question by the case.

Parties named in headlines



Source of statements:

*Lawyers were the most common spokespeople for plaintiffs*

*Company spokespeople were the most common for defendants*

## 06 The role of litigation communications

H/Advisors's proprietary research underscores the critical role litigation communications play in shaping public perception, particularly at the outset of legal proceedings. Our data-driven approach enables legal teams not only to respond to public narratives quickly and forcefully, but also to proactively shape them—aligning communications strategy with legal objectives to strengthen a company's position inside and outside the courtroom.

In particular, how and when filings are made can drive the broader narrative around any case. Plaintiffs hold the first mover advantage, with the opportunity not only to raise the profile of their case but drive the greater part of the narrative surrounding it. The onus is on defendants to determine how to respond and rebalance that narrative.

Without control of the narrative, even the best legal strategy leaves a critical gap. Integrating strategic communications into the overarching legal strategy equips general counsels and attorneys to anticipate risks and safeguard reputations when it matters most.

## 07 Methodology

H/Advisors conducted a comprehensive analysis of top-tier media coverage of U.S. corporate litigation. We identified 785 cases covered in 1,578 articles across *Bloomberg*, *The New York Times*, and *The Wall Street Journal* between January 1, 2022, and December 31, 2023, that involved at least one company as either the plaintiff or defendant. Industries represented included financial services, retail, media and entertainment, tech, health care, pharmaceutical, food and beverage, energy, insurance, automobile, among others.

We would like to express our deep gratitude to the H/Advisors associates and interns who were central in helping compile the data and research found in the report.

## 08 About H/Advisors

Ranked by Chambers and Partners as one of the top firms in the country for litigation communications, H/Advisors has deep experience helping clients navigate challenging and complex legal matters. For over 40 years the firm has been entrusted by clients across sectors to help build, protect and enhance their reputations, boost value and seize new opportunities. The firm has worked alongside in-house and external legal counsel through numerous IP litigation cases, material contract disputes, workplace-related issues, product liability matters, white-collar crime, government investigations and more.

### **Karina Byrne**

Managing Director,  
Head of Los Angeles Office  
[karina.byrne@h-advisors.global](mailto:karina.byrne@h-advisors.global)

### **Amal Robleh-Gessel**

Managing Director,  
Head of Research & Insights  
[amal.robleh-gessel@h-advisors.global](mailto:amal.robleh-gessel@h-advisors.global)

# Thank you

