



## Charles-Theodore Zerner

### Principal Attorney Litigation

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**Charles-Theodore Zerner is a principal attorney at Munck Wilson Mandala, uniquely positioned at the nexus of complex commercial litigation, artificial intelligence, and global data compliance. With over two decades of hands-on experience in AI—including co-founding a neural network-based company while an undergraduate at Harvard in 2000—Charles offers an unparalleled blend of legal acumen and technological insight.**

As a commercial litigator, Charles has successfully resolved high-stakes commercial disputes across a spectrum of industries, involving matters ranging from \$50,000 to over \$1 billion. His expertise encompasses:

- Trade Secret Misappropriation
- Intellectual Property Infringement
- Antitrust Claims
- Business Torts
- Securities Fraud
- RICO and False Claims Act Cases

Charles has significant experience conducting data-intensive internal and regulatory investigations across national and international jurisdictions. His practical experience navigating data privacy laws—including California's CCPA, the EU's GDPR, and other international regulations—combined with deep technical expertise in data systems, enables him to advise companies on complex compliance landscapes, ensuring sensitive data is handled appropriately while mitigating risks. In matters requiring the utmost data privacy, Charles can efficiently conduct data-intensive internal investigations and discovery end-to-end using custom AI tools and e-discovery software—running locally, in a fully air-gapped environment—simplifying global privacy compliance and reducing reliance on external vendors and associated costs.

What truly sets Charles apart is his expertise in AI technology and the AI sector. His journey with AI began over 20 years ago, and he has since been at the forefront of its evolution. This extensive experience provides him with:

- **Technical Understanding:** A profound grasp of AI technologies at a technical level, essential for litigation involving AI and advising on legal aspects of model development and AI implementations. His ability to engage with developers on

a granular level—including understanding data processing pipelines and, when necessary, code-level details—ensures that legal and regulatory compliance are integrated into AI solutions.

- **Sector Knowledge:** In-depth familiarity with industry players, trends, and debates, including open-source versus closed-source discussions, policy, and monetization. An avid supporter of open-source initiatives, Charles believes that AI safety is one of the defining challenges of our time and engages in pro-bono work to promote responsible and transparent AI development.
- **Business Insight:** An appreciation of how AI impacts business operations, emphasizing the importance of feedback loops and data preservation for model refinement, improving agentic systems, and future-proofing your business to extract full value from current operations.

For over a decade, Charles has leveraged and developed his own custom AI tools and implementations to enhance his legal practice by:

- Accelerating early case assessments.
- Streamlining discovery processes.
- Informing strategic decision-making.
- Delivering improved efficiency and unparalleled insights to clients.

Beyond litigation, Charles advises companies and AI developers navigating the complex landscape of AI integration. His cross-domain expertise allows him to bridge the knowledge divide between legal compliance, ethical considerations, and technological innovation.

## Experience

- Helped secure a favorable settlement in litigation over ownership of an NFL football team and NBA basketball team, in high profile case with over \$1 billion at issue;
- Secured dismissal of all federal antitrust and state law tort claims in a high-profile case with over \$200 million at issue involving the alleged monopolization of the market for landfill waste disposal in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina;
- Secured the survival of a medical device company with over 500 employees accused of submitting false claims to Medicare and Medicaid in “bet-the-company” dual-track regulatory and federal court action joined by DOJ;
- Helped to secure dismissal of all trade secret claims against a pharmaceutical company in a case with over \$100 million at issue;
- Helped a Fortune 500 energy provider obtain a favorable settlement in a highly technical copyright dispute;
- Successfully represented clients in the energy sector in high-dollar contracts, trade secrets, and regulatory matters;
- Assisted clients in various stages of commercial litigation for matters involving contractual disputes, securities fraud, environmental torts, non-disclosure and non-compete agreements, secured transactions under UCC Article 9, and insurance matters;
- Perform legal research and draft court pleadings, including complaints, answers, and pretrial motions – including motions to dismiss and motions for summary judgment in cases with over \$100 million in controversy;
- Sophisticated e-discovery experience performing early data assessments, drafting and executing e-discovery plans, training predictive coding algorithms to achieve high F1 scores, using data filtration tools, clustering algorithms, drafting complex traditional searches and teaching CLEs and publishing articles on the same;
- Successfully helped clients to recover (or avoid) millions of dollars in damages at trial level and obtained the reversal of an award of over \$7 million on appeal.

## **Focus Areas**

Commercial Litigation  
Corporate Governance  
Antitrust & Competition  
Business Breakups & Partnership Disputes  
Life Sciences  
Entertainment & Digital Media  
Private Equity  
Securities Litigation  
AI/Machine Learning

## **Education**

Tulane University Law School, JD, 2012  
summa cum laude  
Order of the Coif  
  
Harvard College, BA, 2002  
  
David McCord Prize for Musical Achievement

## **Associations & Memberships**

- State Bar of Texas
- State Bar of Louisiana

## **Honors & Awards**

- Best Lawyers in America  
2019-2022
- Louisiana Rising Star, Thomson Reuters  
2016-2020
- Associate Fellow of the Litigation Counsel of America  
2017
- New Orleans Top Lawyers for Antitrust, New Orleans Magazine  
2016

## **Bar Admissions**

Louisiana, 2012

Texas, 2022

U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana

U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana

U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana