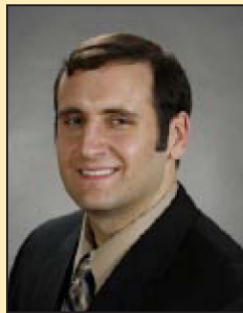


P I T T S B U R G H

BUSINESS TIMES

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ask the LEGAL ♦ PROFESSIONALS



CONTRACT LAW

Q What do I need to know about my business's contracts?

A Everything, actually! Generally, the law presumes that businesses are sophisticated enough to understand their contracts. Practically then, you should diligently familiarize yourself with your business's current contracts

and review all proposed contracts. This diligence should always include a lawyer's review, as contracts create important legal rights and obligations regardless of your business. Ask your lawyer to explain the risks, legal implications, and practical effects of each term. Know that a contract's scope, term, and payment provisions (e.g. amount, timing, conditions) should unambiguously reflect the business arrangement as you intend it. Pay attention to insurance and indemnification language. Note confidentiality, integration, and choice-of-law clauses. Identify language that shortens the statute of limitations. Confirm the contract's enforceability under applicable state law. Ultimately, recognize that every contract is unique, so a thorough legal analysis is your best weapon both in preventing costly future litigation and maintaining an efficient, ongoing, and mutually-beneficial business relationship.

Dickie McCamey

Integrity. Experience. Solutions.

Nathan A. Kostelnik

Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, P.C.

Two PPG Place, Suite 400, Pittsburgh, PA 15222-5402

412-392-5140 • nkostelnik@dmclaw.com

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