

Day in the Life: Richard Brunner

Interviews and Profiles



Richard Brunner

Global Head of Legal, Dennemeyer Group, Germany

6:45 am

The alarm clock goes off. I get up and prepare breakfast — an easy exercise that clears my head and leaves the night behind. I wake my wife and seven-year-old daughter, and we get ready for the day. I enjoy a quick breakfast with my family before my wife drives our daughter to school and goes to work.

7:45 am

While drinking another cup of strong Italian coffee, **I check emails on my smartphone**, which allows me to structure my day and be ready when I arrive at the office. I send answers to simple requests so that I have the first items on the list done for the day.

8:00 am

I jump into the car, turn on my favorite music (early '70s soul, jazz and deep house) and **fight my way to the office over the always-congested Autobahn**. I rarely make calls while on the road because this is my private time off.

9:00 am

After arriving in the office, **I answer the most urgent emails, get another coffee** and go to see one of my reports to discuss client contracts she handles. We align our schedules so that she is able to prepare for our next meeting later today.

10:00 am

Today is our **quarterly global management meeting**, this time held in Munich (it alternates with our Luxembourg headquarters). Under the direction of our CEO, the globally responsible people for our business lines (patent annuity payments, trademark renewal management, IP legal services and IP management software) and the internal functions (business development, marketing and legal) propose the agenda's various topics. They include new key accounts, setting up new offices abroad, important hires, optimization of communication between departments and countries, and discussing developments regarding competitors (the market of IP legal services faces an enormous consolidation, mostly driven by private equity).

1:00 pm

I go out **to a nice Italian restaurant** (with lunch specials) with a colleague who just returned from our US and UAE offices, where he met with prospective clients. It's a good occasion to keep up with things.

2:00 pm

My inbox is flooded with new emails, and I need to **separate the important from the irrelevant**. My trademark team is responding to a request for proposal for a global trademark filing and prosecution program for a US-based client. I need to review the proposed pricing and confirm which actions and costs are included and that they are clearly defined.

3:00 pm

HR asks for support mediating a conflict between an employee and his supervisor. **Not really my practice area, but I do what I can...**

3:45 pm

I pass by the office of my fellow legal counsel and see what she's up to. She has some questions that we go through, and **we make a few internal calls** together to get more information from other departments on certain matters. Then we discuss some provisions in our new service-level agreements with our global network of local law firms.

5:00 pm

A client who hasn't paid any invoices for almost a year informs us that it intends to leave us because of our determined insistence on payment, and has requested that we transfer all files to another vendor. **I'm checking on applicable termination periods** and consider whether we have the right to hold back files until the outstanding balance is settled. I have a call with the operational department to see if there are any IP rights that might lapse in case we decide to suspend or terminate services on short notice. Nope: Everything is under control, and we agree on a strategy to raise the pressure without risking a claim for trademark loss.

6:00 pm

I draft a certificate of employment for an employee who left my team recently (required by German law) and head back home.

8:15 pm

Again! I didn't see my daughter before she went to bed. After dinner, I respond to emails from my US colleagues as they pour in. Then I have a quick look at the stock market and watch the news on TV.

10:00 pm

I fall asleep over the latest issue of the *ACC Docket*.

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