

Ronie M. Schmelz

Partner

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OVERVIEW

Ronie Schmelz is a partner in the firm's Commercial Disputes practice group. Ronie is a seasoned litigator who has spent decades representing clients in litigation and now spends much of her time counseling clients on best practices to stay out of litigation. She counsels consumer brand companies, including cosmetic and personal care, food and supplement companies, on litigation-avoidance strategies so they can confidently focus on building and operating their businesses in ways that reduce the risk of regulatory oversight, consumer challenge, and litigation. Ronie routinely counsels companies on compliance with the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetics Act (FDCA), as amended by the Modernization of Cosmetics Regulation Act (MoCRA), Federal Packaging and Labeling Act (FPLA), Federal Trade Commission Act, California Proposition 65, and other Federal and State consumer protection, advertising, and unfair business practices laws. In addition to representing clients in litigation, including consumer class actions, she also represents companies in proceedings before the National Advertising Division (NAD) of the Better Business Bureau and advises clients on a myriad of regulatory issues, including responding to Warning Letters, inspections and corrective actions, implementation of adverse event reporting and recall procedures, best advertising practices, contract and intellectual property matters, privacy, automatic renewal and subscription programs, and Prop 65 compliance and defense.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

A prominent member in the cosmetics industry, Ronie serves on the Independent Beauty Association's (IBA) board as vice chair of the executive committee, as well as chair of the IBA's government and public relations committee. She is also on the board of Beauty Industry West (BIW) where she chairs the legal and regulatory committee. Ronie frequently speaks at industry conferences and events, including IBA's Cosmetic Convergence, various chapters of the Society of Cosmetic Chemists conferences, including Naturally Kiawah and the Sunscreen Symposium, Cosmoprof North America and Bologna, and American Conference Institute. Ronie also co-taught a course on advertising law at Loyola Marymount University Law School and has lectured at UCLA Extension and the Fashion Institute of Design and Management (FIDM) on regulatory, advertising, and litigation issues impacting the beauty and personal care products industry. Ronie also provides added value to client relationships by conducting in-house regulatory and advertising training sessions.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Named to the Consumer Goods Business Visionaries list, *LA Times Studios*, 2026

PROFESSIONAL / CIVIC ACTIVITIES

- Independent Beauty Association (formerly ICMAD)
  - Chairman of the Board
  - Board Member, Vice-Chair Executive Committee
- Beauty Industry West (BIW), Board Member, Chair, Legal and Regulatory Committee
- Living Beauty Cancer Foundation, Board Member, Secretary of the Board
- California Society of Cosmetic Chemists (SCC), past Board Member
- Cosmetic Executive Women (CEW)
- Bay Area Beauty Association (BABA), Founding Board Member
- Personal Care Products Council (PCPC)

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- "What Beauty Brands Need to Know About Packaging Regulations," Beauty Industry West, 13 October 2026
- "The Federal Trade Commission: Understanding the Agency's Role in Regulating Consumer Product Companies," Southern Aerosol Technical Association (SATA), 17 September 2026
- "Navigating US State Regulations," Good Face Project Webinar, 30 July 2026
- "US Regulatory Overview," Japan Cosmetic Industry Association (JCIA), Nagoya, Japan, June 2026
- "Legal Developments Impacting Cosmetic Products and Marketing," Beauty Industry West, April 2026
- "Avoiding recalls and lawsuits cosmetics/Dietary Supplements Trending Litigation," SGS Cosmetics, OTC & Dietary Supplements Compliance Conference, 16 December 2025
- "EPR Regulations Cosmetics and Dietary Supplements – at the state level and across the US," SGS Cosmetics, OTC & Dietary Supplements Compliance Conference, 16 December 2025
- "Key Issues Shaping Cosmetics and Personal Care Oversight," *FDA Watch*, 24 November 2025
- "US Regulatory and Legal Issues Impacting the Sunscreen Industry: Best Practices For Making Product Claims," FLSCC Sunscreen Symposium, September 2025
- "Beauty Industry West: West Coast Regulatory Issues," New York Society of Cosmetic Chemist Suppliers' Day, June 2025

- "What's Going On? Chemical Bans, Packaging Laws, and Litigation Confronting the Cosmetics Industry," Dallas 2025 Cosmetic Industry Insights, May 2025
- "US Federal and State Regulatory Roundup," IBA Cosmetic Convergence Conference, May 2025
- "FTC Regulation of Product Advertising," WAIB / NAA Conference, April 2025
- "PFAS – Impacts worth considering," Global Retailer and Manufacture Alliance, March 2025
- "Key Regulatory Issues Impacting the Beauty Industry: MoCRA, Chemical Bans, Packaging, Litigation and Beyond," Beauty Industry West, February 2025
- "Regulatory Update: State Chemical Bans | Prop 65 | Sustainability Claims," Society of Cosmetic Chemists, October 2024
- "U.S. Regulatory Update: MoCRA and Beyond," 16th Chemical Regulatory Annual Conference, CRAC Korea, September 2024
- "'From California with Love' – Innovating in a Complex Regulatory Landscape," Speaker at NYSCC's 2024 Suppliers' Day, 2 May 2024
- "MoCRA, Consumer Data, and the Sustainability Issues Confronting the Cosmetics Industry," Beauty Industry West, 12 March 2024
- "Regulatory Update FDA, FTC, MoCRA and More: Some 'Hot' Regulatory Topics," Co-panelist at the Society of Cosmetic Chemists California Chapter – Suppliers' Day 2023, October 2023
- "Myth Busting Misinformation on MoCRA," Society of Cosmetic Chemists California Chapter – Co-panelist at the Suppliers' Day 2023, October 2023
- "10 Steps of Product Development – Taking Your Idea from Your Head to Your Warehouse," Co-panelist at the Society of Cosmetic Chemists California Chapter – Suppliers' Day 2023, October 2023
- FDA, FTC, MoCRA and More: Some "Hot" Regulatory Topics," Beauty Industry West, September 2023
- "Getting Clean Beauty Advertising Right," BBB National Programs, July 2023
- New York Society of Cosmetic Chemists (NYSCC) Suppliers' Day Conference, *What's Next in Ingestible Beauty & Wellness Products: The Consumer's Viewpoint,* May 2023
- "Nutraceuticals in Beauty: Exploring the Intersection of Nutrition and Skincare," Beauty Industry West, March 2023
- "2023 Regulatory Update: MoCRA and Other Regulatory Issues Confronting the Cosmetics Industry," Beauty Industry West, January 2023
- "Advertising 101: Best Practices for Marketing Ingredient and Product Benefits," New York Society of Cosmetic Chemists, May 2022
- "U.S. Regulatory Landscape: What to Know Before Marketing Probiotics," Healthy Skin Microbiome Summit, June 2021

- "Clean Beauty Claims: Regulation, Transparency and Certifications," 2nd Annual Clean Beauty Connect Virtual Summit, June 2021
- "Claims and Descriptions: A Legal Opinion on What You Can and Cannot Say," CBD Expo Midwest 2021, April 2021
- "Greenwashing," Moderator, Hairstory Studio Sustainable Beauty Summit, April 2021
- "The Microbiome: From Decoding Nature to Biotech Breakthroughs," Global Synthetic Biology Conference, October 2020
- "CBD in Cosmetics: So, What's Legal?", LUXE PACK | MakeUp Los Angeles, LosAngeles, California, February 2020
- "Cannabis Regulations: Canada & European Union," Processing of Cannabis/Hemp Plants and Refining of CBD Oil: Market, Regulations and Applications," Las Vegas, Nevada, December 2019
- "The Farm Bill Has Passed: How Will Federal Refinement of Rules & Regulations for CBD and Hemp Oil Affect the Cosmetics, Personal Care Products and Dietary Supplements Industries?", Beauty & Supplement Regulatory Exchange, Washington, D.C., November 2019
- "The Legality of CBD: Separating Fact from Fiction," 2019 In-House Counsel Summit, Tucker Ellis LLP, Cleveland, Ohio, November 2019
- "How to Tap into the CBD Beauty Trend the Right Way!", Webinar, Cosmetics Design, October 2019
- "Marketing Probiotic Products: Careful What You Say!", Skin Microbiome Congress 2019, San Francisco, California, September 2019
- "CBD and Cosmetics: Separating Fact from Fiction," Intermountain West Society of Cosmetic Chemists (IMWSCC), Park City, Utah, August 2019
- "CBD and Beauty: The Next ___ Year(s)," Cosmoprof North America 2019, Las Vegas, Nevada, July 2019
- "CBD and Cosmetics: Separating Fact from Fiction," California Society of Cosmetic Chemists, Malibu, California, May 2019
- "Riding the Coattails: The Latest Developments in Class Action Litigation Affecting the Cosmetics Industry," ACI Cosmetics & Personal Care Products – Legal, Regulatory and Compliance, New York, New York, March 2019
- "Cosmetics 101: How to Market Cosmetics Without Attracting Unwanted Attention From Regulators and Consumer Lawyers," Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising (FIDM), Los Angeles, California, March 2019
- "What to Know Before You Market Products in the United States," Webinar, Italian Trade Agency, ICE – Italian Trade Commission, Trade Promotion Office of the Italian Embassy, February 2019
- "Welcome to 2019! What's New?", Natural and Organic Health and Beauty Alliance Webinar, January 2019

- “Regulatory Challenges: Probiotic Beauty Products,” 2nd Skin Microbiome Congress, San Francisco, California, September 2018
- “High on Beauty: The Cannabis Dilemma,” Cosmoprof North America, Las Vegas, Nevada, July 2018
- “FTC Spotlight,” co-presented with Richard L. Clelland, Division of Advertising Practices, Federal Trade Commission, Natural Product Association's (NPA) “The Big Natural,” Las Vegas, Nevada, June 2018
- “Cosmetic Sciences: Skin Care Ingredients, Skin Conditions and Regulatory Issues for Cosmetic Professionals,” UCLA Extension, Los Angeles, California, April 2018
- “Regulatory and Legal Challenges Facing Subscription Commerce Businesses: What Can You Do to Reduce Your Legal Exposure?”, SUBCOM 2018 East, New York, New York, March 2018
- “How to Market Cosmetics Without Attracting Unwanted Attention from Regulators and Consumer Lawyers,” Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising, Los Angeles, California, March 2018
- “Regulatory, Compliance, and Legal Challenges for Subscription Businesses: What You Should Know to Reduce the Risk of Exposure,” SUBCOM 2017: The Subscription Commerce Summit, San Francisco, California, November 2017
- “Lessons Learned: How to Market 'Natural' Products Without Drawing the Attention of Regulators and Class Action Lawyers,” 2017 Suppliers' Day Exhibition of the Society of Cosmetic Chemists, Long Beach, California, October 2017
- “How to Market Cosmetics Without Attracting Regulatory and Consumer Scrutiny,” In-Cosmetics North America, New York, New York, October 2017
- “What Women Want From Naturals,” Panelist, Cosmoprof North America Las Vegas, Las Vegas, Nevada, July 2017
- “Knowledge is Power: Recent Developments in FDA Warning Letters, FTC Enforcement Actions, NAD Proceedings, and Consumer Class Actions,” Society of Cosmetic Chemists, Manhattan Beach, California, April 2017
- “FDA, FTC and Consumer Class Action Update: Avoiding Unwanted Attention from Government Regulators and Private Plaintiff Lawyers,” Beauty Industry West, Los Angeles, California, January 2017
- “Proposition 65: Heightened Disclosure Requirements,” Valley Industry & Commerce Association, Van Nuys, California, December 2016
- “Advertising Risks and Brand Protection – Claim Substantiation, Enforcement, and Consumer Class Actions,” 2016 In-House Counsel Summit, Tucker Ellis LLP, Cleveland, Ohio, October 2016
- “Claim Substantiation: Best Practices for Avoiding Unwanted Attention from Government Regulators and Private Plaintiff Lawyers,” New York Society of Cosmetic Chemists, Edgewater, New Jersey, September 2016

- "Natural Beauty: The Wave of the Current Beauty Industry," The Fashion Group International of Los Angeles, Inc. (FGI) and the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising (FIDM), Los Angeles, California, December 2015
- "Food & Beverage Class Action Litigation Spotlight," 3rd Annual Food & Beverage Litigation, Compliance & Regulatory Exchange, Chicago, Illinois, October 2015
- "Regulatory Update: Strategies for Avoiding Class Actions and Complying with FDA and FTC Guidelines," Society of Cosmetic Chemists (SCC) Suppliers' Day, Long Beach, California, October 2015

EDUCATION

- J.D., University of California Hastings College of the Law, 1987
- B.A., University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), 1984

ADMISSIONS

- Bar of California
- Bar of New York
- United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit
- United States Court of Federal Claims
- United States District Court for the Central District of California
- United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
- United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York
- United States District Court for the Northern District of California
- United States District Court for the Southern District of California
- United States District Court for the Southern District of New York

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP *POWERED BY HUB*

- November 2026, July, August, September, and October 2026 Accolades
- 1 April 2024, Sephora Prevails in Consumer Challenge of "Clean at Sephora" Claims

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- "Regulation of Probiotic and Other Live Biologic Products: The United States Approach," Skin Microbiome Handbook, 2020
- "FTC Maintains Its Focus on 'Made in the USA' Claims," Nutrition Industry Executive, September 2020
- "Report on the FDA Cannabis Hearing: Passionate Presenters Urge Clarity in Regulation of Complex Industry," Westlaw Expert Analysis, July 2019
- "Sifting Through the Weeds: A Primer on Federal Laws Regulating CBD Oil," Nutrition Industry Executive, September 2018
- "Despite Deregulation in 2017, Cosmetic Companies Remain FDA Focus," CPNA Newsflash – The Official Blog of Cosmoprof North America, February 2018
- "Regulatory Oversight of Supplement Industry Continues," Nutrition Industry Executive, September 2017
- "Did 2016 Come to a 'Natural' Conclusion?", Nutrition Industry Executive, January/February 2017, and COSMOPROF North America Blog, January 2017
- "FTC Distinguishes Between 'Natural' and 'All Natural,'" Nutrition Industry Executive, September 2016
- "FDA's New Rule on Sanitary Transport of Food," Nutraceuticals World, September 2016
- "FTC Distinguishes Between 'Natural' and 'All Natural,'" Tucker Ellis Client Alert, July 2016
- "Website 'Terms of Use' May Not Bind Users," Nutraceuticals World, March 2016
- "FDA Warning Letters Target Internet Testimonials," Nutraceuticals World, February 2016
- "Seller Beware!! What You Need to Know About Prop 65 Before Selling Products to California Consumers," Cosmoprof North America eNewletter, April 2015

NEWS & EVENTS

- 10 December 2024, "Under the Wire" CLE Seminar—Emerging Contaminants: Regulations, Litigation, and Insurance Coverage—What You Need to Know
- 18 July 2023, Getting Clean Beauty Advertising Right (Part One), Hosted by Better Business Bureau, National Programs' National Advertising Division
- 2 May 2023, What's Next in Ingestible Beauty & Wellness Supplements: The Consumer POV, Hosted by New York State Society of Chemists
- 14 March 2023, K&L Gates Strengthens Consumer Products Industry Capabilities With Los Angeles Lawyer Additions

OTHER MEDIA MENTIONS

- Quoted, “What Will Beauty's Era of Transparency Mean for the State of Clinical Testing?,” *Women's Wear Daily and Yahoo! Life*, 9 April 2024.
- Quoted, “Clean Beauty, The New 'Natural,' Carries Same Litigation Risk – Attorneys,” HBW Insight, 21 July 2023

AREAS OF FOCUS

- Commercial Disputes
- ESG - Litigation
- Healthcare and FDA
- Mass Tort
- Product Liability

INDUSTRIES

- Advertising and Marketing
- Cannabis
- Consumer Beauty and Aesthetics
- Consumer Goods and Services
- Food, Beverage, and Agribusiness
- Household Goods
- Luxury Products and Fashion

EMERGING ISSUES

- Emerging Contaminants

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- Defend advertising of personal care company selling natural products.
- Act for a consumer products company, overseeing and directing all of their legal needs, including a revamp of their contract management system, reviewing and updating contracts, handling consumer challenges and disputes, and class action defense.

- Providing regulatory counseling for compliance with the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FD&C Act), as amended by the Modernization of Cosmetics Regulation Act of 2022 (MoCRA), and Federal Trade Commission Act (FTC Act).
- Assist a cosmetics manufacturing client in responding to issues raised by Food and Drug Administration (FDA) following inspection and an Official Action Indicated (OAI) notice.