Barker Brettell

Intellectual Property

AUTOMOTIVE



Technical innovation and the power of the brand have always been key drivers in the automotive industry. Here at Barker Brettell – one of the UKs largest specialist intellectual property (IP) firms – we understand how critical both innovation and branding are to the sector.

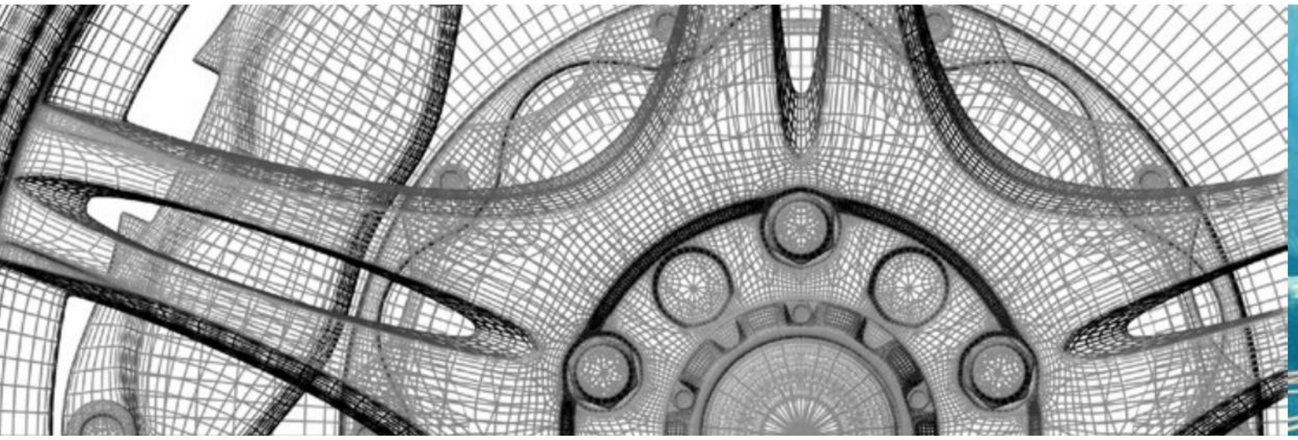
While the research & development and engineering functions at manufacturers and their suppliers use innovation in technology and design to achieve competitive advantage; marketing and brand teams levy brand names and their connotations to secure emotional connections and encourage buying behaviours.

This has led to a hugely competitive and constantly evolving industry, exacerbated both by consumer demand and changing government legislation.

Our teams of highly qualified patent, trade mark, copyright and design attorneys advise a diverse range of clients operating across the industry, from US headquartered OEMs to UK-based Tier 2 and 3 suppliers.

WE CAN ADVISE YOU ON

- Patent protection of new automotive technology
- Licensing opportunities and exploitation of brands
- Shapes and designs of vehicles and their parts and how best to protect their IP rights
- UK and multi-jurisdictional trade mark, patent and/or design litigation involving automotive clients; acting for both claimants and defendants
- Customs & excise matters
- Counterfeit products
- Research & development and technology transfer agreements





CLIENTS

Our sector experts are just that. We've worked with some of the world's leading automotive businesses for more than 30 years and, as a result, have been at the forefront of some of the industry's most significant developments including Anti-lock braking systems and Electric Power Steering. As many of us are trained engineers and scientists, we can talk the language of the inventors behind the innovation, allowing us to create meaningful relationships based on a shared understanding and appreciation of both the sector requirements and the technology involved.

By working with our dedicated automotive sector team, our clients can cost-effectively:

- Ensure their IP strategy is fit for purpose, even through times of significant change, and in line with their corporate objectives
- Rigorously protect their IP, secure competitive advantage and compete successfully on a global scale
- Prevent copycat manufacturers from undermining their brand and products both now and in the future
- Ensure innovation is effectively captured and turned into a commercial asset
- Select the best routes to low cost manufacturing solutions, with sufficient protection while reducing the risk of infringement

EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

- Providing a full range of IP related services for one of the UK's leading car manufacturers including the implementation of IP procedures and processes; leading a global trade mark enforcement project and advising on trade mark protection for shapes and designs
- Advising a niche UK car company on infringement risks surrounding the design of a new supercar
- Advising on a multimillion pound licensing deal involving a historic racing car brand and a third party
- Patent protection for a diverse range of products spanning braking, steering navigation and suspension systems for a primary developer and producer of active and passive safety systems, serving all major vehicle manufacturers worldwide
- Advising on IP related matters for automotive gearing, limited slip differentials, lighting, induction filters and spark plug manufacturers

RECOGNITION

- Shortlisted for IP Awards 2026 – Managing IP
- Top Tier Firm 2026 – Legal 500
- Ranked in Sweden, United Kingdom: England & Wales – WTR 100
- Ranked as a Top Tier Firm for 10+ years – IP Stars 2026
- Ranked as a Recommended Firm – IP Stars 2026
- Cyber Essentials Certified Plus
- CITMA – Net Zero Pledge Signature



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