

Lee Straus

Professional Background

Lee Straus has been a part of the entertainment industry for over thirty years, where he has become one of the most effective deal makers in Hollywood, by successfully negotiating deals across all aspects of television programming and distribution, including scripted, alternative and live-event content. Lee was most recently Executive Vice President of Business Affairs, Alternative and Reality Group within NBC Entertainment, where he was responsible for all aspects of business affairs and business strategy in connection with the development, production and distribution of all alternative/reality programming associated with the NBC Network, Universal Television Alternative Studio and Universal First-run Distribution. Throughout his twenty years at NBCUniversal, Lee oversaw an experienced team that handled a variety of business and legal negotiations, including, but not limited to, overall and first-look term deals, license agreements, co-production agreements, talent negotiations and litigation disputes. Lee oversaw the negotiations associated with the Emmy-award winning music competition series *The Voice*, *The Kelly Clarkson Show*, *America's Got Talent*, *American Ninja Warrior*, *The Wall* and *The Golden Globes*, among many others.

Lee started his career with The Walt Disney Company in 1991 as a Creative Assistant with Walt Disney Pictures/Touchstone Pictures. He went on to work as a Production Assistant with Buena Vista Home Video International, where he was responsible for coordinating the advertising and promotion campaigns of animated classic and live-action motion pictures for international distribution. While attending Loyola Law School as an evening student, Lee transitioned to becoming the Assistant to the Director of Labor Relations and Immigration for Walt Disney Pictures and Television, where Lee learned all aspects of immigration and labor issues and their impact on the entertainment industry. Prior to joining Buena Vista Television in 1997 as a junior business and legal affairs executive, Lee was a paralegal in the Corporate Legal department at The Walt Disney Company, where he oversaw the court approval of minors' employment contracts for all divisions at Disney.

Education and Public Service

Lee received his J.D. from Loyola Law School and his Bachelor of Arts degree in Production from the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts. In 1998, just two years after graduating Loyola, Lee became an Adjunct Professor-of-Law at Loyola, where he created practiced-based courses entitled *Business and Legal Affairs for Scripted TV Programming and Distribution* and *Business & Legal Affairs for Alternative/Reality TV Programming and Distribution*. Over the past 22 years, Lee has taught over 600 students about the business and legal aspects of the television industry.

Lee is a seasoned volunteer arbitrator for mandatory fee arbitrations, which he started handling in 1998 through the Los Angeles County Bar Association's Attorney-Client Mediation and Arbitration Services, where he currently serves as a Deputy Chair of the ACMAS Executive Committee. Lee spent five years as a member of the State Bar of California's Committee on Mandatory Fee Arbitration Program and currently serves as an Assistant Presiding Arbitrator for the State Bar's MFA Program.