

## Litigation

## MARTY TRUSS

Cox Smith Matthews  
Incorporated  
Shareholder



By Carol Schliesinger

**M**arty Truss doesn't have an amazing story to tell about why he ventured into law. He didn't come from a family of lawyers or feel an urgent calling to the industry. Armed with an undergraduate degree in humanities, Truss merely thought a legal degree would be a saleable solution to his future — so he gave law school a try.

After successfully litigating several multimillion-dollar disputes, many of Truss' clients are glad he did. The St. Mary's law school grad — a shareholder at Cox Smith Matthews Inc. — represents companies in the energy field in state and federal court. Over the years, one thematic trend emerges from Truss' court appearances: the amount of times he was able to secure results that exceeded his clients' expectations.

"That's personally rewarding," Truss says. "People are trusting me to defend their position."

Confidence, however, was not always on his side. Although many people would tell him, while growing up, he would make a good lawyer; litigating cases seemed difficult, even mystical.

Litigation, it seems, chose him. During his second year in law school, Truss spent his summer with Judge Alma Lopez witnessing corporate law litigation in action. The experience in court made the profession accessible to

him in a way he had never seen before. "It was sort of an epiphany. I was thinking 'Hey I got a chance!'" he says.

As it turns out, he had more than just a chance. He's built a successful career around business litigation and thrives on the excitement of the courtroom.

Working principally in the energy industry, Truss has represented clients in state and federal courts and arbitrations of complex business disputes throughout Texas, Oklahoma, Wyoming, Louisiana, Arkansas and New York. He has represented major and independent producers, operators and other mineral interest owners, as well as oil field service companies, drilling contractors, pipeline companies and refiners in a wide variety of business litigation.

Jamie Smith, managing director at Cox Smith says Truss is sought by clients because of his industry knowledge and presence in the courtroom.

"Clients turn to Marty Truss because he aggressively advances their interests and achieves the most favorable results in an efficient and cost-effective manner," adds Smith.

Among the responsibilities he enjoys most about his job, Truss says it's the ability to mentor young lawyers and give back for what he once received.

"It's a lot more invigorating when you work with a group of talented young attorneys like the team I work with," Truss adds.

**Age:** 47

**Hometown:** I claim San Antonio. Fairfax, Virginia, long ago.

**Family:** Wife Julie Corwin Truss, a lawyer for Clear Channel Communications; two sons, college-aged and fourth grade; one daughter, second grade

**High School:** Judson High School

**First Job Ever:** I threw the Washington Post.

**Higher Ed Degrees:** B.A. Humanities, UTSA; J.D. St Mary's University School of Law

**Moment you realized you wanted to be a lawyer:** When I made my first argument before Judge John Specia, late in my first year of practicing law — realized how exhilarating it is to be entrusted to advocate passionately on behalf of someone.

**When did you hit your stride:** I'm still working on it. I work with a great group of extremely talented people and that challenges me every day.

**What makes your area of law interesting:** Our clients — I love the entrepreneurial spirit that permeates the oil and gas business.

**What gets you out of bed in the morning?** The need to cook breakfast for my children.

**What keeps you up at night?** Re-runs of the World Series of Poker on ESPN.

**Accomplishment most proud of?** Personally, I am most proud of my roles as husband and father. Professionally, I am most proud of the consistent loyalty of the clients we serve. Businesses very naturally do not like being involved in litigation or dealing with litigators if they do not need to. That so many of our clients return again and again when they need help solving a problem is something I take a lot of pride in.

**Biggest learning experience:** Trying to achieve a comfortable balance between my career and my family life is a constant struggle, but it is one that I think makes me a better husband and father and ultimately a better lawyer.

**Mentor(s):** Sarah and Bob Truss for teaching me the intrinsic value of basic courtesy, civility and respect. Jon Ray and Jamie Smith for teaching me that great lawyers treat each client as their only client and embrace their clients' challenges as their own. It is common to hear lawyers advise that "You just can't take things too personally" or "You've got to learn to leave it at the office." In my experience, great lawyers ignore this sort of advice.

**How has technology changed your job:** Technology can and does improve the speed and quality with which we provide legal services, but it can also detract from the same when we become overloaded by the ease of access to information via email, the Internet and otherwise.

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