'Simple ideas are often the best inventions, but are the most difficult to protect. I enjoy the challenge of safeguarding those inventions.'

Bernard Ledeboer

Engineering

European and Dutch Patent Attorney,

Registered European Patent Litigator

Partner

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Bernard Ledeboer started his career as a Patent Attorney with V.O. in 1997. Before, he worked at a large law firm in Amsterdam. He holds an MSc in Mechanical Engineering, and an LLM in Intellectual property litigation.

Bernard's general expertise lies in the field of mechanical and civil engineering. He has specialized in machine construction, flexible manufacturing systems, conveyor systems, offshore techniques, surgical instruments and consumer products. His clients are of all sizes, with a focus on midsized industrial supply companies. Bernard has a pragmatic approach to IP protection, and is a word smith who enjoys direct communication with his clients. Bernard's practice is divided between patent prosecution and patent litigation. He has wide experience in patent litigation cases before the court in The Hague, and opposition and appeal cases before the European Patent Office. Bernard is also qualified to act as European Patent Attorney Litigator before the Unified Patent Court, Europe's centralized patent court. He applies his litigation experience to build strong patent portfolios for his clients.

Bernard is Head of the Engineering and Hightech & Electronics section. Also, he is founding member of the V.O. China Desk. He is member of the steering committee and chairman of V.O.

In addition to his work at V.O. , Bernard works as part time patent judge at the Unified Patent Court.

Working experience

- Patent Attorney, V.O. (1997-present)

Education

- LLM in IP Litigation, Nottingham Law School (2011)
- MSc in Mechanical engineering, Delft University of Technology (1995)
- Economics, Beloit College USA

Directories

- “Bernard Ledeboer focuses on prosecution and litigation in mechanical and civil technologies, combining precise drafting with a practical, client-focused approach” (IAM Patent 1000, 2026)
- “Approaching three decades of dedication to the firm,Bernard Ledeboer possesses dual mastery of IP litigation and mechanical engineering, astutely leading patrons to courtroom and commercial success. Ledeboer is a key propellor of the set’s global expansion as one of the founding members of the China desk; he balances this with his role as a part-time judge of the UPC” (IAM Patent 1000, 2025)
- Featured as a patent attorney with technical specialty: mechanics, process and mechanical engineering (JUVE Patent 2024)
- Ranked ‘Thought Leader’ in Who’s Who Legal: IP 2024
- “Bernard Ledeboer, a seasoned patent attorney, boasts an impressive career spanning nearly three decades. His expertise lies in diverse sectors that drive innovation, including machine construction, flexible manufacturing systems and surgical instruments. As a key figure in patent law, Ledeboer is well equipped with pragmatism and eloquence. His rich international outlook is further showcased through his establishment of the VO China desk, underscoring his keen interest and capabilities abroad” (IAM Patent 1000, 2024)
- Recommended individual (JUVE Patent 2020 – 2026)
- “A mechanical engineer by trade, Ledeboer is well regarded for his commercial and legal acumen” (IAM Patent 1000, 2023)
- “In the mechanical and civil engineering fields, it’s hard to find a better expert than Bernard Ledeboer. He syncs up perfectly with company legal and inventor teams, and has the experience and perspicacity to solve their prosecution and litigation issues” (IAM Patent 1000, 2021)
- Recognized as IP Star (2014, 2015, 2017 – 2026) by Managing Intellectual Property
- Recommended Individual (IAM Patent 1000, 2020 – 2026)
- Recommended in Who’s Who Legal 2023
- Bernard Ledeboer “has tremendous experience in dealing with the courts and has a knack for presenting cases clearly and effectively” (IAM Patent 1000, 2019)
- Bernard Ledeboer “particularly impresses, and he is frequently singled out by peers as an example of what a prosecutor should be. The engineering aficionado also boasts qualifications and experience in litigation. He stands out for his recent efforts in conjunction with colleagues in the Belgian office, excelling in opposition proceedings on behalf of plastics giants, and for his instrumental technical contribution to infringement proceedings between medical devices supremo B Braun Melsungen and its arch-rival Beckton Dickinson. He has a pragmatic approach to IP protection, and is a wordsmith who enjoys direct communication with his clients” (IAM Patent 1000, 2018)
- “A founding member of the firm’s China desk, Bernard Ledeboer is a font of insight on the Middle Kingdom” (IAM Patent 1000, 2017)
- “Mechanical engineer Bernard Ledeboer has an LLM in IP litigation and is regularly tested in infringement cases; he recently obtained a favourable judgment for Ascom, working together with Peter Hendricks of Freshfields fame” (IAM Patent 1000, 2016)
- “Bernard Ledeboer is another consistently high-functioning mechanical engineering connoisseur. Operating on both sides of the contentious/non-contentious divide, he is well positioned to disburse holistic advice” (IAM Patent 1000, 2015)
- “Bernard Ledeboer is the first port of call for lawyers looking for technical assistance on litigation briefs” (IAM Patent 1000, 2014)
- “Excellent communicator Leo Jessen and Bernard Ledeboer are the top mechanical engineering specialists there” (IAM Patent 1000, 2013)
- “Bernard Ledeboer’s legal training and experience of cases before the court in The Hague make him a joy to work with – he understands the difficulties facing lawyers and intuitively knows how a case should be presented to a judge. A civil and mechanical engineering specialist, Ledeboer has niche expertise in machine construction, conveyor systems and surgical products” (IAM Patent 1000, 2012)

Publications

- ‘Patent Litigation at the patents County Court’, Extended Piece of Work for the LLM in Intellectual Property Litigation at Nottingham Law School, Nottingham Trent University, 2011.

Professional & Community Activities

- Technically qualified judge (part time) for the Unified Patent Court (UPC)
- Member of the Netherlands Patent Attorney Organization, EPI, AIPPI, CEIPI, UNION

Languages

- English
- Dutch
- German