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Man Suing Facebook Hires S.D. Firm

By Casey Sullivan
Daily Journal Staff Writer

Ever since DLA Piper LLP jumped ship from Paul Ceglia's lawsuit against Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, many observers have made even more light of Ceglia's claims that he owns more than half of the social media empire.

Inheriting the case—and battling the barbs—is Lake APC, the four-person San Diego law firm Ceglia has chosen to represent him against the Internet titan.

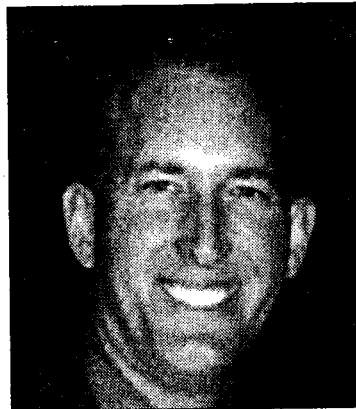
The firm had its main website taken down last week for maintenance, and few people have been able to learn much about how it took on the case.

Its founder, Jeffrey Lake, is perhaps best known for his work on medical marijuana cases — recently representing BT Collective in *BT Collective v. IP Holdings LLC*, a products liability case over defective irrigation tubing in the San Diego-based collective's marijuana farm.

But Lake, who has since relaunched his firm's website with an updated profile, marketing himself as a lawyer who represents "high-profile clients" and takes "politically charged, policy-driven, and historic" cases, said he doesn't think his firm's size or reputation is an issue — in fact, he said it helps him.

"We look at this case as a David versus Goliath analogy," Lake said. "They may have high-priced Park Avenue lawyers from Manhattan and D.C., but I'm not intimidated or put off by that. We're going to advocate our client's position well. If it's me versus all of them, it won't matter, because if this case is determined on the merits, we'll prevail."

Lake's comments came last week, a day after he and Ceglia appeared in federal court in Buffalo, N.Y. and a judge ruled Ceglia must hand over evidence to Facebook's forensic experts so they can determine whether the doc-



LAKE

uments he plans to use in court — including an alleged contract agreement between himself and Zuckerberg — are legitimate.

Ceglia must hand over the evidence by July 15, after which the experts will have 30 days to complete the examination and present the results to the court. U.S. District Judge Richard Arcara will determine if Ceglia's case can move forward.

"From the outset, we said this case was a fraud based on a doctored contract and manufactured emails, and that remains as true today as it was the minute this lawsuit was filed," said Facebook's lawyer, Orin Snyder of Gibson Dunn & Crutcher LLP.

Snyder declined to comment on the change in Ceglia's legal representation.

In court documents, Facebook blasts Ceglia and calls his argument a "moving target," pointing out the fact that he's had to switch lawyers.

"The evidence of fraud is so overwhelming that Ceglia's own lawyers, in an apparent act of self-protection, have been reduced to making their client take a polygraph examination," the document said, hinting at apparent client-attorney mistrust dating back to DLA Piper.

Lake said he took the case because he believes Ceglia's claim. He said he has seen the contract Zuckerberg allegedly signed for a business deal with Ceglia in 2003 and believes it to be legitimate.

He said he picked up the case in part because one of his clients is a family member of Ceglia's long-term New York lawyer, Paul Argentieri.

"(Argentieri's) son-in-law, Chris James, came to me and told me about the case and said Paul Ceglia is looking for counsel to talk about a number of things," Lake said. Since then, Lake said he has visited Ceglia in New York and stayed in the loop.

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