

WilmerHale Secures Antitrust Clearance for Gannett Acquisition of HomeTown Communications Network

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WilmerHale recently won an important victory, securing antitrust clearance from the US Department of Justice for the acquisition of client HomeTown Communications Network by Gannett Company. HomeTown Communications Network publishes 62 community weekly and biweekly newspapers reaching over 640,000 readers in three metropolitan areas in which Gannett owns the metropolitan dailies: Detroit, Cincinnati and Lansing.

The Justice Department's review of the Gannett/HomeTown acquisition attracted widespread interest in the newspaper industry. Faced with growing competition for readers and advertising from other electronic and print media, metropolitan daily newspapers have increasingly sought to expand their business by acquiring community weeklies in surrounding suburban areas. In the past, the Justice Department had routinely cleared such transactions. When the Justice Department decided to give this transaction a closer look, people in the newspaper industry worried that it might change its policy. Working closely with Gannett's counsel, Nixon Peabody, and after an intensive four-month investigation, the WilmerHale team, led by William Kolasky and Ali Stoeppelwerth, persuaded the Justice Department that competition from other print and electronic media would continue to constrain Gannett's and HomeTown's advertising rates post-merger and that it should, therefore, clear the transaction.

The WilmerHale team included [William J. Kolasky](#), [Ali M. Stoeppelwerth](#), Wendy Anderson Terry, Barbara R. Blank and Jeffrey P. Rogers, assisted by paralegals Margaret Marchak and Stephanie Guy.