



Harnessing Big Data to Turn Consumer Social Media into Trade Secrets by Tom Mahlum

Litigators' insights for food industry on big data, social media, and possible trade secret law protections for data sets and analysis.

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The food and beverage industry and social media "friended" each other awhile back. Across the industry, leading players from different sectors have learned to use social media and insights derived from analytics — usually supplied by outside partners — to drive consumer behavior. As data sources and data sets continue to grow, many in the food and beverage business see an advantage of bringing some "big data" capabilities in house. Doing so lets industry members maximize the competitive advantage that comes with being able to leverage more fully the information big data creates as a company asset. It also means that, sometimes, key data can be protected under trade secret law, even if some of it comes from outside social media sources.

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