

# Boarding the train to the future

New INTA board members Tiki Dare, Ranjan Narula and Scott MacKendrick discuss how their tenure will help to shape the future of the association



During the International Trademark Association's Europe conference, CEO Etienne Sanz de Acedo praised the ever-increasing diversity of its board. He described it as being "exceptional for the organisation" and "extremely

rewarding" for him as CEO. He said that by having such a diverse board the association would have "a lot of extremely smart and sophisticated people sitting around a table sharing ideas".

IPPro spoke with three such members, Tiki Dare, Ranjan Narula and Scott MacKendrick, to talk about how their positions on INTA's board will propel the association in 2019.

## Perceptions and provocations

Tiki Dare, INTA's new vice-president brings with her a background of working for high tech companies in Silicon Valley.



Tiki Dare

Given INTA's global reach, Dare reminds us of the importance for her, as a US representative, to listen closely to her colleagues from different industries and especially from different countries.

One of her responsibilities as the association's vice president is as group officer for the advocacy group of committees. Dare will also be working with the INTA teams developing and implementing policy position.

Moreover, INTA's rotating presidency means that Dare is now only two years away from her own presidency.

Dare echoes Acedo's comments on diversity, and says this is something INTA values when choosing its officers.

"Our board and current officers represent a diversity of countries and industries," she says, "we really want to make sure we have that diversity reflected".

As reflected in INTA's strategic plan, Dare adds that she aims to promote the value of trademarks and brands, foster consumer trust and embrace innovation and change on a "truly international scale".

One of INTA's new board members is representing the furthering of the association's international scale.

Ranjan Narula, the managing partner of RNA Technology and IP Attorneys, originates from India and says he hopes to bring his "perspective on the cultural and emerging market issues that could be quite different to more developed economies".



Ranjan Narula

He explains: “India is an emerging economy with a lot of potential for brand owners.”

With his presence on the board, Narula said he believes he can help INTA members “appreciate the small nuances of this market as well as the differences in expectations of government and stakeholders”.

Narula says he can act as a bridge between differently developed economies.

One such issue that Narula raises is the problem of counterfeits. He observes that in some emerging economies governments have acknowledged this problem, but the onus is on brands to invest and control the flow of counterfeit products.

He adds that private players and enforcement agencies are left to take the lead on the issues.

In agreement with Narula, Scott MacKendrick, partner at Canadian law firm Bereskin & Parr and new addition to INTA's board, says that counterfeiting is one of the “biggest challenges” for INTA.



MacKendrick argues that INTA needs to pay attention to why there is a demand for counterfeits and better understand why consumers want fake goods.

He also noted that the association's Unreal Campaign, which is being used to teach the importance of trademarks and dangers of counterfeit products to teenagers, will continue.

Dare explained: “We really want teenagers, as the next generation of consumers, to understand the importance of buying genuine.”

Another challenge that all three board members greatly expressed concern on was INTA's stance on anti-IP sentiments.

All expressed that INTA faces a challenge in working with governments and other stakeholders to reduce anti-IP sentiment and adapt the ways in which brands are evolving.

MacKendrick said the association sees the public misunderstanding IP frequently.

He adds: “You see press references where someone talks about getting a trademark for something when they are really seeking copyright or vice versa”.

“There is this real misunderstanding about the role of IP in the economy, the daily lives of consumers, and in society-at-large, and there is an element of that then feeds into anti-IP sentiment. We're going to have an ongoing role in addressing and resolving these misunderstandings.”

Dare explains that this is a big issue and expresses concerns over the number of countries that have adopted legislation that restricts the use of brands on specific products like tobacco and pharmaceuticals.

This issue is so problematic that Sanz de Acedo has suggested a full-time committee may have to be dedicated to it if it is “no longer an emerging issue but a real problem for brand owners and consumers”.

### Embracing the future

Despite the concerns raised by INTA and its board, the future seems bright.

The association's stance on these issues and many more are evident in its strategic plan, and Dare notes that INTA actively monitors new technologies and the challenges and benefits that come with them.

Dare also points out the importance of INTA's pro-bono clearinghouse and adds that despite its relative youth, members are getting many projects from it.

With challenges ahead, INTA stands well equipped to face the future and with talent like Dare, Narula and MacKendrick on board, the sky's the limit.