

News

Gibson Quoted in *Washington Post* Story Titled “Write a Negative Online Review and Get Sued? It Can Happen, But Maybe Not For Long”

Related Attorneys

Whitney C. Gibson

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Whitney Gibson, a partner and leader of the firm’s group that focuses on internet brand and reputation issues, including both illegal online sales enforcement and internet defamation, was quoted in a *Washington Post* story regarding policies some hotels and other lodging facilities have put in place to stop attendees from posting negative or disparaging comments online. According to the story, a man claimed that he was not satisfied with his accommodations and wrote a “negative, but factual, review on TripAdvisor.” After the review was posted, the owner called, directed him to the contract he signed with a non-disparagement clause and requested the review be removed.

The story states:

“Fedigan’s brother signed away his right to free speech, which appears to be an increasingly common occurrence in the travel industry. Non-disparagement clauses in contracts are multiplying, according to Whitney Gibson, a partner at the Washington law firm Vorys, which specializes in Internet brand and reputation issues. ‘There have certainly been an increasing number of these clauses in the last couple years, as businesses have grown concerned about their online reviews,’ he says.”

But a proposed law would tip the scales in the consumer’s favor. The Consumer Review Freedom Act, being considered by Congress, would void any contract that prohibits, restricts or imposes a penalty on customers who write a review.”

To read the entire story, visit the *Washington Post* [website](#).