



Lee Enterprises  
Consulting

## Case Study

### Client

Law Firm

### Project Number

19076

### Team Members

Doug Rivers

# Expert Witness for Cellulosic Biomass Trade Secret Dispute

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## Summary of Client and Challenge They Faced

A law firm was defending a European multinational in a trade secret misappropriation case involving an allegedly novel approach for converting cellulosic biomass into ethanol as a primary product. The matter was brought before the American Arbitration Association as agreed upon by the parties. The law firm sought an expert on ethanol production to review the trade secret in question and provide an expert opinion.

## Our Approach to the Solution

The LEC expert witness analyzed the trade secret technology in question and compared it to publicly available information, including published patents and patent applications of the plaintiff who had claimed misappropriation of their trade secrets. Our expert witness reviewed the discovery documents, several public documents he found, the report of the plaintiff's expert, and the depositions of several people involved with the matter. Following this comprehensive review, a detailed report was provided of his expert opinion.



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#### Client Results and Benefits

A thorough review of the documentation and depositions showed that the plaintiff's conversion technology which was claimed to be a trade secret was already in the public domain. In addition, it was confirmed that the European multinational had independently developed an alternative technology based on its own efforts in collaboration with a third party. As a result, the law firm prevailed in arbitration, proving their client had the right to use the technology as they saw fit.