

## **Trials Group Of The Year: Reese Marketos**

By **Daniel Connolly**

*Law360 (February 23, 2026, 4:00 PM EST)* -- Reese Marketos LLP winning a \$1.64 billion judgment against a Johnson & Johnson subsidiary and defending a financial technology startup from a disputed ownership claim were among the wins that helped make the Dallas-based boutique one of the 2025 Law360 Trial Groups of the Year.

Reese Marketos has just 15 lawyers, all focused on commercial litigation and especially trials.

Founding partner Pete Marketos and partner Tyler Bexley told Law360 Pulse that several techniques help them win trials.

The firm normally uses small teams of two to three attorneys who know a given case well, as opposed to dividing a big case among many people. It focuses on training new attorneys to become proficient trial advocates through hands-on work in depositions and other settings. To sum up reams of documents, they use artificial intelligence software.

And like many trial lawyers, they work hard. The firm said that while the attorneys get along well and don't compete against each other, each one has a competitive nature. Several are former athletes, including Marketos, who in 1992 was one of the top high school wrestlers in Texas in the 130-pound weight class representing Plano High. He later played rugby.

The desire to win keeps the team motivated during difficult trials, Marketos said. "First and foremost, you can't lose," he said.

"We're not a firm that's accustomed to losing, and we don't want to start that habit, respectfully," Marketos added.

The Johnson & Johnson case illustrates how the boutique firm works. It represented whistleblowers who alleged that J&J subsidiary Janssen had illegally profited from the off-label marketing of HIV medications. The case went to trial in Trenton, New Jersey, in 2024.

In a DoubleTree hotel near the courthouse, Reese Marketos' attorneys converted a conference room into a "war room," with copiers, printers and snacks.



For weeks, they spent hours at the trial each day, then late nights of preparation in the war room, sometimes until 3 a.m. or even 4 a.m., seven days a week, Marketos said. The setting wasn't ideal — the conference room smelled of chlorine from the indoor pool across the hall.

In this case, the hard work in the unglamorous hotel paid off: Reese Marketos and co-counsel won a \$150 million False Claims Act verdict. In March, a federal judge added nearly \$1.3 billion in penalties, bringing the total award to \$1.64 billion. It is being appealed.

After an intense trial like this, Marketos said, the lawyers try to take care of themselves by going on vacation before starting over again.

Reese Marketos' lawyers notched another notable trial win last year when they defended Array, a startup financial technology company, from an ownership claim by former executive Jason Owen.

Owen said in a 2022 lawsuit that he'd been given an oral promise of a 5% ownership stake in the startup. The company's value had exploded to more than a billion, making his stake worth more than \$70 million, according to his complaint.

Reese Marketos was brought in shortly before trial to knock down Owen's claim.

Firm partner Bexley described how he and fellow lawyers sought to argue for Array.

"We set out to show what would be in evidence if an agreement had actually been reached, and trying to prove a negative by showing there were no text messages, there were no emails, there was nothing out there," Bexley said.

After a bench trial, Justice Joel M. Cohen ruled for Array in October and dismissed the former executive's ownership claim.

Bexley said that when the firm's attorneys start a case, they try to think about the narrative, themes and evidence they plan to deliver to a judge, jury or other decision-maker. Then they base the entire trial preparation around that narrative.

Marketos said selecting the narrative is one of the firm's best skills, and that its attorneys pick a story that's most tied to the facts and the truth. "So that, therefore, it's one that we're invested in, and we're not just selling a line," he said.

If the facts look bad for the client, the firm's lawyers advise them to settle all or part of the case, Marketos said.

So what's next for this trial law firm? More trials: four scheduled in the next few months around the country.

--Additional reporting by Dorothy Atkins and Jarek Rutz. Editing by Adam LoBelia.