Business executives who rely on R. David Donoghue for help with patent disputes say that he's more than just an effective litigator.

Donoghue, 36, a partner at Holland & Knight, is also keenly aware of their business needs.

"Dave has a great command of patent law, but he also shines in terms of understanding my company's business needs and objectives," says Beverly Reid, corporate counsel at NOW Health Group, who has been working with Donoghue since 2006. "He never pursues a litigation or licensing 'win' that does not further our goals."

Before Donoghue joined Holland & Knight, he was an in-house counsel at Delphi Automotive Systems. Delphi corporate counsel William Cosnowski Jr. says Donoghue proved that he had a solid grasp of patent law as well as good business sense.

"Dave embodied Delphi's cost-effective, business-focused approach to handling intellectual property disputes," Cosnowski says. "He understands how business executives, in-house counsel and outside counsel should partner to achieve not just a litigation win, but the company's business objectives."

One of those business objectives is keeping down legal costs. Reid and Cosnowki both say Donoghue has been able to achieve winning legal results without racking up huge expenses.

"He never proposes an expensive plan to win on a legal issue when the cost is not justified by sales of the product at issue," Reid says. "Dave has helped NOW resolve several patent disputes without significant litigation or expensive licenses."

Reid also says Donoghue excels at explaining complicated issues involving intellectual property law.

"Dave has always been able to distill patent issues into understandable explanations for my business team," she says.

Executives at Donoghue's clients aren't the only people benefiting from his teaching instincts. He's an adjunct professor at the Loyola University Chicago School of Law, teaching legal research and writing and intellectual property courses.

And anyone can benefit from Donoghue's expertise by reading the Chicago IP Litigation Blog (www.chicagoiplitigation.com), which he started four years ago.

"It has become the go-to source for Chicago intellectual property matters," Reid says.

Donoghue's blog recently won the Chicago Bar Association's 2010 Herman Kogan Media Award for legal affairs reporting. The award came with a $1,000 journalism scholarship, which Donoghue donated to Loyola University Chicago's journalism school.

Donoghue, who won in a new category for online media, received the honor for a series of articles he posted in late 2009 about changes in local patent rules.

In one of those winning articles, Donoghue explained that new rules for federal patent cases in the Northern District of Illinois mean that cases will go to trial faster, following a different path than before. He predicted: "The rules ... will draw patent cases to the Northern District."

Donoghue graduated cum laude from Georgetown University Law Center, and before that, he earned a bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering with honors at the University of Michigan.

"His aerospace engineering background gives him a leg up in patent infringement cases," says Erick Ottoson, who previously practiced with Donoghue, and now practices law in Phoenix, Ariz.

"When I worked with him, I was consistently impressed with his strong oral advocacy skills and courtroom presence, which are on a level that one would expect from a much more senior attorney," Ottoson says. "This gravitas carries over into his negotiating skills."

Executives Reid and Cosnowski say they're glad to have Donoghue on their side, and Ottoson can see why.

"Dave is an exceptional all-around lawyer," he says. "Any client embroiled in an IP-related dispute would be lucky to have him as its counsel."

R. DAVID DONOGHUE

AGE
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"Dave has a great command of patent law, but he also shines in terms of understanding."

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