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TOP 100 2021

TAD J. FREESE

LATHAM & WATKINS LLP
BAY AREA
CORPORATE

— TOP 100 —



With more than 25 years at Latham & Watkins' Silicon Valley office, Freese advises some of the most innovative companies in the tech industry. Since joining the firm right out of law school, Freese has grown his corporate practice, focusing on mergers and acquisitions, securities offerings and corporate governance matters.

“Working with new companies every day that are innovating, disrupting and creating has been very energizing, and continues to be,” Freese said. “Also, I really enjoy working on sophisticated legal transactions, whether that’s complex security matters or complex M&A matters.”

Freese and his team helped short-term rental platform Airbnb close its \$3.4 billion IPO in December, the largest in 2020. While the pandemic caused a major slowdown in its business, Freese said Airbnb managed to quickly pivot to cater to customers looking for local getaways and space to spread out and work remotely.

“We helped the company pull off an IPO that was successful, nine months after the beginning of the pandemic. All the while, Airbnb didn’t give up on its other missions in connection to that IPO, which was to make sure other stakeholders—such as employees, hosts, guests and the communities it operated in – also got to share in its success at the time of the IPO,” he said. “It was incredibly complicated, and a deal that required a huge amount of effort by me and a very broad Latham team.”

In March, he advised Airbnb in its \$2 billion convertible senior notes offering.

Freese also advised semiconductor company Advanced Micro Devices (AMD) on its acquisition of Xilinx in an all-stock transaction valued at \$35 billion. The blockbuster deal, announced last October, has received approval by the three major global regulatory bodies. China is the last region left to give the go-ahead, expected by the end of the year.

“AMD is a client I’ve worked with almost since I joined Latham in their major transactions since, and there have been a lot, but none as transformational as the \$35 billion acquisition of Xilinx,” Freese said.

“AMD has been the underdog historically, competing against much bigger players. Over the last five years, they have really catapulted themselves to be one of those big players. Helping them grow and get to the top of the pyramid has been a fun journey, and very personal to me.”

— Jennifer Chung Klam