

THE RECORDER



DEALMAKERS OF THE YEAR FINALIST

Sarah Axtell, Rick Kline and
Tony Richmond, Latham & Watkins

Sarah Axtell and Rick Kline, partners, and Tony Richmond, retired partner, at Latham & Watkins are among the finalists for The Recorder's 2025 Dealmakers of the Year Award. Read a Q&A with them below.

What are some of your most significant achievements of the past year?

Sarah Axtell: Beyond working with the team to advise on Reddit's \$748 million IPO—the first social media IPO in five years—I'm proud of working on nearly every notable tech IPO of 2024. My work of the past year includes venture-backed IPOs for Rubrik (who I have worked with since the company's early stages, first advising on their incorporation in 2018) and ServiceTitan, as well as OneStream's IPO. Those all contributed



Courtesy photos

(l-r) Sarah Axtell, Rick Kline, and
Tony Richmond, with Latham & Watkins.

to the revival of the tech IPO market, which had previously lay dormant the past few years. I've also enjoyed the strides I've made in redomiciling, and establishing a successful model for tech companies considering reincorporation through my work advising The Trade Desk on its reincorporation to Nevada.

What does it take to become a trusted transactional lawyer in California?

Rick Kline: Put simply, deliver pragmatic, commercial solutions to your clients. At Latham, we've

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scaled our global tech platform through a commitment to providing unmatched versatility and a deep understanding of the market's evolving complexities and opportunities. This positions us to help our clients achieve their goals and address their legal and commercial challenges more nimbly and strategically within the markets.

When you comprehensively understand the market landscape, can see around the corner, and help solve tough commercial problems, you build the momentum to stand out from the crowd. For Latham's technology group, that manifests in our ability to meet the unique legal needs of our clients through each stage of growth, which sets us apart from our peers. Look to any active tech hub, trend, or turning point in the past five years—including Reddit's IPO revitalizing the tech IPO market—and you will see Latham guiding the deals that shape the market.

What advice would you give to someone who is starting out in your field?

Sarah Axtell: Invest the time to invest in your future and figure out your differentiators, then deepen those skills or attributes. Take advantage of resources, mentorship, and professional development opportunities that will empower you to grow from an intellectually curious self-starter into an exceptional lawyer.

Rick Kline: Once you determine what sets you apart, discover ways to apply those skills to your passions. That intersection of your interests and skills represents where you can really make a difference within the legal profession.

Note: Tony Richmond worked on the Reddit IPO during his time at Latham, before being named executive vice president, corporate affairs, and chief legal officer at American Airlines in April 2025.