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2025

Real Estate

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PROFILED:

MICHAEL HAAS

Latham & Watkins LLP

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PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY

Michael Haas represents private equity firms, real estate asset managers, public companies and real estate investment trusts, and private real estate companies in sophisticated, market-defining transactions. A widely recognised leader in real estate private equity and finance, he helps market-shaping private capital clients successfully navigate their most complex deals in the US and internationally. He brings broad experience across a range of asset classes, including single family rental, multifamily housing, industrial and logistics facilities, senior housing, retail, office and data centres.

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Q&A WITH MICHAEL HAAS

How do you mentor and inspire younger colleagues within your firm? Can you share a success story of someone you have guided?

My career has been book-ended by mentorship – first as a beneficiary, now as a sponsor of others. Early on, I was fortunate to learn from extraordinary lawyers and industry leaders, who let me sit in on calls, ask the naïve questions and experiment with new deal structures. Their willingness to share practical and commercial judgment, not just knowledge, shaped how I practice today. I have tried to replicate that culture of mentorship I came up in with the teams I lead now by keeping 'clean windows': associates see me on every call, at every hour, so they know I am shoulder-to-shoulder with them. I insist that junior lawyers take the first crack at term sheets, lead portions of client meetings, and then debrief in real time. We map each lawyer's growth plan – cross-border work, leadership roles and business-development exposure – and I advocate for them when high-profile matters or lateral opportunities arise. Mentorship launched my career; paying it forward sustains it.

Could you describe your approach to tackling complex legal challenges? What principles or philosophies guide your work?

At Latham, a client-centred mindset drives every decision. Before we draft a term sheet or negotiate a covenant, we map potential outcomes and determine how each one affects the client's long-term objectives and relationships. Collaboration powers the engine that makes all this work: I partner with colleagues across M&A, finance, tax and regulatory to harness the reach of our global platform. Whether a transaction touches Frankfurt, Singapore or Silicon Valley, we can deploy practitioners who have executed similar deals, understand local market nuances and work seamlessly as

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one team. That multidisciplinary approach to our clients' needs positions us to deliver solutions that are both technically sound and commercially grounded.

Looking ahead, what are your broader predictions for the market? What key developments are on the horizon?

◆ When I entered the profession, we were still called 'dirt lawyers', but technology rewrote our playbook, and real estate will continue to head in that direction. I followed the technological advancements in real estate, embracing the industry's change instead of ignoring the evolution. With these innovations, private capital flooded in, equity and debt structures became more sophisticated, and joint venture models proliferated. Today, the most dynamic intersection lies within tech infrastructure – data centres, fibre networks, towers and the power procurement that underpins them. Tech companies are no longer simply tenants; they are owners, developers and capital partners, which means real estate lawyers must speak the language of structured products, energy markets and artificial intelligence. Looking ahead, tools like Harvey AI will streamline diligence and document production, but clients will still need a trusted adviser who can interpret risk, read the market and offer judgment. Technology will accelerate what we do but still plays a complementary role to the relationships and trust that define successful counsel. ■

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REPRESENTATIVE ENGAGEMENTS

- Advising GreenPoint on its inaugural fund series with over $1bn in equity commitments.
- Representing AGC Equity Partners in its strategic growth investment in Atmosphere Data Centers.
- Representing Brookfield Asset Management in its $2.2bn sale of Fundamental Income Properties to Starwood Property Trust.
- Advising Invitation Homes in a $200m joint venture with a leading global real estate investment partner.
- Representing StepStone Group Real Estate in its partnership with Western Wealth Capital.
- Advising Apollo on its €1bn capital solution to Vonovia.
- Advising Howard Hughes Holdings in the spin-off of the company's Seaport Entertainment division.