

Rising Star: Latham's Mark Bekheit

By **Clarice Silber**

Law360 (July 13, 2021, 2:02 PM EDT) -- Mark Bekheit of Latham & Watkins has worked on giving strategic advice to technology and life sciences companies amid mergers and acquisitions, investments and other corporate transactions, including the deal in which workplace messaging company Slack was acquired by Salesforce.com Inc. for roughly \$27.7 billion, earning him a spot among the technology lawyers under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

HIS BIGGEST MOST RECENT DEAL:

Last December, Latham, together with Wachtell Lipton Rosen & Katz, Morrison & Foerster LLP, and Goodwin Procter LLP, guided the cash-and-stock deal that would lead Slack Technologies Inc. to become integrated into Salesforce's business management software known as Salesforce Cloud.

Bekheit was among three corporate partners at Latham that led the firm's team working on the merger, and he counts it as the biggest deal he's recently worked on. All together the process lasted a month and drew roughly 30 attorneys from different practice areas across the firm, Bekheit said.

"It was obviously a name brand, everybody in the Bay Area knows who Slack is ... so it was pretty cool to be part of the deal leads on that," Bekheit said. "Slack was a new client to Latham, they came to us specifically for the M&A and so there were the usual, I think, complexities associated with any very, very large deal, but also learning the client and understanding the things they cared about, didn't care about, and also just the relationship with the prospective buyer, was all just a bit of a process to learn, but really went well at the end of the day."

HIS PROUDEST MOMENT AS AN ATTORNEY:

Bekheit's proudest moment as an attorney comes down to the moment he was elected into the partnership at Latham.



Mark Bekheit
Latham & Watkins

Age: 36
 Home base: San Francisco Bay area
 Position: Partner
 Law school: Harvard Law School
 First job after law school: Associate at Latham

"I've had a lot of great mentors at Latham over the years and that was really just a great moment in my career where everything that my mentors have been telling me kind of proved true," Bekheit said.

Bekheit has enjoyed his journey at the firm thus far and sees reaching the partner level as a continuation of his work with his colleagues and a chance to keep further building his practice. The technology-focused lawyer detoured to become an in-house attorney for a year before deciding he preferred to work as a law firm practitioner.

"And I came straight back to Latham, because I've always enjoyed practicing at Latham — it's the firm I see myself growing old in," Bekheit said.

WHAT MOTIVATES HIM:

Bekheit draws motivation from his parents who came to the U.S. as immigrants.

"I'm first generation born in the U.S. and they always had really high hopes and expectations, they invested a lot in me and my education," Bekheit said. "They always prioritized the kids and I just look every day and I try to do my best because they invested in me so much, and I always want to make sure they're proud of all that they put in and the end result here."

HOW HE SEES HIS PRACTICE CHANGING IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS:

Bekheit believes that he and other attorneys in his field will evolve with their clients, noting the "only thing I can say is we'll ... grow with them."

The practice will continue to focus on working with tech clients in the San Francisco Bay area and nationally, Bekheit said. According to Bekheit, the most challenging issues in big tech deals lie in the regulatory landscape and how those agreements are negotiated in light of an evolving regulatory framework.

"You know there are jurisdictions all over the world popping up ... for example foreign investment regimes that trip up any given deal, and you can find yourself doing regulatory filings in 15 jurisdictions all of which have their own separate requirements," Bekheit said.

"And I think that's just going to continue to be an ever present and growing issue in big tech deals, and so I think it's up to the deal team to navigate those — because at the end of the day, there's never going to be a lot of clarity around those processes, and so the best thing that we can do is help give our clients comfort that we can navigate those issues, we can navigate the risks associated with those issues, and you know head eyes wide open into these deals knowing that those risks exist on the regulatory front," Bekheit said.

— *As told to Clarice Silber*

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2021 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,400 submissions. Attorneys had to be under 40 as of April 30, 2021, to be eligible for this year's award. This interview has been edited and condensed.