



MICHEL DEBOLT

Partner

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Michel Debolt is a Partner and member of the firm's Business, Finance & Tax Team, resident in Fort Lauderdale. He focuses his practice on helping investors and companies in the US, Europe and Asia by successfully negotiating, structuring and closing transactions involving industries from financial services, to telecommunications, manufacturing, chemicals, hospitality, retail, food & beverage and logistics. For more than 20 years, Michel has spearheaded and shaped financial, legal and operational elements of organizations. He is a Certified Public Accountant in Illinois and has experience in the US and Russia, enabling a nuanced understanding of accounting and tax matters.

As an attorney helping investors and companies in the US, Europe and Asia, he learned the value of balancing a commercial-minded approach with a keen focus on detail to successfully negotiate, diligence, structure and close dozens of transactions involving industries from financial services, to telecommunications, manufacturing, chemicals, hospitality, retail, food & beverage and logistics.

Education

J.D., Columbia University
M.B.A., Wharton School University of Pennsylvania
M.S. in Accounting (Tax), University of Illinois
B.S. in Accounting, University of Illinois

Bar Admissions

Florida
New York
Hong Kong (Non-Practicing)

Practice Teams

Business, Finance & Tax

Practice Areas

Corporate
Mergers & Acquisitions
Taxation

Representative Matters

- Advised companies and investors with interests in over 35 countries in relation to commercial, financial, tax, governance, intellectual property, real estate, HR, environmental, competition, valuation and other matters.
- Lead deal attorney responsible for legal negotiations, diligence, financial structuring, approvals, and documentation for various M&A and operating investments in a range of industries and regions, including:
 - acquisition of a Dutch chemicals company by a US private equity investor
 - acquisition of Taiwan / China based manufacturer by a French packaging company
 - secondary fund purchase of limited partner interests of the Hong Kong branch of a Swiss bank by a US private equity investor
 - senior management employment agreements and equity incentivization plans, including for US manufacturing, German telecommunications, French chemicals, Hong Kong financial, Chinese manufacturing, Hong Kong technology and American media companies.
 - property management agreements of Thai hotel group covering locations in China, Cambodia and Vietnam
 - re-negotiation of master franchise agreement of a Chinese children's retailer between master franchisor (US) and its private equity investor (Hong Kong)
- Negotiated the implementation agreement for the Nicaraguan Grand Interoceanic Canal between the Hong Kong-based concessionaire and the government of Nicaragua.
- Designed and managed complex capital structures for private fund investments involving companies in the United States, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Germany, France, Luxembourg, Switzerland, China, Cayman, British Virgin Islands, Jersey and others using debt, equity, and hybrid securities to achieve corporate, financial, tax and employee-incentive objectives.
- Devised and implemented one of the first uses of a Dutch cooperative in an offshore investment structure to minimize tax withholding on dividends to US investors.
- Regularly work with professionals across the US, Europe, and Asia to complete investments within budget, on time and tax efficiently, including attorneys, accountants, consultants, as well as valuation, environmental, competition and other experts.
- Managed delivery of regulatory solutions to matters, ranging from competition, FCPA, ITAR, OFAC sanctions and CFIUS matters in the US, customs control in Nicaragua and Russia, the Proceeds of Crime Act in the United Kingdom, and currency requirements and use of variable interest entity (VIE) structures in China.

- Provided board level advice and corporate secretarial assistance to investors and their portfolio holding companies.
- Advised clients regarding international treaty relief available for transactions and investments relating to the United States, Russia, Germany, England and others.

Community Activities / Associations

- Hong Kong Business Angel Network
 - Member, 2010-2019
 - Board of Directors, 2017-2019
- Board Member, Florida Venture Forum

In the News

Law360 Quotes Michel Debolt in, "Berger Singerman Grows Business Team With 3 Attorneys"
March 20, 2023

Events & Speaking Engagements

Michel Debolt, Speaker, "Start-ups - Pitching Essentials," TecONE Hong Kong Science and Technology Park
October 2017

Michel Debolt, "Tech Startups - Pitch, Mix and Match," Hong Kong Trade Development Council
April 2017

Michel Debolt, Speaker, "Winning Over Start-up Investors," Hong Kong Trade Development Council
May 2016

Michel Debolt, Speaker, "Cross-border Legal Issues Relevant to Growing Hong Kong Businesses," Hong Kong Institute of Directors
November 2013

Prior Affiliations

- Kirkland & Ellis (London and Hong Kong)
- Ernst & Young (Chicago and Moscow)