



Artificial Intelligence

2026



PROFILED:

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Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP and Affiliates



Skadden



Artificial Intelligence



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PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY

Ken Kumayama leads Skadden's intellectual property and technology practice in Palo Alto, where he manages a remarkably diverse and sophisticated portfolio. His expertise spans intellectual property, artificial intelligence and machine learning, cyber security and data privacy in some of the largest and most complex technology transactions. As a leading IP attorney, he is sought after by clients for his extensive knowledge and experience in advising on a wide array of technology and commercial transactions. He has experience in a broad range of industries, such as semiconductors, entertainment, fintech and digital health.

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**Q&A WITH KEN D. KUMAYAMA****How do you stay ahead in your field? Are there any emerging trends or innovations you are particularly excited about in your area of expertise?**

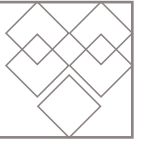
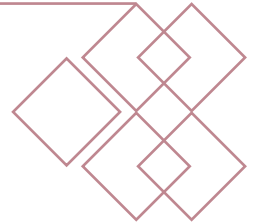
◆ I stay current in the intellectual property (IP) and technology fields by reading across a variety of publications and subject matters, listening to podcasts and speaking to people at companies of all sizes, including engineers, lawyers and business leaders, about the technologies and developments that they find most exciting. More recently, I have also been spending time using a variety of artificial intelligence tools to better understand their capabilities and limitations. One notable trend is the apparent resurgence in the strength and value of patents. Legal and policy shifts in the US, Japan, the European Union and elsewhere suggest that patents are likely to play an increasingly important role in both transactions and litigation in the years ahead.

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

◆ I am a visual thinker, so when a problem is especially complex, I will often try to write down or sketch out how things are organised and how they may be connected or interrelate. Depending on the nature of the issue, I may test my thinking by talking it through with trusted colleagues. More recently, I have sometimes used large language models to pressure-test ideas and explore alternative approaches or viewpoints. As for guiding principles, I do not think there is a single approach that fits every situation. Good advice needs to be tailored to the client, the business context and the practical realities of the situation. In my experience, clients are usually looking for clear, sound and practical guidance delivered in a straightforward manner.

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**Reflecting on your career, how have your goals and aspirations evolved over time? Have there been any unexpected achievements or shifts in direction?**

◆ Early in my career, my focus was simply on gaining experience and learning as much as I could. Over time, my perspective has broadened. As a partner, I am focused not only on supporting clients, but also on mentoring associates and helping shape business strategy. One goal that matters deeply to me now is helping younger lawyers develop and succeed in their own careers. Training associates is an investment, both in the individual and in the future of our profession, and it is especially rewarding to see that investment pay off over time. As for unexpected turns, my entire career itself has been somewhat of a surprise. In law school and during my time as a summer associate at Skadden, I was leaning toward a career in patent litigation. I certainly did not imagine that I would one day become a partner in IP and technology transactions, but I would not have it any other way. ■

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REPRESENTATIVE ENGAGEMENTS

- ◆ Advised Netflix on its proposed, but terminated, \$82.7bn acquisition of Warner Bros.
- ◆ Advised Scopely on its \$3.5bn acquisition of Niantic's mobile games business, which includes popular titles such as Pokémon GO and on its acquisition of control of a Turkey-based developer of a popular mobile game.
- ◆ Advised Juniper Networks in its \$14bn acquisition by Hewlett Packard Enterprise.
- ◆ Advised NXP, a semiconductor manufacturing and design company, in the \$950m sale of its MEMS sensor business to STMicroelectronics.
- ◆ Advised Axcelis Technologies in its \$4.4bn merger of equals with Veeco Instruments, creating a leading semiconductor equipment company.
- ◆ Advised Eventbrite on its \$500m acquisition by Italian software firm Bending Spoons.
- ◆ Advised Chan Zuckerberg Initiative in an acquihire transaction involving EvolutionaryScale, an AI research lab and public benefit company specialising in large-scale AI systems for the life sciences.

