

Partner, Palo Alto

Mergers and Acquisitions; Corporate Governance



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Education

J.D., University of California, Berkeley School of Law, 1987
(Editor-in-Chief, *California Law Review*; Order of the Coif)

B.A., Stanford University, 1977

Bar Admissions

California

Experience

Law Clerk, Hon. Kenneth W. Starr, U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit (1987-1988)

Associations

Board of Directors, Berkeley Center for Law, Business and the Economy (2006-Present)

President, California Law Review, Inc. (1996-1998)

Languages

Japanese

Kenton J. King is widely recognized as one of the country's preeminent corporate attorneys. He provides his clients a strong focus on the technology, semiconductor and biotech sectors, regularly handling complex, cross-border M&A transactions and advising companies and boards on shareholder activism, corporate governance and ESG matters. Mr. King also represents companies in joint ventures and other strategic partnering transactions, investment and capital markets matters and restructurings.

Mr. King's M&A practice encompasses friendly and unsolicited transactions and includes some of the largest-ever technology deals, including: Netflix in its proposed acquisition of Warner Bros. following the pending separation of Discovery Global for \$82.7 billion; Activision Blizzard in its \$75 billion acquisition by Microsoft Corporation; NXP Semiconductors N.V. in its proposed but terminated \$47 billion acquisition by Qualcomm Incorporated; Xilinx, Inc. in its \$50 billion acquisition by Advanced Micro Devices, Inc.; Broadcom Corporation in its \$37 billion acquisition by Avago Technologies Limited; Ansys in its \$35 billion acquisition by Synopsys; Skyworks Solutions, Inc. in its pending \$22 billion combination with Qorvo, Inc.; SanDisk Corporation in its \$19 billion acquisition by Western Digital Corporation; and Intel Corporation in its \$15.3 billion acquisition of Mobileye N.V.

He previously represented Yahoo! Inc. in Microsoft Corporation's unsolicited \$45 billion acquisition proposal; Ascend Communications, Inc. in its \$20 billion acquisition by Lucent Technologies, Inc.; and Compaq Computer Corporation in its \$25 billion merger with Hewlett-Packard Company.

Mr. King has represented numerous companies and boards in connection with activist and unsolicited takeover situations, the majority of which remain confidential. Among publicly disclosed situations, he has advised Autodesk, Ciber, Inc., Cypress Semiconductor, The Greenbrier Companies, MIPS Technologies, PayPal, PMC Sierra, Tessa Technologies, Violin Memories, Inc., Western Digital and Yahoo! Inc. He has advised in situations involving Carl Icahn, Elliot, Third Point, Starboard, The Clinton Group, Lone Star Value, Relational and Value Act, among others.

Fluent in Japanese, Mr. King has represented numerous U.S. and Japanese corporations in connection with cross-border transactions, including Seven & i Holdings in response to an unsolicited \$50 billion takeover proposal. He also has advised multinational corporations on acquisitions and joint ventures in multiple jurisdictions in Europe and Asia. He was resident in Skadden's Tokyo office in the early 1990s and worked for several years in the Tokyo headquarters of one of Japan's largest integrated trading companies.

In 2024, in recognition of his work on Activision's acquisition by Microsoft, Mr. King was named a Dealmaker of the Year by *The American Lawyer* and honored as part of the Skadden team selected as Tech Industry Advisory Team of the Year by *The Recorder*.

Chambers USA 2025 ranks Mr. King as the only Star Individual for M&A in the San Francisco Bay Area and recognizes Skadden's Palo Alto M&A practice as the only Band 1 Corporate/M&A: The Elite practice in the region. He also has been previously selected as the recipient of *The Deal Awards'* M&A Lifetime Achievement Award, recognized as a California Trailblazer by *The Recorder* and named a Mergers and Acquisitions Trailblazer by *The National Law Journal*, which noted his decades of groundbreaking work in Silicon Valley. In addition, on the strength of feedback from his clients, the BTI Consulting Group has repeatedly recognized him as a Client Service All-Star.

Kenton J. King

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In 2023, Mr. King was recognized as a Stand-Out Lawyer by *Thomson Reuters* and was noted in *Variety's* Dealmakers Impact Report, which highlights top attorneys working in film, television and digital media.

He led the deal teams recognized by the *Daily Journal* with California Lawyer Attorneys of the Year (CLAY) awards for innovative work on behalf of Broadcom Corporation in its acquisition by Avago Technologies (2016) and Intel Corporation in its acquisition of Mobileye N.V. (2018). In connection with *The Recorder's* 2016 and 2017 Corporate Department of the Year accolades, Mr. King also was recognized as one of California's Trusted Advisers, "the lawyers clients turn to for strategic counsel and valued industry insights."

He was named by the *Daily Journal* as one of the Top 10 Lawyers of the Decade and appears annually on its list of the Top 100 Lawyers in California. *The Recorder* has recognized him as an Attorney of the Year and *California Lawyer* named him one of the top corporate and M&A lawyers in the state (in a group of only nine attorneys listed). In 2013 and 2017, he received a Client Choice award in the M&A category from International Law Office and Lexology. He is recognized annually in *The Best Lawyers in America*, which has repeatedly named him its San Jose Area Mergers and Acquisitions Lawyer of the Year (2024, 2018 and 2016).

Mr. King also has been recognized in virtually every other major legal ranking guide, including *Chambers Global*, *The Legal 500 U.S.* (including as part of its M&A Private Practice Powerlist), *The International Who's Who of Business Lawyers*, *IFLR1000*, the *PLC Cross-border Mergers and Acquisitions Handbook* and Lawdragon as one of its 500 Leading Lawyers in America, 500 Leading Dealmakers in America and 500 Global Leaders in Crisis Management. He also was previously named to the Lawdragon Hall of Fame and recognized as a Lawdragon Legend.