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2026

Private Equity

2026



PROFILED:

MARK CHURCHMAN

Dorsey & Whitney, LLP



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★ 2025

PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY

Mark Churchman advises private equity (PE) sponsors, portfolio companies and corporate clients on complex UK and cross-border transactions, with particular experience in deals involving Europe and the US. With more than 15 years of experience, he counsels clients across the full company lifecycle, from investment through divestment. His practice includes M&A, PE transactions, joint ventures and shareholder arrangements. He works across a range of sectors, including technology, financial services, energy and infrastructure, and is known for his practical, client-focused approach to helping businesses and investors execute strategic transactions.

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Q&A WITH MARK CHURCHMAN

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

◆ I find the most important aspect of tackling complex legal issues is to listen carefully to what the client wants to achieve and why. It is then a case of staying laser focused on that outcome and not going off on tangents or flights of academic fancy that are not relevant to achieving the outcome. I also find that in the most complex scenarios it is important to do all you can to keep the approach and your communication as simple as possible. A short accurate email takes much longer to write than a long one but will pay dividends by ensuring large teams across multiple jurisdictions understand what is important rather than requiring them to interpret for themselves, potentially inaccurately. Finally, do not over-promise or try for an unlikely outcome without express instructions to do so, having made clear that it is unlikely, and having a backup plan. While it might come off, more often that approach will fall over somewhere along the way.

What are your predictions for the future of your legal specialty? How do you see your vocation evolving over the next few years?

◆ It is difficult to look past the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into the transaction process. The adoption of appropriate tools into the more labour-intensive elements of due diligence and transaction management will drive efficiencies and provide better information. This, in turn, will allow advisers to work with clients to refine strategy, ultimately resulting in better outcomes. At Dorsey, we are embracing these new opportunities to improve the way we have been doing things for a long time, and I think that refinement will continue over the next few years. Notwithstanding this, to borrow from Mark Twain, reports of the death of



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the role of the human legal professional because of these innovations have been greatly exaggerated.

Reflecting on your career, how have your goals and aspirations evolved over time?

◆ Legal practice offers a structured career progression from securing a position for training and qualification all the way through to attaining partnership. I suppose up to that point attaining each milestone was the goal. However, becoming a partner is really just the beginning, providing the opportunity to work toward your own practice working with interesting people on complex matters and continuing to learn more as you go. I would say these are my main goals and aspirations for the future – continuing to build a practice, work with good people and keep learning along the way. ■

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REPRESENTATIVE ENGAGEMENTS

- Represented Sazerac Company, Inc. on its acquisition of Au Vodka, a UK-based vodka and ready-to-drink (RTD) brand, for an undisclosed sum.
- Represented shareholders of a financial advisory firm in the sale of the company to a global investment bank.
- Represented a PE firm on the English law aspects of its acquisition of a portfolio company and in strategic acquisition by its portfolio companies.
- Represented a portfolio company in the technology industry on the English law aspects of an acquisition and a divestiture.
- Represented a portfolio company on its acquisition of various pharmaceutical product lines.
- Represented an advanced materials company on the acquisition of the principal operating subsidiary of an AIM-listed company.
- Represented a Japan-based corporation on certain English law aspects of its majority investment in solar photovoltaic plants.

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