HUSCH BLACKWELL

James M. Ash

OF COUNSEL

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OVERVIEW

Jim draws on his deep experience and analytical skills to help clients find their best solution. As a lawyer, he has guided some of the world's best-known companies, investors, and financers in complex domestic and trans-border transactions.

Jim is well regarded for his experience and counsel in corporate governance issues. His service as General Counsel for a Fortune 400 corporation has given him unique insights into the internal dynamics of corporate senior management teams and boardrooms. On several occasions, Jim has been engaged to help Boards of Directors work through highly sensitive and confidential management transitions, board restructurings, and individual board member evaluation and separation.

Industry

Healthcare

Services

Canada, Mexico, Central, & South America
Corporate
Europe, the Middle East, & Africa
International
Mergers & Acquisitions
Securities & Corporate Governance

Featured Experience

"Jim's brilliant. I look for his counsel in more than just securities and exchange issues. He's been extraordinarily valuable to our company."

— CEO, International Restaurant Company

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Multinational Transaction Realigns Client's U.S. and EU Interests

In a four-party transaction that realigned an entire manufacturing industry across the United States and Europe, Jim and his team led the client through a series of acquisitions, joint ventures and exclusive supply arrangements. The team skillfully and diplomatically coordinated the interests of Swedish, German, Italian and U.S. parties, the workers' councils at plants in Germany and Italy, the Italian government and the EU competition commission. The result? The successful simultaneous closing of three transnational acquisitions and approval by the EU competition commission of the longest exclusive supply agreement allowed at that time.

Experience

- Structured the first physician owned HMO in the United States, advising on organizational, regulatory, and governance considerations for a groundbreaking healthcare model.
- Advised on dozens of physician practice combinations, supporting healthcare providers through complex affiliation, consolidation, and integration matters.
- Led the legal team in a State of Florida receivership arising from one of the largest HMO-related financial fraud cases in U.S. history.
- Managed multiple HMO acquisitions and restructurings, advising clients through regulatory, transactional, and operational transitions.
- Advised Illuminet on its $1.3 billion sale to VeriSign Inc.
- Served as general counsel to a Fortune 400 company, providing strategic legal guidance across corporate, transactional, and operational matters.
- Represented AMC Theatres in its $1.1 billion acquisition of Carmike Cinemas and its $1.2 billion acquisition of Odeon & UCI Cinemas Group.
- Advised Freightquote.com on its $400 million sale to C.H. Robinson.
- Represented Applebee's International Inc. in its $1.2 billion acquisition by IHOP Corp., including a first of its kind securitization involving franchise agreements, company owned restaurants, and intellectual property rights.
- Counseled American Italian Pasta Co. in its $1 billion merger with Ralcorp Holdings Inc.

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Recognition

- *The Best Lawyers In America®*
  - Corporate Law, 1995-2026
  - Mergers and Acquisitions Law, 1995-2026
  - International Mergers & Acquisitions, 2020-2026
  - Best Lawyers® Mergers and Acquisitions Law "Lawyer of the Year," Kansas City, 2015
  - Best Lawyers® Corporate Law "Lawyer of the Year," Kansas City, 2010
- BTI Client Service All-Stars, 2017
- *Chambers USA*, Corporate/Mergers & Acquisitions Law, 2010-2019; *Senior Statesman,* 2020-2023
- *IFLR 1000 United States*
  - Mergers & Acquisitions (Missouri), Experienced Consultant, 2025
  - M&A; Capital Markets: Debt (Nationwide), Notable Practitioner, 2018-2019
- Martindale-Hubbell AV Preeminent

Education

- J.D., University of California, Los Angeles School of Law
  - Order of the Coif
  - *UCLA Law Review*
  - *UCLA-Alaska Law Review*, Editor
- B.A., University of California, Los Angeles
  - *summa cum laude*

Admissions

- Missouri

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*Contact Jim to set up an in-person consultation by appointment in the Kansas City office.

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