

Rising Star: Morrison Foerster's Justin Haan

By Sarah Martinson

Law360 (August 4, 2023, 1:05 PM EDT) -- Justin Haan of Morrison Foerster LLP advised software company Salesforce Inc. on its \$27.7 billion acquisition of messaging platform Slack, and high-profile companies like Meta and OpenAI on other deals, earning him a spot among the technology lawyers under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

His biggest deals so far:

Haan worked on a series of deals from 2017 to 2020 involving virtual reality headsets and augmented reality glasses by Meta Platform Inc., formerly known as Facebook Inc. He considers these to be the biggest deals of his career, not for their dollar value, but because the technology was cutting edge.

Some of the earlier deals Haan worked on for Meta involved traveling to Taiwan, Beijing and Shanghai to negotiate contracts with manufacturers.

More recently, Haan negotiated a deal for Meta with luxury eyewear maker Luxottica Group SpA to produce a line of Ray-Ban smart glasses including Meta technology. The smart glasses, dubbed Ray-Ban Stories, which have a camera and microphone, debuted in 2021.

"One of the things that made the deal with Luxottica so interesting was it was a deal between a new world and an old world company," Haan said.

He explained that he was "literally negotiating on behalf of a technology company that's generally known for its social media software platform, but also has this expansive hardware platform, against a company like Luxottica, which has been around for many, many years making glasses with these timeless brands."

Haan added: "There's no template for that kind of deal, and it's really a blank slate. And so it's an awesome opportunity to have as a commercial contracting attorney, to be able to be involved early on in structuring what different flavors or shapes that deal could take, and weighing the pros and cons of them actively with your client, and really having a hands-

2023

 **LAW360**[®]
**RISING
STAR**



Justin Haan
Morrison Foerster

Age: 39

Home base: San Francisco

Position: Partner

Law school: University of California, Berkeley School of Law

First job after law school:
Associate at Paul Weiss Rifkind Wharton & Garrison LLP

on, active role in shaping what would come to be, so far, a very fruitful and successful relationship."

His other notable work:

Some of the largest deals Haan has worked on in terms of dollar amount were for Salesforce. Haan advised Salesforce on its \$27.7 billion acquisition of Slack that was completed in July 2021 and its \$15.7 billion purchase of data visualization software company Tableau Software that closed in August 2019.

Haan also advised artificial intelligence research company OpenAI on the commercialization of its generative AI technology that produces text and images based on prompts. He helped the company negotiate agreements with enterprise customers, as well as an early partnership with technology giant Microsoft in 2021.

Haan said part of what made OpenAI's Microsoft deal interesting to work on was the company's novel structure of being a nonprofit organization with a for-profit subsidiary, which allows the company to develop and test large language models rather than only writing research about them.

"The nature of the engagement between Microsoft and OpenAI is relatively unparalleled," Haan said. "Typically, you'd expect to see an outright acquisition of a company that had a technology like this, and so being able to do this as a commercial transaction for something that one of the largest technology companies in the world plans to use as the foundation for much of its business and products made for a very dynamic and unprecedented deal."

Why he's a technology transactions attorney:

Haan attended Harvard University for his undergraduate studies during the early 2000s when peer-to-peer file sharing platform Napster emerged and cellphones were becoming popular.

Haan said that seeing how new technologies created novel legal issues became a catalyst for him to attend law school and become a lawyer.

Haan wrote his law school admissions essay on producing a Bob Dylan concert that prohibited attendees from bringing cameras, but at the time almost everyone had a cellphone with a camera.

"It was one of many examples of the ways in which technology was going to change on-the-ground understanding of how the law could be applied," he said.

His proudest moment as an attorney:

Haan said that he is proudest of the culture he has helped create at Morrison Foerster in its San Francisco office and technology transactions group.

He added that the firm has a culture where attorneys like to "geek out" about technology and dive deep into learning new things, and as a partner, he is able to help foster that culture.

An example of the firm's culture is that a group of associates get together on Thursdays after work to read the latest papers on AI published that week, and they let Haan join their discussions.

"Being able to be somewhere where I've been able to shape the environment, where I think we have an excellent collegial working environment, is really important to me," Haan said.

On the future of the industry:

Haan sees generative AI as being a big part of the legal profession moving forward and doesn't think

attorneys should ignore it. Instead, attorneys should gain a "deep understanding" of generative AI tools and law firms should create policies and procedures to use these tools effectively.

Haan said he thinks that in the future, law firms will be able to use past work product to fine-tune generative AI models that output first drafts of legal documents specific to the firm's standards.

"We've already to date been embracing AI tools in other contexts. For example, we use tools to help us undertake large volumes of due diligence," Haan said.

He added, "There was initially similar types of fear around: Is it accurate enough? What if people just rely on that and are just spitting out the answers from that? We found that by putting in place the proper training and procedures, we're able to find a really good balance between having it help us be more efficient, but also without sacrificing the deep level of care that we would always bring to the work product that we developed for our clients."

— *As told to Sarah Martinson.*

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2023 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,350 submissions. Attorneys had to be under 40 as of May 1, 2023, to be eligible for this year's award. This interview has been edited and condensed.