

MVP: Weil's Michael Moiseyev

By MJ Koo

Law360 (October 23, 2024, 12:12 PM EDT) -- Michael Moiseyev of Weil Gotshal & Manges LLP has helped tech behemoth Microsoft navigate a gauntlet of regulators across different countries and knock out antitrust challenges to large transactions, including its buy of Activision Blizzard, earning him a spot as one of the 2024 Law360 Competition and Antitrust MVPs.

His biggest recent accomplishment:

Moiseyev said the biggest deal he worked on this past year was Microsoft's \$68.7 billion acquisition of Call of Duty maker Activision Blizzard.

He said his role was to head up the team at Weil that handled key aspects of the acquisition, including helping Microsoft fend off the Federal Trade Commission's attempt to block the deal.

Moiseyev noted that a challenging aspect of multibillion-dollar deals is that "you just need to make sure that you're consistent in many different jurisdictions."

He explained that the organizational effort of coordinating Microsoft's buy became more crucial than ever "because now all the regulators are coordinating with each other, and they're always quick to point out when there are any inconsistencies."

"Given the size and the scope of the matter, the fact that it was a multijurisdictional effort that brought together the Weil teams in the U.K., Europe and the U.S., as well as the other jurisdictions, and the litigations that hit on all the areas of our practice, it was a terrific showcase of our work and a fascinating merger to work on," Moiseyev said.

One of his biggest challenges:

Having invested more than \$10 billion in OpenAI since 2019, Microsoft has faced competition enforcers' investigations in the U.S., U.K. and Europe.

The FTC announced in June 2023 that it was investigating the technology giant over its relationship with



the ChatGPT developer. The U.K. Competition and Markets Authority probe followed about six months later, and then in January, the European Commission also launched an investigation.

Moiseyev said he has been able to be on the front line of cutting-edge issues while guiding Microsoft through regulatory scrutiny on its OpenAI investment, but doing so has been challenging and comes with a steep learning curve.

"We're advising on the artificial intelligence work, specifically Microsoft's partnership with OpenAI, which is an entirely new area for me," Moiseyev said.

Why he's a competition/antitrust lawyer:

Moiseyev is also representing Regeneron Pharmaceuticals in an antitrust dispute accusing its competitor Novartis of concealing the true history of an eye treatment's development, delaying Regeneron's entry into the market.

"One of the things that makes antitrust practice interesting is that you do get exposure to such diverse industries, and each time you work on a case, you learn about a different business and a different industry and different groups of consumers and different sort of regulatory overlays," Moiseyev said.

He added that the work is "really consequential" and "cuts across entire communities in some instances."

As a competition and antitrust practitioner, Moiseyev said he has had the opportunity to get involved in transactions that have had a broad impact on consumers, businesses and employees.

His advice for junior attorneys:

While young attorneys are competing against people who really love this work and would do it in their free time, they should also be collaborative and learn how to lean on colleagues, Moiseyev explained, because their teammates are often the best resources and "it's very much a team effort here in antitrust."

"From this past year, that really drove home the idea that a skilled and cohesive group of top-notch lawyers in multiple jurisdictions is really important to deliver the highest-quality results for our clients," he said. "I think Microsoft-Activision was a great opportunity to see what a firm that has the top counsels in every jurisdiction can accomplish."

--As told to MJ Koo. Editing by Drashti Mehta.

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