



PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

ATTORNEY OF THE YEAR -
FINALIST: REZWAN PAVRI

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Some of the world’s largest tech companies have turned to Rezwan Pavri as IPO counsel, but in a year where deals were aplenty, the Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati attorney stretched his boundaries alongside his clients.

In addition to steering eight tech IPOs and several private financings, Pavri guided DoorDash on its \$8.1 billion buy of Finnish food delivery platform Wolt, helping persuade Wolt and its stockholders to back the deal and designing ways to get DoorDash stock into the hands of stockholders in a compliant and tax-efficient manner, over the course of a seven-month period.

The deal is just one example of how Pavri builds deep relationships with his clients, whether it be from the point of a company’s formation or preparation for an IPO to navigating the business goals and challenges that follow. And it’s not just offering the legal expertise, but the judgment that clients want, according to Pavri.

“The client wants to know, ‘If you were in my shoes, knowing what you know and having the legal overlay, what would you do?’

I think it’s important to take that step and take a sense of ownership,” Pavri said.

“I’m fortunate to get to feel like an employee at hundreds of companies at a very important level ... like I have a voice at some of the world’s most innovative companies,” Pavri added.

The feeling is mutual, according to AppLovin chief legal officer Tory Valenzuela, who has known Pavri for more than seven years, and recently turned to him to handle AppLovin’s \$2 billion IPO and \$430 million acquisition of Wurl.

“Rez tells you the truth when you need to hear it, but at the same time, he’ll move mountains to help you get something done,” Valenzuela said.

“He has a way of making you feel like you’re his only client, and he is always there,” she continued. “He’s the expert you want when you’re in the trenches, and he also manages to bring humor and humanity to the most difficult situations.”

It’s those qualities that make Pavri a trusted legal adviser to Valenzuela, who notes that Pavri is on a short list of people she calls when something is mission-criti-



Courtesy photos

Rezwan D. Pavri, partner with Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati.

cal, and one of many reasons Pavri earned a nod as an Attorney of the Year finalist in The Recorder’s California Legal Awards.

From Storyteller to Team Leader

Pavri began his career working on major M&A deals at Cravath, Swaine & Moore before jumping to Wilson Sonsini in 2004. He’s spent the majority of his career at Wilson Sonsini since, save for a stint at Goodwin Procter between 2014 and 2017.

Experiences at all three firms allowed Pavri to develop a diverse skillset as a capital markets, M&A and corporate governance lawyer. But there are a few moments that stand out to Pavri.

One major IPO experience arrived via Twitter back in 2013, when the upstart was still finding

its place in the social media category of companies.

“People talk about Twitter as a social media company, but what did that mean 10 years ago?” Pavri said. “It wasn’t like Facebook or Instagram. It was a unique animal. It wasn’t a company that you could copy a lot of ideas from others and put it into a narrative.”

Pavri said the experience was an important resume-builder, and one that helped him find his role as a storyteller as companies make their journey to the public markets.

Fast-forward about seven years, and Pavri found himself leading the team advising DoorDash on its IPO. There were a few bumps in the road, including a pandemic wrench that created a nearly 10-month delay in the listing, as well as a team that brought no shortage of long-term ideas to the table.

“Being on the front lines, not just as IPO counsel, but as part of the team helping them think through their future as a public company, that experience was truly unique, especially to do it at a company as high-profile as DoorDash,” Pavri said.

It was during that period leading up to the IPO that “Rez became a part of our internal legal team,” according to DoorDash general counsel Tia Sherringham.

“I’ve never seen outside counsel lean in like that,” she continued.

“He took a sense of ownership, by proactively raising concerns, thinking through challenges from a business perspective and helping me communicate risks or tradeoffs to the business team.”

Pavri also provides a depth of experience and intellectual flexibility that is unparalleled, Sherringham said.

“Just because something hasn’t been done before, it wouldn’t preclude us from trying it,” she said. “Rez has always been game for those discussions, and brings creative legal thinking to the table.”

In addition to the tech clients that Pavri counsels, he leads a team of nearly 30 at Wilson Sonsini, and serves as a member of the board of directors.

Douglas Clark, managing partner of Wilson Sonsini, recalls that Pavri stood out for his leadership and responsiveness in his earliest years as an associate at the firm.

“He was a leader before he left,” Clark said, referring to the brief three-year stint that Pavri spent at Goodwin. After he returned, “he was a natural person to take one of those slots [on the board] because of his many contributions to the firm.”

He is a good listener, a thoughtful person and highly attuned to clients’ business and legal needs, Clark said.

“He is focused on mentoring and nurturing young associates so they

can replicate his level of service to clients,” Clark added. “That is not entirely common in our industry.”

Pavri also commented on the importance of making bets on younger partners, noting that the hybrid environment has weakened the interstitial interaction, or the stuff that happens between things, that played an important role in his own professional development.

Along with a renewed focus on training and mentorship, Pavri, who identifies as a Parsi, a small ethnic minority in India, highlighted Wilson Sonsini’s continuous efforts to create a workplace that is not just diverse but truly inclusive.

“Wilson has always been incredibly inclusive, but we’ve been really mindful of that in the last few years,” Pavri said. “Those differences have come to the forefront. We want to make sure people have the ability to reach their potential because they feel like they are in an environment that sees them, identifies them and wants to support them.”

It’s an issue that hits home for Pavri, who said that he’s come from parts of his life where he’s felt excluded, and felt an impact on his sense of self and well-being.

As for Wilson Sonsini, “I’ve always felt like I was part of the club,” Pavri said.