

Cooley Adds Ex-O'Melveny M&A Leader In Palo Alto

By Jeff Zalesin

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Cooley LLP said on Monday that it has boosted its dealmaking prowess in Palo Alto, California, by hiring the former head of O'Melveny & Myers LLP's global mergers and acquisitions and private equity practice, who has guided high-profile transactions in technology and other sectors.

Steven Tonsfeldt joined Cooley as a partner after spending about seven years with O'Melveny. Tonsfeldt is a veteran Silicon Valley lawyer with experience advising on complex transactions, including hostile takeovers and cross-border M&A, Cooley said.



Steven Tonsfeldt

"Cooley has a strong reputation as a leader, both in Silicon Valley and globally, for advising the leading growth companies on all their corporate transactional needs," Tonsfeldt said in a statement on Monday. "I have worked with, and across from, many of my new Cooley colleagues for a very long time and I look forward to hitting the ground running and contributing to what is a truly collaborative platform for teamwork and success."

During his tenure at O'Melveny, Tonsfeldt advised an international roster of clients on headline-grabbing deals.

In November, Tonsfeldt and other O'Melveny attorneys advised Chengwei Capital — the main shareholder in Youku Tudou Inc., the so-called YouTube of China — in a roughly \$3.6 billion deal for Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. to take over Youku Tudou.

Tonsfeldt also advised ticketing and marketing software platform Ticketfly Inc. on its \$450 million deal to be acquired by music streaming service Pandora, which was unveiled in October.

Tonsfeldt's experience also extends to the renewable energy industry. In December 2014, he advised a special committee of U.S.-listed Hanwha SolarOne Co. Ltd. in a \$1.2 billion stock deal to merge with Hanwha Q CELLS Investment Co. Ltd., a German company and fellow affiliate of South Korea-based Hanwha Solar Holdings Co. Ltd.

Tonsfeldt earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Iowa in 1982 and his law degree from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1987, according to his LinkedIn profile. He worked at now-defunct

law firm Brobeck Phleger & Harrison LLP from 1987 to 1996, then joined Venture Law Group, where he stayed until 2003.

From Venture Law Group, Tonsfeldt moved on to since-collapsed firm Heller Ehrman LLP, according to LinkedIn. He stayed there until 2008, the year of the firm's dissolution.

Before his legal career, Tonsfeldt worked for Deloitte as a certified public accountant, according to O'Melveny's website.

Barbara Borden, the head of Cooley's M&A practice, described Tonsfeldt as "a superb and seasoned M&A lawyer" in a statement on Monday.

"Steve will be a tremendous addition to our M&A team, and a great asset to clients seeking sophisticated advice on their most critical transactions," Borden said.

O'Melveny wasted no time in naming a new head of its global M&A and private equity practice. Partner Paul Scrivano has been elevated to that post, O'Melveny said in a statement last week.

--Additional reporting by Tom Zanki. Editing by Stephen Berg.

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