



SUSAN S. SCHALLA

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Susan Schalla is a member of the firm's Board of Directors and is the Director of Associates.

Ms. Schalla went to law school knowing she wanted to be a business attorney. She enjoys working with entrepreneurs who create a positive economic impact by transforming an idea into an employer.

Education

BA, University of Chicago, 1997

JD, University of California at Los Angeles School of Law, 2003

LL.M, New York University (Taxation), 2006

Bar Admissions

California, 2003

Washington, 2006

Honors and Recognitions

Super Lawyer Magazine, Super Lawyer 2023 and 2024

Susan has extensive experience in mergers & acquisitions on both the buy-side and sell-side, having successfully closed transactions with enterprise value up to \$460 million. She has represented businesses in manufacturing, software, food and beverage, seafood, retail, consulting and professional services, and other industries. Susan counsels business owners through the sale process, weighing the practical risks and benefits of key legal points. She strives to be both an effective and diplomatic negotiator, protecting her clients' interests while understanding that, in some major business transactions, the parties may need to maintain an ongoing constructive working relationship.

Susan acts as general counsel for family and founder-owned businesses. She advises entrepreneurs from the earliest stages of company formation and helps them navigate the business and regulatory environments as their companies scale. Susan works to keep each of her business clients fundable and acquirable, so they can seize opportunities as they arise. She helps business owners create business succession plans, transition ownership to employees and make other strategic business changes.

After law school, Susan also earned an advanced degree in tax law. Because many business decisions are either tax-driven or can have tax impacts that directly affect the bottom line, she adds value by advising businesses on the tax issues inherent in choice of entity, equity compensation, and transaction structuring. In addition, Susan structures cross-border business expansion into the U.S. and investments in U.S. companies.

In addition to her business practice, Susan has prior experience in estate planning and probate administration, which allows her to provide more holistic legal advice to business owner clients.

Susan was previously an attorney with the law firms of Davis Wright Tremaine in Seattle and Bingham McCutchen in Los Angeles.

What Clients Say

"We were extremely pleased with our experience working with Susan Schalla and Zach Haveman. They work smart and efficiently and have great expertise in the M&A arena. I would highly recommend this team." -Rachelle Yowell, CEO, Celerity Consulting Group

"Outstanding firm! Professional, friendly and pragmatic business firm with good experience in tech startup and M&A. Susan Schalla and Zach Haveman represented my company in a transaction w/a top-200 firm on the other side. We got the first-class treatment working a deal through to the holidays and I couldn't have been happier." -Peter Curran, CEO, Cirrus10

"I greatly appreciate what you did for me throughout this roller coaster ride... from not just the professional side but a personal one. It was easy to see how quickly you grasped the complexities of family-owned businesses, which was most reassuring. Once again, thank you so much for your past responsiveness, understanding, and expertise." -Bonnie Mikkelsen, Toteco Packaging Company

"Susan helped Ecoservice establish operations and rapidly expand throughout the USA, growing from concept to 170 employees operating in 4 markets across the country in just under 1 year. She showed her understanding for startup environments through her responsiveness and timeliness on all deliveries as we scaled. Susan created a system to respond to all of our business needs within her network of colleagues at Carney Badley Spellman and other firms across the country for any topic we came across and always delivered exceptional work. I would highly recommend Susan to any startup or high-growth company looking for a true partner through your journey." -William Tang, Co-Founder & CEO, Ecoservice

Representative Transactions

- Counsel to C-A-L Stores, a leading farm and ranch retailer, in a merger agreement with Coastal Farm and Home, another leading ranch and country lifestyle retailer, which will operate 54 retail locations across 6 states
- Counsel to Pacific Paper Tube, a manufacturer of sustainable paper tubes and cores, in its acquisition by Sky Island Capital
- Counsel to SecureW2, a cybersecurity SaaS company focused on passwordless security software, in receiving an \$80 million investment from Insight Partners
- Represented Westward Seafoods and Maruha Nichiro in the acquisition of a fleet of Alaskan pollock fishing vessels and a Bering Sea processing plant from Icicle Seafoods
- Represented Celerity Consulting Group, LLC, a leading provider of information management services for utilities, state governments, law firms and corporations, in its recapitalization by Hastings Equity Partners
- Represented Déjà vu Security, specializing in security design and testing of enterprise software platforms and internet of things technologies, in its acquisition by Accenture
- Represented Johansen Construction Company, an essential infrastructure and heavy civil construction company, in the sale of a majority interest to Ukpeaġvik Iñupiat Corporation (UIC), an Alaska Native Corporation
- Represented private equine veterinarian practice in acquisition by NVA (National Veterinary Associates, Inc.)
- Represented Seattle-based software company Enroute Systems in its sale to Pitney Bowes

Select Publications and Presentations

- “Business Succession Planning,” presented to King County Bar Association Business Section, October 2024
- Panelist, “Considerations in Sell-Side M&A: Preparing for an Exit,” Venture Mechanics, June 2024
- Panelist, “Pre-Planning a Business Transition,” ACG Seattle Chapter, November 2023
- Co-presenter with Zach Haveman, “M&A Transaction Process,” Business Owner Summit, July 2023
- Co-author: “The Entrepreneur’s Roadmap: From Concept to IPO,” New York Stock Exchange, 2017
- Co-author: “Start-Up Equity Awards: Securities Law Considerations,” Practical Law Institute Practice Note, July 2015

Professional Associations

- Member, Board of Directors – Association for Corporate Growth (ACG), Seattle Chapter
- Member, Washington State Bar Association (Business and Tax Sections)
- Member, King County Bar Association (Business Section)
- Member, Northwest Family Business Advisors