



Chris Michael

Partner

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Chris is a partner in the firm's Business Group and practices in the areas of mergers and acquisitions, private equity, and complex business transactions involving debt and equity offerings, serving as legal advisor to financial and strategic buyers and sellers of businesses throughout the middle market. Chris assists clients across a variety of industries that include veterinary medicine, manufacturing, healthcare, logistics, financial services, information technology, agriculture, and business and professional services.

Chris also has significant experience representing companies throughout their business life-cycle and often serves as outside general counsel to his clients in a variety of industries. His experience includes pre-incorporation planning, general corporate representation and counseling, early and middle-stage financing transactions, joint ventures, and mergers and acquisitions.

Chris holds a B.A. from The Ohio State University, *cum laude*, and a J.D. from the Michigan State University College of Law, *magna cum laude*, where he served as the associate editor of the *Law Review*.

Education

- The Ohio State University (B.A., 2006)
- Michigan State University College of Law (J.D., *magna cum laude*, 2010)

Admissions

- Ohio

Professional Affiliations

- American Bar Association
- Columbus Bar Association
- Ohio State Bar Association

Services & Industries

- Banking & Financial Services
- Business
- Corporate & Finance Matters for Food & Agribusiness
- Energy & Utilities Law
- Finance
- Food & Agribusiness
- Food & Agribusiness Memberships & Affiliations
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Private Equity
- Property Tax
- Transactions

Awards & Honors

- *The Best Lawyers in America*® for Mergers & Acquisitions Law, 2025-2026; Banking and Finance Law, 2026
- Ohio *Super Lawyers* Rising Star, 2017-2024
- Michigan State University College of Law, Jurisprudence Award - Equity

Community Involvement

- Board member, Michael Farms, Inc.
- Board member, Burnham Square Condo Association
- Board member, Board of Chapter Advisors, Phi Gamma Delta at OSU

Key Matters

Representative Transactions

- Represented MedVet in its acquisitions of specialty and emergency animal hospitals nationwide.
- Represented an investment fund in multiple equity financings into a technology based, veterinary urgent care start-up in the New York City area.
- Served as regulatory counsel for a private equity-sponsored provider of veterinary services in its sale to a large west coast private equity buyer.
- Served as buyer, seller and corporate counsel for multiple businesses in the veterinary services industry sector.
- Represented a family office in its investment in a steel manufacturing and fabrication facility in Memphis, TN.
- Represented a family office in its investments in a national security and surveillance business.
- Represented Kronos Foods Corp. in the divestiture of a division of its food services operations.
- Represented a healthcare industry-focused software technology company in its sale to a technology-focused private equity fund, and subsequent sale to a large private equity buyer.
- Represented a private equity fund in the acquisition of a nationwide clinical trials practice and multiple add-on acquisitions.
- Represented Diamond Cellar in its recapitalization.
- Represented United Retirement Plan Consultants, Inc. in its acquisition of MGA Consultants, Inc. and actual sale.
- Represented multiple venture capital-backed companies in the retail, technology and business services industries in connection with equity and debt financings.
- Represented an agricultural grain company in the acquisition of multiple grain elevators.
- Represented Purepay Capital in multiple acquisitions of payment processing, credit collection and financial services companies.
- Represented Stonehenge Opportunity Fund II, LP in multiple mezzanine debt and equity investments.
- Represented Live Technologies, LLC in its recapitalization and multiple add on acquisitions.
- Represented ARPAC, LLC in its acquisition of Global Material Handling, Inc.
- Represented ARPAC, LLC in its sale to Duravant, LLC, and subsequent sale to a large private equity buyer.
- Represented a private equity fund in multiple leveraged buyouts, ambulatory surgery center and business services industries.

Success Stories

Ice Miller Represents Forge Biologics in \$620M Acquisition by Ajinomoto

Forge Biologics Holdings, LLC, a Columbus, Ohio-based premier gene therapy contract development & manufacturing organization, has been acquired by the Ajinomoto Group, a Japanese multinational food and biotechnology public company, in an all-cash \$620M deal.

The Ice Miller deal team was led by Edward Braum and Dann Bruno, with additional corporate support from Erik Olson, Kevin Burns, Ben Goodman, Chris Michael, Chelsea Abramowitz, Brigid Sharek, Huidi Shu, and Lisa Samblanet. Kathleen Scheidt, Dan Corsaro, Nick Casto, Sean Kim, Holly Banta, Cathy Strauss, Anthony Aaron, Grace Dahm, Nick Reuhs, and Brian Harvey provided specialist support.

Ice Miller has represented Forge since its inception in 2020 through its various rounds of venture capital financing, including its \$40M Series A financing in 2020, \$120M Series B financing in 2021, and \$90M Series C financing in 2022. Ice Miller Business Group partners Edward Braum and Sean Kim have represented Forge through its growth, with Ed overseeing the structuring and financing of the company, and Sean facilitating licensing and day-to-day commercial transactions.

This representation further highlights Ice Miller's rapidly growing life sciences practice, with the acquisition placing Forge in a position for long-term growth. The transaction also supports Ajinomoto's desire to extend its development and manufacturing of gene therapies worldwide.

Speaking Engagements

- Keynote Speaker, "Key Trends and Market Outlook in Mergers and Acquisitions for 2019," to Columbus Chapter of Financial Executives International, Jan. 22, 2019
- Panel Moderator, "Third Annual Central Ohio M&A and Capital Markets Forum: How Deals Are Getting Done," June 20, 2018
- Panel Moderator, "Third Annual Central Ohio M&A and Capital Markets Forum: How Deals Are Getting Done," June 21, 2017
- "Building Your Own Successful Business Model," OH&LA 2015 Annual Conference & Gala, Columbus, OH, Nov. 16, 2015
- "Construction Reform," Newly Elected Mayors Workshop, Mayors Association of Ohio Conference, Co-presenter, Columbus, OH, June 27, 2012
- "Municipal Contracting and Construction Reform," Co-presenter, Cleveland, OH, Dec. 16, 2011
- "Public Construction Seminar," Co-presenter, Columbus, OH, Sept. 9, 2011