



Matthew J. Lewis

Partner

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Matt Lewis has delivered practical, focused, and above all, effective solutions to business and legal issues for owners, managers, investors, borrowers, and lenders in a wide range of fields for over three decades. His practice concentrates on the real estate, wine, and energy industries.

A generalist by design, Matt has a particularly strong background in debt financing transactions, representing borrowers in a variety of deals, many of them either in the wine business, or mid-sized private companies. In addition to his transactional work, Matt also serves as a strategic and operational adviser to investors in and owners of closely held clients, counseling them on organizational matters, operations, and other day-to-day issues. He is particularly skilled at brokering internal conflicts and working with stakeholders with differing views to arrive at an appropriate, executable path forward for the enterprise.

Matt's experience includes all aspects of formation, development, financing, and dissolution. He has also advised numerous clients with respect to loans, mergers, acquisitions and divestitures, joint ventures, private placements, sales, intellectual property licensing, and foreign investments.

As a practitioner, Matt brings to his deals a unique combination of innovation and strategic focus, grounded in decades of experience. Matt often finds that a transaction in one field will be informed by experience or knowledge arising from a completely different transaction he has overseen. Just as his clients deeply understand, and so ably manage their own businesses, Matt knows the ins and outs of the transactions that they may only engage in once every few years, enabling him to anticipate and plan for what the other party may do next.

Matt's goal is to get the deal done and his clients to the right result. He seeks, and focuses on the issues that move a deal forward. He usually finds that a win-win negotiation is the best way forward and that the key to understanding his counterparty's goals and priorities is to continuously ask the question, "How will the person on the other side of the table be rewarded and what will they risk for agreeing to this?" Answering this hypothetical helps Matt structure his negotiations.

Matt represents both borrowers and lenders in commercial and real estate single loan, portfolio, and other structured financing transactions and the sale and acquisition of financial assets, with an emphasis on secured transactions. He provides advice on creditor and debtor rights issues, including workouts, reorganizations and restructurings, collections, repossessions, and rights in bankruptcy. A trusted advisor to the wine industry, Matt also advises wineries, vineyards, farms, ranches, processors, and other agribusinesses in all aspects of acquisitions, development, operations financing, and sales.

Distinctions

- *Best Lawyers in America* in Corporate Law (2023-2024)

Memberships and Affiliations

- Former Chair, Uniform Commercial Code Committee, Business Law Section, State Bar of California

Services

- Business Transactions
- Consumer Products + Manufacturing
- Financial Services
- Regional Banking
- Private Client
- Renewable Energy
- Bankruptcy, Restructuring, and Creditors' Rights
- Securities
- Technology
- Wine
- Private Equity and Venture Capital

Education

- University of Chicago Law School (J.D., 1984)
 - . *cum laude*; Associate Editor, *University of Chicago Law Review*
- Williams College (B.A., 1981)
 - . *cum laude*
 - . Political Science

Bar Admissions

- California

Publications

September 1, 2023

Life Is Too Short for Bad Wine Distribution Agreements: 10 Key Considerations

Wine Business Monthly

October 28, 2022

Green in a Sea of Red: Winery Sales Are a Continuing Safe Haven in Rough Waters

Wine Industry Advisor

October 25, 2021

Mitigating the Uncertainty of Smoke Taint in Wine Grapes

American Vineyard

February 25, 2021

New Round of PPP Loans: What Nonprofits Need to Know

Nonprofit Education Series

January 28, 2021

Hidden Liens in Custom Crush Relationships: How to Avoid Being Caught Between Creditors

North Bay Business Journal

December 15, 2020

M&A Deals and PPP Loans: Unexpected Parties in Your Deal

August 19, 2020

Three Steps Licensees Can Take to Protect Their IP Rights in Bankruptcy

IP Watchdog

June 18, 2020

Hot Topics Facing Nonprofit Organizations and Their Advisors in 2020

Nonprofit Education Series

May 27, 2020

Hospitality Companies and Their Lenders: Preparing for Difficult Conversations

Lodging Magazine

April 30, 2020

7 Ways to Check If Coronavirus Triggers 'Force Majeure' Clauses in Your Wine Business Contracts

North Bay Business Journal

April 20, 2020

Questions Wineries Need to Answer Before Talking With Lenders About Coronavirus-Caused

Financial Woes

North Bay Business Journal

April 2, 2020

Wine Businesses, Lenders, and Difficult Conversations

March 19, 2020

Force Majeure and Contractual Non-Performance During the Coronavirus Pandemic

1/21/2011

Creative Use of Receiverships to Solve Environmental, Construction and Other Problems in Distressed Projects

11/3/2010

Tech (and IP) Company Re-Starts, Reboots, Retrenchments, and Re-animations: Making Lemonade in Lemon-Filled Times Webinar

9/20/2010

Best Under Stress: Surviving and Thriving Through Difficult Times

North Bay Business Journal

9/15/2010

Best Under Stress: Surviving and Thriving in the Wine Industry During Difficult Economic Times Webinar

3/31/2010

Guaranties of Debt in Default: What to Do Now (for Guarantors and Their Creditors) Webinar

2/1/2010

Snatching Retreat from the Jaws of Rout: Guaranteeing a bad real estate debt doesn't guarantee financial disaster

1/26/2010

Answering When Your Guaranty Is Called

10/5/2009

Managing Risk: How Growers and Suppliers Can Protect Themselves from Winery Insolvencies

6/9/2009

Board Minutes: Increased Risks in Troubled Times

5/18/2009

Growers: Protecting Yourself Against Winery Insolvencies

4/28/2009

Directors And Officers: Increased Risks In Troubled Times

7/9/2008

Alternatives in Wine Finance Webinar

Outside the Office

Just as in his practice, Matt's personal interests span a broad range of interests and topics. He's active on the board of directors of his local Boy Scouts of America chapter. He has a small, but impressive, workshop in his house, and does work in both wood and metal. He's a runner, and has loved travelling to continents.