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The Go-To Firm For White Collar Defence

This month, ACQ profiles Morvillo, Abramowitz, Grand, Iason, Anello & Bohrer, P.C., a leading New York litigation boutique that for the past three years has been named Law Firm of the Year in the “business crime” practice category by Who’s Who Legal, The International Who’s Who of Business Lawyers. With 35 years of experience helping their institutional and individual clients confront complex white collar matters, securities litigation, and sophisticated business disputes, these accomplished litigators have found themselves in the middle of many of the most significant cases of the day.

From its inception in 1973, as a small practice at a time when larger firms generally avoided “white collar” criminal representation, to its present incarnation as a powerhouse litigation boutique consisting of more than 50 highly talented lawyers, this firm is regarded by many as the go-to New York firm not only for white collar criminal and regulatory matters, in which the firm has unmatched depth of experience, but also complex and difficult civil disputes.

At any given moment the firm is involved, in some capacity, in the major white collar criminal cases of the moment. For example, over the past several years the firm has been heavily involved in investigations and litigation relating to foreign corrupt practices, options backdating, fallout from the subprime “meltdown” and related credit crunch, auction rate securities, tax shelters, and alleged abuses by New York Stock Exchange specialists. Notably, the firm also recently succeeded in

Morvillo, Abramowitz, Grand, Iason, Anello & Bohrer, P.C.

The firm has a long history of dealing with the Department of Justice, the SEC, and state law enforcement officials, and many of its Principals (and alumni) have worked as prosecutors. The firm has a national practice, and frequently finds itself involved in matters of international significance.

obtaining dismissal of criminal charges against a former executive of Stolt-Nielsen in a landmark case that tested the limits of the U.S. Department of Justice's antitrust amnesty program.

The firm has a long history of dealing with the Department of Justice, the SEC, and state law enforcement officials, and many of its Principals (and alumni) have worked as prosecutors. The firm has a national practice, and frequently finds itself involved in matters of international significance. Because a large part of the firm's practice involves pre-indictment advocacy and the representation of clients in connection with confidential investigations by the SEC and Self-Regulatory Organizations, many of the firm's biggest non-trial successes never become public. The firm also has been involved in many high-profile civil cases, including hundreds of private securities fraud cases, litigation involving the music and cellular telephone industries, the insurance fight relating to the World Trade Centre attacks, and representation of multiple litigants in civil litigation arising out of Russian business disputes.

For a firm of its size, Morvillo Abramowitz consistently punches above its weight. Many of the firm's 20 Principals are considered leaders in their fields of practice. Counted among the firm's ranks, for example, are a past president of the New York Council of Defence Lawyers, the chair of the Board of Trustees of New York's Federal Bar Council, a vice president of the New York Women's Bar Association, the chair of the Federal Courts Committee of the New York County Lawyers' Association, a former chair of the Committee on Professional Responsibility for the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, and the current chair of that association's Committee on Professional Discipline. The firm's principals contribute regularly to the *New York Law Journal* and other legal publications, and routinely speak at professional conferences and continuing legal education events as experts in their fields. Seven of the

firm's principals are Fellows of the American College of Trial Lawyers – one of the highest accolades bestowed on a trial attorney in the U.S.

Over the past 35 years, Morvillo Abramowitz's founding Principals have seen the practice of white collar defence, as well as their own firm, change in many ways. With the firm's growth over the past decade, for example, the firm now has the depth of personnel at all levels to handle large scale criminal or civil litigation for corporate clients that previously might have required a larger firm. Nevertheless, the firm's focus has remained distinct. Although the firm routinely conducts internal investigations on behalf of companies and performs other regulatory work that has become a staple of big firm criminal practice, the firm also frequently is called upon to represent high-level officers and directors and other individuals in contentious litigation against the government or regulatory agencies – something that corporations themselves are increasingly unwilling to do. As a result, the firm's practice involves a higher percentage of cases in which obtaining a satisfactory result for its clients requires cases to be litigated aggressively to reach a resolution.

Like many other American firms, the firm has been seeing more and more cases with a European component, either because of parallel inquiries being conducted by European regulators or because European-based clients are being forced to confront U.S. regulators or U.S.-style internal investigations. In addition, the firm has a long history of working with UK-based clients to deal with U.S. regulators, whose expectations and approach are vastly different than those of the FSA. The firm participated in C5's London Advanced Conference on Market Abuse & Insider Dealing this July, and anticipates an increase in international cooperation among members of the bar as U.S. and European regulators harmonize their approaches. **ACQ**

DETAILS

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