

Goodwin Adds Industry Vet, Wilson Attys To Privacy Bench

By Allison Grande

Law360 (October 3, 2021, 12:02 AM EDT) -- Goodwin Procter LLP is adding to its privacy and data protection capabilities with the addition of the vice president of the industry's leading membership association and a Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati PC attorney who's well-versed in advising clients on cutting-edge privacy issues in the European Union.

Omer Tene, vice president and chief knowledge officer at the International Association of Privacy Professionals, began work Friday as a partner in Goodwin's Boston office, the firm said. Tene arrives after more than eight years leading the creation and distribution of content, research, programming and knowledge for the association, which is the world's largest and most comprehensive global information privacy community.

Goodwin is also planning to welcome Lore Leitner, of counsel in the London office at Wilson Sonsini, to its privacy and cybersecurity team as a partner upon the completion of her notice period in mid-December, according to the firm. Leitner has spent the past decade advising clients on emerging data protection and privacy issues in the EU, including the expansive General Data Protection Regulation, which took effect in May 2018, and will be bringing associates Josephine Jay and Annabel Loose with her.

Boris Segalis, partner in the data, privacy and cybersecurity practice at Goodwin, told Law360 that the additions of Tene and the Wilson Sonsini team is part of the firm's ongoing effort to offer clients a full range of legal advice on emerging issues, including new privacy laws in the U.S. and abroad and growing regulatory risks.

"When I came here in February, our goal was and continues to be to build a global leading destination practice," said Segalis, noting that with the newest additions, the firm has added 12 full-time privacy lawyers since he joined the group earlier this year. "Both Omer and Lore need no introduction and are leading privacy lawyers who are recognized for their thought leadership and legal acumen on the cutting edge of technology."

Aside from being "great lawyers," Tene and Leitner bring with them a deep stable of connections and knowledge on developing data privacy and cybersecurity issues that are affecting clients in not only the



Omer Tene



Lore Leitner

U.S. and EU, but also in other vital global destinations, such as China, Singapore and India, Segalis added.

"This is the dream team, and with their additions we're well on our way to becoming a global leader in this space," Segalis said.

Tene has built a reputation as a go-to thought leader on these issues during his tenure with the privacy association, where he's spoken and written on issues such as the fallout from the invalidation of a vital mechanism that allowed personal data to flow freely from the EU to the U.S., efforts by the U.S. Federal Trade Commission to ramp up penalties for privacy and data security missteps, and the enactment of novel consumer privacy protections in California that have sparked a race among states and the federal government to enact similar restrictions on how companies use and share personal information.

Aside from his work at the International Association of Privacy Professionals, Tene also serves as an affiliate scholar at the Stanford Center for Internet and Society and senior fellow at the Future of Privacy Forum, according to his new firm. He's also been tapped as a consultant to governments, regulatory agencies and businesses on privacy, cybersecurity and data management and was appointed to the arbitration panel under the EU-U.S. Privacy Shield data transfer agreement that the European Court of Justice struck down last year.

Tene briefly worked in private practice as an associate at Debevoise & Plimpton LLP and Fried Frank Harris Shriver & Jacobson LLP after earning his law degree from New York University School of Law in 2000. He told Law360 that it "felt like the right time" to re-enter private practice and take a more active role in providing advice and counsel to companies, given the increasing pace of changes and developments in the global privacy and data security space.

"At the IAPP, I've been at the center of a network of privacy officers from hundreds of companies as well as policymakers and regulators not just in the U.S. but all over the world, and those are assets that I will leverage in private practice," he said.

Both Tene and Leitner bring with them a deep well of knowledge on the privacy and data security issues facing companies around the globe and the valuable ability to anticipate and advise clients on industry trends, Segalis said.

These qualities are especially important at a time when states such as Virginia and Colorado are moving to add to the growing U.S. privacy law patchwork and EU regulators are ramping up their scrutiny of companies' data protection practices. This includes a record €746 million (\$884.9 million) fine that Luxembourg's data protection regulator hit Amazon with in July and a €225 million (\$267 million) penalty that Ireland's Data Protection Commission imposed on WhatsApp in September.

"You can't have a global leading privacy practice with only one or two partners," Segalis added. "You need a bench of leaders."

As the need for in-depth privacy counsel continues to grow among clients, Segalis stressed that the practice planned to meet these needs by continuing to add attorneys to the roughly 25-member team in the near future.

"This is really a breakout point for our practice," he said. "It's not the end of it, and we're still looking to expand in California and in Europe and build on the success that we've had."

Tene added that he had been thoroughly impressed by Goodwin's commitment to and investment in delivering top-notch privacy and data protection advice to its wide array of clients.

"This isn't the end of the story for Goodwin in privacy," he said. "It's really incredible how hot this area is, and for Goodwin to be investing in hiring a dozen attorneys for this practice area signals that privacy has graduated to the big leagues of risk, regulatory and business strategic issues."

--Editing by Karin Roberts.

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