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TOP ANTITRUST LAWYERS 2025



Meet the practitioners shaping how markets compete in a year of landmark antitrust actions.



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Nicholas Goldberg has spent 15 years practicing antitrust law, building on a foundation laid by his parents. His mother was one of the first women to make partner at her firm in New Mexico, and his father has spent more than 30 years trying complex antitrust cases.

"Watching both of them shaped my view of what it means to be a lawyer," Goldberg said. "Even as a kid, I could see how deeply they cared about their clients and how much pride they took in solving hard problems."

That sense of purpose led Goldberg to antitrust work at Keker, Van Nest & Peters LLP, where he focuses on competition litigation across technology and business sectors. The field appeals to him because it sits at the intersection of law, economics, and policy while presenting constant intellectual challenges.

"Every case presents an opportunity to dive deep to learn a new industry and understand the competitive dynamics," Goldberg said.

He credits his development as a lawyer to mentors at the firm, including John Keker, Elliot Peters, Eric MacMichael, Laurie Mims and Stuart Gasner. He describes watching them work as a master class in integrity, toughness and humanity.

One lesson stands out: the importance of courage and tenacity in litigation. "Great trial lawyers don't shrink from confrontation," Goldberg said. "They face it head on with respect, honor and grace."

That approach proved valuable in his representation of Commercial Real Estate Exchange, Inc. (Crexi) against CoStar, the dominant player in the commercial real estate industry. *CoStar Group Inc. et al. v. Commercial Real Estate Exchange Inc.*, 23-55662 (9th Circ., filed July 27, 2023) and *CoStar Group Inc. et al v. Commercial Real Estate Exchange Inc.*, 20-CV-08819 (C.D. Cal., filed Sept. 25, 2020).

After a district court dismissed the antitrust claims with prejudice, Goldberg sought permission to immediately appeal. In June 2025, the Ninth Circuit issued a unanimous published opinion reviving the claims.

The decision broke new ground as the first in the Ninth Circuit to recognize a "de facto" exclusive dealing theory. Goldberg views it as significant for how courts evaluate monopolies in digital marketplaces.

"It was a long road, but the outcome validated us and showed that persistence and conviction matter, especially when you're fighting against a powerful adversary," he said.

Goldberg is also representing the Pac-12 in an antitrust case against the Mountain West Conference, challenging $55 million in poaching penalties. The court denied the Mountain West's motion to dismiss, allowing the claims to proceed. He describes the case as novel and potentially influential for the future of college athletics.

Goldberg also represents DoorDash in a competitor case brought by Uber, involving how digital platforms compete and innovate.

Goldberg sees several developments shaping his practice. AI is generating complex legal questions around product development, training, and deployment, he said. Competition law is expanding beyond traditional Sherman Act claims, with parties exploring creative uses of existing statutes, Goldberg added.

"And finally, the college athletics world is in the middle of a major transformation," he said. "With realignment, NIL rules and the potential for direct athlete compensation post-House settlement, the entire model is shifting. How that money and power get redistributed — between conferences, schools and athletes — is going to define the next era of amateur sports law."

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