



Desmond M. Balakrishnan*

Co-Chair, Entertainment, Gaming and Sports
Vancouver

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*Law Corporation

education and year of call

- Called to the British Columbia bar - 1998
- University of Alberta, LLB (with Distinction) - 1997
- Simon Fraser University, BA - 1994
- Simon Fraser University, CLA - 1994

practice areas

entertainment and media
gaming and lottery
mergers and acquisitions

industries

media, communications and
entertainment
entertainment
food, beverage and agribusiness
gaming and lottery
cannabis practice group

profile

Desmond Balakrishnan, a partner with the firm since 2004, is a member of the firm's Corporate Finance/Securities Law Group. Desmond's current areas of focus include private equity investments, public offerings, new listings, mergers, acquisitions, listed company maintenance, gaming, entertainment and hospitality law. Desmond has acted as counsel on new issues and listings on all Canadian Stock exchanges and inter listings with several international exchanges.

directorships and professional associations

- Vancouver Bar Association
- International Masters of Gaming Law

representative matters

- Acted as lead counsel for Contagious Gaming Inc. in its reverse takeover transaction of Contagious Sports Ltd. and Telos Entertainment Inc.
- Represented Great Canadian Gaming Corp. to secure a C\$200 million revolving credit facility and a US\$170 million term loan and to issue US\$170 million senior subordinated notes for gross proceeds of C\$600 million, February 2007.
- Represented Great Canadian Gaming Corp. to secure \$450 million in financing and redeem Series A & Series B Secured Notes, September 2006.
- Represented Avcorp Industries to complete a private placement of \$12 million, July 2006.
- Represented Great Canadian Gaming Corp. in acquisition of

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several casino and gaming facilities throughout British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Washington State, 2005.

- Acted as counsel to in joint venture with major resource company for development of Brazilian Assets valued at \$100 million.
- Acted as counsel to Great Canadian Gaming for \$350 million offering and private placement arrangement of \$75 million.
- Acted as counsel to TSE listed issuer for \$82 million equity offering.
- Acted as counsel to lottery service provider for successive hospital and charitable foundation lottery.
- Acted as counsel to concert promotion company with respect to national tour of multi-platinum recording artists.
- Acted as counsel for acquiror of three standard bred racetracks and casinos in Ontario and British Columbia.
- Acted as counsel for acquiror of British Columbia thoroughbred racetrack.
- Acted as counsel in connection with casino development in Europe and public listing in Canada of management company.
- Acted as counsel in connection with listing of several Australian resource exploration companies on Canadian Stock Exchange.
- Acted as counsel for acquisition of gas lease blocks in Gulf of New Mexico and development funding (\$60 million).

awards and rankings

- Listed in the *Legal500 Canada 2020* as a "Recommended Lawyer" – Cannabis
- Recognized by *Best Lawyers in Canada (2020)* as a leading lawyer in the area of Gaming Law
- Recognized in *Chambers Canada 2019* as a Practitioner of Gaming & Licensing
- Recognized by *Best Lawyers in Canada (2019)* as a leading lawyer in the area of Gaming Law
- Chambers Canada 2018 - Gaming & Licensing (Recognized Practitioner)
- Named by Lexpert as a "Lawyer to Watch" 2009.
- Recipient of the Lexpert Rising Star Award 2008 - "Top Canadian Lawyers Under Forty".
- Recipient of Business in Vancouver's "Top 40 Under Forty" award 2006.

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teaching engagements

- Speaker at Canadian Gaming Summit 2008-2010

community involvement

- Governance Officer Bumblebee Preschool Society, Vancouver BC
- Volunteer, Brad Addison Memorial Hockey Tournament, Vancouver BC
- Panel Member, Vancouver Property Assessment Review Panel (2005-2007)

media mentions

- "[Vancouver law firms vie for cannabis-related clients](#)", *Business in Vancouver*, June 5, 2019
- "[Meet the top lawyers working on some of the biggest deals in the booming marijuana industry that's set to skyrocket to \\$194 billion](#)" by Jeremy Berke, *Business Insider*, January 9, 2019
- "[Cannabis Industry Starts to Boil](#)" by Paul McLaughlin, *Lexpert Magazine*, July 23, 2018

publications

August 2017

Strong Roots in Stormy Weather: Federal Government Affirms Commitment to Legalize Cannabis by July 2018 in Light of Premier Uncertainty
Capital Market Bulletin

presentations

January 2017

Cannabis Legalization in Canada: Social, Legal and Political Hurdles
Canaccord Genuity's Cannabis Investor Day, Vancouver, British Columbia