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Antitrust Expert Moves to Silicon Valley

By Jill Redhage

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PALO ALTO — Mayer Brown relocated Washington, D.C. antitrust partner Christopher J. Kelly to its 26-lawyer Palo Alto office Tuesday as it seeks to expand its footprint in Silicon Valley.

Although the move follows several years of speculation the Department of Justice plans to heighten its scrutiny of technology company mergers, lawyers say increased enforcement hasn't materialized. The need for more antitrust lawyers in Silicon Valley likely has more to do with the maturation and consolidation of the tech industry than it does with companies' short-term legal needs.

"Two years in [to President Barack Obama's term], there's not a lot to point to," Kelly said of the promised crack-down on consolidation in the technology sector. "So far, that seems to be a work in progress."

Kelly specializes in applying antitrust laws to technology and



Chris Kelly

the intellectual property rights that protect it. Earlier in his career, he spent 16 years in the Department of Justice's Antitrust Division, where he helped develop its antitrust enforcement policy regarding intellectual property licensing, patent pools and joint ventures. He ultimately

served as senior counsel for intellectual property.

He joined Mayer Brown in Washington in 2003.

Kelly acknowledged the gravitational draw of antitrust lawyers to the Washington legal market is strong, given the number of antitrust cases filed in its courts and the location of the Federal Trade Commission and Justice Department, which regulate antitrust matters.

"But a lot of very important clients, including ones that find themselves facing interesting and difficult antitrust questions, are located outside of Washington, and a huge number of them are located here in Silicon Valley," Kelly said.

Edward Johnson, Mayer Brown's partner-in-charge in Palo Alto, said Kelly is joining five other partners in the office who handle a lot of antitrust matters.

"Basically, Chris' skill set is a perfect fit for Silicon Valley," Johnson said.

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