

Law Firm Cole Schotz Launches Restaurant Group

Law firm **Cole Schotz P.C.** recently announced they have launched their Restaurant & Hospitality Group, led by New York-based members **Jordan Fisch** and **David Rubenstein**. The group will bring together multiple disciplines in the firm, such as real estate, tax and corporate, to provide restaurant operators with strategic advice to better grow their businesses.

“We’ve been counseling entrepreneurs, restaurant groups, celebrity chefs...for years,” said Fisch. Creating the specialized group “was a natural progression for us...”

Cole Schotz regularly advises restaurant clients on challenges they face, such as site selection, start up and other capital raises, and partner or employee disputes, just to name a few.

Rubenstein, who leads the efforts on the real estate side, joined the firm in 2015 because his prior firm did only real estate. “When my clients needed other disciplines, I had to refer them to other firms, or they found their own counsel.” At Cole Schotz, he found that the other disciplines in the firm had restaurant experience, as well.

As the restaurant work continued, he and Fisch “kept bouncing things off of each other. We found it was beneficial to our clients to know they could get everything (all legal disciplines) under one roof.”

The two decided to formalize it, and add “some structure to our packaging,” said Fisch. He relayed the story of a new client—a European franchisor in the fast casual restaurant space—that is now expanding in the U.S. “Out of the box they needed corporate representation and tax help...” he said. And then it was trademarks, and after that, structuring leases.

“It’s about efficiency for our clients; with a number of practice disciplines here, we’re a one-stop shop,” said Fisch.

Much of their recent work is for restaurant companies expanding, he said. “I’m getting calls about opening new locations, or reinventing or rebranding an existing location.”

Rubenstein said his franchised restaurant clients are expanding, too. His job is to get them through that construction phase, and helping them with the landlord issues that may come up.

“We want to help them have an eye on the P&L so they are not coming out of the box too far behind the eight ball,” he said, “which can happen with restaurants.”

They are both fans of working in the restaurant industry, because “its fun to walk into the restaurants and say ‘I was involved in this,’” said Fisch. And, he likes the challenge, too.

“I have to push myself,” he said of representing restaurants. “This involves multiple disciplines at the firm, and I need to weave them in. It’s always an opportunity to sharpen my skills.”

Rubenstein agrees with his colleague: “For me, the challenge is that each client and restaurant deal is unique. There are so many moving pieces and no two deals are alike.” It’s what he likes best. “You have to pay attention and keep on your toes.”

For more information on Cole Schotz, contact Jordan Fisch at 646-563-8933, or by email at JFisch@coleschotz.com. Or contact David Rubenstein at DRubenstein@coleschotz.com or by phone at 646-563-8927.