

Luis Alberto Aziz

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Biography

Luis Alberto Aziz is the founding partner at Aziz & Kaye Business Law and is specialised in corporate law, M&A transactions and antitrust. Previously, he founded SAI Law & Economics. During his 19 years at the consultancy, he advised local and multinational companies in the design and negotiation of various business operations. Luis graduated with honours from the National Autonomous University of Mexico. He has master's degrees in international law (the University of Georgetown, honours) and European community law (the College of Europe). For his pro bono work, he has been awarded the Robert Herzstein medal by the Appleseed Foundation (2017) and the Premio Nacional de Acción Voluntaria y Solidaria by the Mexican government (2018), the national prize recognising voluntary work.

What attracted you to a career in law? Why did you decide to specialise in antitrust, corporate and M&A law?

I have always been passionate about logical thinking but I have also been attracted to negotiating and business matters. A legal career offered me the opportunity to carry out such activities and develop the corresponding skills.

I decided to specialise in corporate and M&A law because it gives me the opportunity to participate in all of the growth stages of a business, from its incorporation until the moment that the business has been so successful that selling to or buying from competitors is the reasonable next step.

I also decided to specialise in antitrust because it is an area that allows me to practise quantitative thinking and have a better understanding of the economic effects of my clients' business decisions.

What has been your biggest achievement to date and why?

I believe that my biggest business achievement has been developing a long-term relationship with several of my clients and having them consider me not only as a lawyer but as a trusted adviser or "consigliere" to their business.

I am also very proud to have been able to have a firm that incorporates pro bono matters as part of its DNA. I have been able to influence my team on the importance of taking such cases and having a positive social impact.

How has Mexico's antitrust landscape developed since you first started practising?

The landscape has become more competitive and challenging for lawyers as several legal reforms have fostered the authority and the field of action of the Antitrust Commission. When I started practising antitrust law, around 20 years ago, only a handful of business people knew about the antitrust authority; now it is in the forefront of all deals.

What more could be done to improve the country's competition laws in your opinion?

Mexico is going through a political transition during which the roles and authority of several autonomous technical bodies, such as the Antitrust Commission (COFECE) are under threat. I believe that the current priority regarding competition laws is not necessarily amending them but we must be more critical of the ultimate goals in any potential reform efforts. For example, I believe that the independence of COFECE shall be respected, since it is critical to keep monopolies under control and to ensure they are not affected or influenced by politics.

What impact do you expect Mexico's new government will have on the country's business and investment landscape? Do you see any specific challenges or opportunities in the coming year?

There are a lot of challenges but also a lot of opportunities.

As stated, the new government is interested in evaluating how things were done in the past and how they should be done in the coming years.

Our new government is not afraid of making changes which is good, but this can also increase uncertainty and investments do not necessarily work well during these periods of uncertainty.

However, this transitional period provides the opportunity to rethink the way we have been acting and be very critical of the way to move forward. Times are changing and each of us shall decide if change shall be resisted or seen as an opportunity to improve things. I see it as an opportunity.

Why did you decide to start your own firm?

Aziz & Kaye is the second firm that I have founded. The first, SAI Law & Economics, provided economic, finance and legal consultancy services. I learnt a lot from my partners and friends in this firm and I believe that they taught me to think outside the "legal box". However, since the firm was not focused solely on legal services, potential clients were having a hard time thinking we could provide corporate and M&A services. That is the reason myself and my partner, Allan, founded Aziz & Kaye and our growth has shown that we made a good decision.

In-house legal teams are becoming increasingly sophisticated. How has Aziz & Kaye adapted to address new client demands and stand out from the competition?

I believe that Aziz & Kaye stands out because we put business before law, meaning that we are lawyers that are focused on making the deal happen. We understand ourselves to be partners with our clients in helping them make their business flourish by covering their legal needs, but also advising them on other important issues in a deal.

What advice would you give younger lawyers hoping to one day be in your position?

The best advice that I can give younger lawyers is that clients need a lawyer who can offer solid legal advice, but who also considers the business consequences and commercial benefits of those decisions. The advice is to protect your client as a lawyer, but also to treat them as a business partner.