

Daily Journal

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TOP 20 UNDER 40

The editors of the Daily Journal reviewed more than 300 nominations to find just 20 lawyers for this list. As is the case every year, we are confronted with a richness of talent. Lawyers on the cutting edge of every issue facing the world. In deciding which ones will make

the cut, we looked for those with matters having a larger impact. It is great to win a case or successfully put together a deal for a client. It's even better if it changes an industry, a region or society. As you read through this issue, you'll find a group of litigators, and corporate and

regulatory specialists working on many of the major issues of our time: drones, data privacy, transportation, health care, pharmaceuticals, gay marriage and on and on. We believe you'll be impressed. We were.

-The Editors

Christopher T. Casamassima



FIRM

**Wilmer Cutler
Pickering Hale and Dorr
LLP**

Los Angeles

PRACTICE TYPE

litigation

SPECIALTY

**complex business
disputes**

AGE

39

The end of 2014 was an eventful time for Casamassima. He was made partner at WilmerHale and Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc. named him part of the studio's defense team in massive data breach class litigation.

The unprecedented Sony matter, nine employee class actions have been filed as of mid-January relating to a cyber attack the FBI pinned on North Korea, will combine Casamassima's experience in complex commercial litigation with a growing entertainment law portfolio.

The trial attorney started at Kirkland & Ellis LLP, but jumped to the Los Angeles office of Boston-headquartered WilmerHale in 2012 after the firms clashed in litigation over an alleged ponzi scheme.

"Wilmer is an incredible firm with a particularly strong practice on the east coast," Casamassima said of the move. "I thought they were really trying to make an effort to increase commercial litigation in California."

Casamassima has cut his teeth at the new firm representing a Connecticut funds manager accused of his own Ponzi scheme by the Securities and Exchange Commission, a trial that resulted in a mixed verdict. He brokered resolution of a dispute among Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians tribal leaders regarding tens of millions of dollars.

Along the way, Casamassima started to branch out into entertainment law, winning victories for exhibitor Regal Entertainment in antitrust litigation and film

production company Snowpiercer Limited in a dispute over international distribution payments.

Asked about his transition to motion picture work, the attorney said "being a business litigator in Los Angeles implies the potential for entertainment and media-related work."

Casamassima said he could not comment yet on the Sony suit, sure to be one of the closely watched cases of 2015. Besides the data breach litigation, his 2015 is also expected to be absorbed by defending pharmaceutical company Bristol-Myers Squibb in a massive health insurance fraud case.

— Matthew Blake