

GUZMAN LAW GROUP, PC

Denise M. Guzman, Founder/Principal Attorney

Manhattan Beach-based legal firm Guzman Law Group has been advocating for the South Bay community for over 30 years. Their clients represent the diverse industries that define the vibrancy and innovation of the South Bay. The firm provides high-caliber legal services in business and finance transactions, trust and civil litigation, estate planning, and trust administration. With its close proximity to Hollywood, Guzman Law Group also focuses on entertainment law and celebrity estates. The firm is certified as a Women's Business Enterprise by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council.

WHAT SERVICES DOES GUZMAN LAW GROUP OFFER?

Edward Powell, Corporate, Securities, & Finance Attorney: We help business owners when they want to buy or sell a business, finance a business, or bring in investors or partners. We can provide every service needed from formation and initial capital raising rounds to structuring and documenting relationships with institutional investors, succession planning and other exit strategies. The business lawyers at Guzman Law Group work closely with our estate planning colleagues to ensure our business owners have wide-ranging guidance to protect their personal wealth and provide for their families while continuing to operate and grow successful family businesses.

HOW DOES GUZMAN LAW GROUP PROVIDE A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE TO CLIENTS?

Drew Hallett, Business and Trust Litigation Attorney: The Guzman Law Group provides its clients with a competitive advantage because we offer big law services right here in the South Bay. Guzman Law Group provides a variety of legal services under one roof—a critical benefit for clients because an issue that arises in one area of law can impact a legal issue in another area. We

develop a strategy that addresses a client's entire situation and circumstances. With our open and collaborative culture, we work as a team to provide the best legal services we can for our clients. And because we are a boutique firm, we do so with a personal touch.

HOW DO WE APPROACH WEALTH PRESERVATION FOR OUR CLIENTS?

Jane S. Lee, Estate Planning Attorney: We use various strategies tailored to each client's circumstances including their specific long-term and short-term goals. We create a comprehensive estate plan that includes the trust, wills and powers of attorney to ensure their assets are distributed according to their wishes and that they have designated individuals who will make decisions on their behalf if they become incapacitated or unable to manage their finances. We also work with the client's CPA and financial advisors to ensure their objectives and goals are aligned with their estate plan.

IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU ENSURE YOUR BUSINESS STANDS OUT IN THE MARKETPLACE?

Edward Powell: The last few years have seen an increase in the private mergers and acquisitions market for the best and most prepared companies. This is primarily through strategic acquisitions but also with family-owned businesses seeking to implement their succession planning with a sale or transfer of part or all of their business. Our firm has the sophisticated experience to deal with even the most aggressive private equity firms that may demand highly complex deal structures when investing in a South Bay industry. We can adapt this expertise to family-owned businesses that need similarly creative solutions. We guide clients to ensure they understand each step and can make the most informed decisions.

WHAT DO YOU WISH ALL CLIENTS WOULD DO?

Marcus Chang, Business and Estate Planning Attorney: Checking in before or after making a major decision concerning their assets could save the client time and money in the future. One common mistake I have seen is when an individual takes their residence out of their trust to refinance their residence but fails to transfer it back into the trust once the refinance is concluded.

WHAT FULFILLS YOU IN YOUR CAREER?

Denise M. Guzman, Business and Estate Planning Attorney: I am a people person. I enjoy meeting the vast array of people that live in our community. Having someone entrust me with their thoughts and wishes is truly a gift. You have to take the time to really listen to another person's needs, whether it be preparing an estate plan or selling a client's business. In the end, you have provided peace of mind for someone—and that is a great feeling.

Drew Hallett: Our clients' satisfaction. When a client retains our firm, they usually have a legal issue of a serious nature that is extremely important to them and/or their loved ones. Our clients put their trust in us to serve them and put them in the best position to address these legal issues. That is why we work so diligently, thoroughly and effectively for our clients. There is no greater feeling than helping our clients achieve the results they expect and desire.

Marcus Chang: The most fulfilling part of my career is when clients tell me how much they appreciate the work we have done for them. The process of administering a probate estate or trust can be complicated, and it makes me happy when I am able to guide them through the complicated process to a satisfactory conclusion.

L to R: Attorneys Alisha R. Swain-Fall, Carol T. Contes, Drew C. Hallett, Edward Powell, Denise M. Guzman, Charles Shelton, Marcus Chang, Maaha Khan, Jane S. Lee, Charles Scheurich

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARISA GUZMAN-ALOIA

