

# People

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## **Antitrust veteran Dashefsky moves from Visa to Bass, Berry & Sims**

Michael Dashefsky has joined Bass, Berry & Sims as a partner and co-chair of its antitrust and trade practices group. He has in-depth experience as an antitrust enforcer, in-house counsel and private practice lawyer.

Dashefsky told *FTCWatch* his background gives him an array of experiences on which to base his advice to clients.

“In government, I had a phenomenal opportunity to get a range of experience and learn how enforcers determine if there is some kind of antitrust violation,” he said. “My work in-house helps me understand how corporations work and what they want from their outside counsel. And I have worked at law firms and this gives me a unique perspective from which to counsel clients.”

Dashefsky chose his current firm because it’s a “great firm with great people and an excellent platform for expanding the antitrust practice.”

Before joining Bass, Berry & Sims, Dashefsky spent almost five years as vice president and associate general counsel of Visa. He worked on endeavors including the company’s \$20 billion buyout of Visa Europe.

Prior to being at Visa, he spent 10 years as a trial attorney in the Justice Department’s antitrust division, handling a range of cases involving financial institutions. One of Dashefsky’s most noteworthy cases was a lawsuit against American Express. The agency and 17 states sued several credit card companies, alleging their steering practices had violated antitrust laws.

Visa and Mastercard settled, but American Express fought the case, and it eventually landed at the Supreme Court. Dashefsky was recused from any involvement in the case while at Visa.

Last June, the high court voted 5-4 to uphold an appellate court ruling that the DOJ and state attorneys general focused too heavily on the merchant side of the credit card market and didn’t consider the effect American Express’ anti-steering rules have had on customers who use the cards.

Before he was at DOJ, Dashefsky was an associate at two law firms and spent four years as an attorney at the Federal Trade Commission’s Bureau of Competition.

While earning his law degree from Georgetown University, he got hooked on antitrust because he “liked the thought process involved.” Dashefsky also enjoyed the opportunity to learn “about a variety of industries in significant detail.” One of his antitrust professors was future FTC

Chairman Robert Pitofsky, whom he described as “a great scholar and great guy.”

At the University of Rochester, Dashefsky received his bachelor’s degree in political science and economics, which formed the basis of some of his future study on the nexus between law and economics. He earned a master’s degree from the same school in public policy analysis.

When not working, Dashefsky likes to spend time with family, play basketball, ski and run.

References:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/michael-dashefsky-bab95548/>

<https://www.bassberry.com/news/bass-berry-sims-bolsters-antitrust-practice-with-distinguished-government-and-in-house-attorney-michael-dashefsky/>

— Claude Marx