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Business Experts Join Berger Kahn

By Drew Combs

Daily Journal Staff Writer

Berger Kahn, a 65-attorney law firm with four offices, continues the expansion of its business and corporate practice in Irvine with the addition of three lawyers.

Wayne Allen, George Kunzelman and Fred Chang joined the firm Feb. 1 from Orange County-based Allen & Associates.

"These new attorneys add to Berger Kahn's competence in matters involving businesses, their owners and their managers," said Martin P. Florman, co-chair of the firm's business and corporate practice group.

Since summer, seven attorneys have joined Berger Kahn's corporate practice in Orange County. The firm's clients include Securitas USA, Cerius Consulting Group, Systech Integrators and Zetara Corporation.

Allen joins as a partner, while Kunzelman and Chang come on board as associates. Their practice comprises the representation of entrepreneurs and investors in relation to business and estate planning matters.

Florman himself is part of the firm's recent growth spurt. He joined in August from Baker & Hostetler's Costa Mesa office.

"After talking to [managing partner] Craig Simon, I realized that there was a platform and opportunity here to be instrumental in growing a business practice group," Florman said. "This is something that I have wanted to do for a long time."

Marc L. Wilson was brought on in August from Richmond & Richmond to head the firm's trusts and estates group.

In October, Ryan K. Hirota lateraled into the firm as a partner from Weiss-



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Berger Kahn lawyers, from left, seated, Craig Simon and Wayne Allen and, standing, Kent Clayton, Marty Florman, Marc Wilson, Fred Chang and George Kunzelman.

Hirota. His practice focuses on real estate and other business matters. Hirota's professional group involvement included a term as president of Women Lawyers of Long Beach, the first man to serve in that capacity.

In January, Kent M. Clayton started as a partner and co-chair of the Berger Kahn's business and corporate practice group. Clayton previously practiced at Rutan & Tucker. He has represented large, middle-market and emerging-growth companies in a variety of matters.

"These attorneys have strengthened our presence and taken it to a new level in the transactions area," said Craig S. Simon, Berger Kahn's Orange County-based managing partner. "We have enjoyed success in the business practices

group, and we strategically wanted to expand it."

The new lawyers joined the firm after "relatively short courtships," according to Simon.

"I think we shared a vision of clients first and law firm second," he said. "When you meet people that are like-minded, it is an easy fit."

With these additions, there are now 30 attorneys across several practice groups that work in Berger Kahn's Irvine office. The firm also has offices in Marina del Rey, San Diego and Novato.

Prominent practice groups at the firm include business litigation, entertainment, aviation, professional liability and labor and employment.