



ASSOCIATE

Michael Russo

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📍 San Diego



Michael Russo is an associate attorney in the Business Practice Group at Best Best & Krieger LLP (BBK), where his practice focuses primarily on real estate and business transactions. He represents a diverse client base that spans both the public and private sectors, including small businesses, start-ups, banks, developers, hospitals, universities, cities, and special districts.

Based in the firm's San Diego office, Michael blends his legal experience and strategic insight to guide clients on a wide array of real estate matters, including office, industrial, retail, mixed-use, special-purpose, and ground leases. His practice also encompasses negotiating license agreements, acquisitions, estoppel certificates, due diligence, and title and survey reviews. In addition, Michael is well-versed in business entity formation, corporate governance, and negotiating various business contracts, offering clients comprehensive solutions that extend beyond just legal advice.

Michael takes a hands-on approach to every deal, ensuring it moves smoothly from negotiation to closing while keeping the focus on aligning legal strategies with his clients' business goals. Known for his pragmatic and results-driven mindset, he leverages his diverse background in bankruptcy and litigation to approach complex transactions.

He represents individuals, privately owned and closely held businesses, and large companies with national operations.

Before joining BBK, Michael honed his skills at various San Diego law firms, representing healthcare practitioners and clients involved in bankruptcy, business, injury, insurance, real estate, and transactional matters.

A proud San Diego native with deep Sicilian roots, Michael is an avid sports fan, with a passion for soccer and his hometown Padres. In his downtime, he enjoys playing chess, travelling, concerts, and enjoying the local cultural scene.

Notable Experience

- Negotiates office, industrial, and retail leases for tenants of all sizes throughout California.

CORE PRACTICES

Business

Business Transactions

Real Estate

Municipal Law

Special Districts

Housing, Economic Development and Real Estate

EDUCATION & ADMISSIONS

Education

University of San Diego School of Law, J.D.

University of San Diego, B.S., business administration

Bar Admissions

California

- Advises private developers on the leasing, acquisition, and disposition of office and retail properties.
- Handles leasing of multi-use and specialty properties, including shopping centers, public facilities, airports, and sports arenas, for both private and municipal clients.
- Represented a hospital district in negotiating an industrial lease.
- Assists public entities and cities such as Santa Rosa, West Hollywood, Fontana, Ontario, Palm Springs, and Modesto Irrigation with easements, licenses, rights of way, and real estate agreements, including leases and acquisitions.
- Developed master lease templates for mixed-use and office developments for both public and private sector clients.

Professional & Community Involvement

- San Diego County Bar Association
- Consumer Attorneys of San Diego
- Urban Land Institute, Member

Thought Leadership

Publications

- "Damage Control to Commercial Real Estate," Co-Author, *Riverside Lawyer Magazine*, May 2025 Issue
- "How to Navigate Trust Amendments: When Probate Code Compliance Meets Trust Procedure Failures," BBK Legal Alert, Sept. 11, 2024
- "The U.S. Corporate Transparency Act Is Almost Here," BBK Legal Alert, Oct. 11, 2023
- "What You Need to Know About the U.S. Corporate Transparency Act," BBK Legal Alert, Jan. 1, 2023

Presentations

- "Considerations in Leasing With Public Entities," California Lawyers Association, Real Property Law Retreat, May 16, 2026