2026 RISING STAR

Zoey Hitzert

Zoey Hitzert of Kirkland & Ellis LLP advised an investor consortium in its agreement to acquire Electronic Arts Inc. in a $55 billion deal that was the largest take-private investment in history, earning her a spot among the capital markets law practitioners under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

" I love to learn, and I actually think I landed in the right practice area for that because … I never know what's going to land on my desk on any day. "

Her biggest case:

While Hitzert has advised on several multibillion-dollar deals over the course of her career, she regards advising Norwegian Cruise Line on a roughly $2.4 billion transaction in May 2020 as the most meaningful. The transaction included four different capital markets products in a search for liquidity, including a secured notes offering, a convertible notes offering, an equity offering and a private investment in public equity financing — all executed at the same time.

"You can imagine working with a cruise line in May 2020 — we really executed this transaction in unprecedented circumstances at the very start of the pandemic," Hitzert told Law360. "Norwegian Cruise Line's revenue had essentially gone from roughly $6.5 billion a year to nothing overnight, and there was absolutely no visibility into when the company would be able to start cruising again. It was just a fascinating transaction. In negotiating it, there was a lot of blood, sweat and tears involved. … But we really pulled it off."

Since the deal, Hitzert has helped advise the cruise line in countless other capital markets transactions, and she said it has been incredibly rewarding to build a relationship with the company by doing all its business deals.

Her most interesting recent deal:

Hitzert is part of the team advising an investor consortium, which includes Silver Lake, Affinity Partners and Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund, on its $55 billion acquisition of Electronic Arts Inc. The deal, announced in September 2025, was the largest take-private investment in history, according to Kirkland.

"Just due to the size of the deal, it naturally had a lot of complexities, and even more so because it's not just one investor acquiring Electronic Arts, it's a consortium of three investors who are different types of investors that have different priorities," Hitzert said. "There were a lot of bespoke features to the deal, and so it was really interesting to work through all of that … and make sure that we were achieving the optimal outcome for our clients."

> *“We spend so much time focusing on cross-office and cross-practice collaboration, and I feel really proud when we work together.”*

Hitzert is still working with the consortium on various aspects of the deal, noting that the war in the Middle East added complexities to navigate

Her proudest moment:

Hitzert said she takes pride in all the deals she is part of, but she feels most proud when she works collaboratively with colleagues to achieve a client’s desired outcomes.

“I think the really special thing about Kirkland is that the teamwork within the firm is really second to none,” she said.

Acknowledging that Kirkland is a huge law firm, Hitzert said that when she first started working there, it was hard to imagine how such close collaboration across the firm was possible.

“We spend so much time focusing on cross-office and cross-practice collaboration, and I feel really proud when we work together. … I work with colleagues and other practice groups to help clients navigate the most difficult situations,” she said. “If the client wants to do something, we’ll find a way to make it happen, even when other people say, ‘We can’t,’ or, ‘There’s no way.’ We work together to find a way, and I really love that.”

What motivates her:

Acknowledging her dislike of boredom, which goes hand in hand with her love of learning, Hitzert said she is motivated by the ever-changing work that comes with being a capital markets attorney.

“I love to learn, and I actually think I landed in the right practice area for that because … I never know what’s going to land on my desk on any day,” she said. “I might be working on an initial public offering or a high-yield debt offering, or it’s a liability management transaction and a public M&A deal. … It’s really hard to get bored when you’re learning or doing something new every day, so that’s a big motivation.”

Hitzert also finds herself motivated by working with junior attorneys and acting as a mentor as they navigate their entry into a legal career.

“I try to teach them as much as I can and explain things and to challenge the associates. I like to give them the space to grow, but also provide the guidance that they need,” she said.

Why she’s a capital markets attorney:

Because Hitzert went to law school in London and navigated the British legal system in her schooling, she said that when she started as an associate at Davis Polk, she didn’t fully understand what capital markets were. However, after being put on the underwriter side of an IPO for her first deal as a first-year associate, she said she fell in love with the work.

“I loved that there was such a variety to the work. Even just within the deal itself, there’s the governance and there’s the disclosure and there’s the transaction structure,” she said. “So that’s where I started, and then why I continued with capital markets was, one, the variety, and then two … the relationships that you can build with clients as a capital markets attorney.”

Because she works with clients on both deals and ongoing governance and disclosure matters as a capital markets attorney, Hitzert doesn’t just say ‘goodbye’ to her clients when a deal closes.

“Oftentimes, I’m still in touch with them every week — if not every day — on their day-to-day matters,” she said. “I just don’t think there’s a better way to build relationships with clients than to be in touch with them regularly on the questions that they need help with.”

> *“I just don’t think there’s a better way to build relationships with clients than to be in touch with them regularly on the questions that they need help with.”*

Kirkland & Ellis LLP | 601 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10022 | +1 212 446 4800