

Mark Longo on growing Osler's Vancouver office, transactional activity in the tech sector and more – Lexpert TV

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Mark Longo, Managing Partner of Osler's Vancouver office, tells *Lexpert TV* that he expects to see "a lot of transactional activity post-pandemic" in Canada's tech industry. In a Q&A video interview with *Lexpert* Editor-in-Chief Tim Wilbur, Mark touched on a variety of topics ranging from growing Osler's Vancouver office over the past five-plus years, to trends he is seeing in the tech sector and the economy overall. Mark, who is also Co-Chair of Osler's [Emerging and High Growth Companies Group](#), explains what the firm's growth strategy has been in Vancouver.

"Osler was servicing the British Columbia economy for many decades prior to us opening an office," Mark tells *Lexpert TV*. "The strategy we took was really marrying up the practice areas that are strategic to the B.C. economy with strategic practice areas within Osler."

"By looking at it from that lens, that lent itself to growing in areas like commercial real estate, like financial services, capital markets, and of course, the technology sector, which is booming out here in B.C."

Mark also explains how Osler's Emerging and High Growth Companies Group operates and how clients benefit from the structure.

"Our Emerging and High Growth Companies Group starts working with companies literally at the formation stage. So we work with startups who are typically entrepreneurs with a great idea, and a business plan. So we incorporate the companies, we have a fixed-fee startup package, which is fee deferred," Mark tells *Lexpert TV*.

"We then literally work with companies throughout their life cycle. We do a lot of angel investment, venture capital investment, growth equity investment, transactions for our clients, we also act for investors, such as VC firms on these deals, and many of our companies tap into exit opportunities, and that can be both buy-side as well as sell-side acquisitions. So, a big part of our practice is acquisitions, acting for companies that are being sold, or many of our clients now are at a level of maturation where they are acquiring companies as well."

"And more recently, an IPO window has opened. So we're also working with our companies on raising capital through the public markets as well..."

As for trends in the tech sector and the economic recovery, Mark says that a "[K-shaped recovery](#)" is a "good way to describe the tech industry." He adds that "it's a robust market for taking in investment capital through venture capital, growth equity and private equity. And the mergers and acquisitions market is heating up, so we're seeing that Canada is on the radar, and the B.C. tech industry is on the radar for investors and acquirers." What does Mark project for Canada's tech industry post-pandemic?

"There are home-grown, anchor tenant technology companies that are being formed in Canada, are growing in Canada," Mark says. "I mentioned the very robust financing environment – I expect that we're going to see a lot of transactional activity post-pandemic. I think the capital markets activity we're seeing, we expect to continue. There's a lot of dry powder available in private equity funds, in growth equity and venture capital funds, and the Osler fund formation team has been very active in creating new funds.

"So there's literally into the trillions of dry powder available for investing in the tech space. We expect the Osler emerging companies team to be right in the middle of that, providing transactional services for our clients, for investors we work with, for buyers of businesses, and increasingly as our own portfolio of clients grows, those clients themselves are looking to grow through acquisition. So we expect a very busy transactional period and we are certainly staffing up to accommodate that and we have grown our office and our firm through the pandemic in anticipation of that transactional activity."

[Watch Mark's full interview with *Lexpert TV*.](#)