

## Top Boutiques of 2015

GIANT SLAYERS: THE SMALL, HYPER-FOCUSED LAW FIRMS THAT TAKE ON BIG MATTERS AND WIN

### AUTOMOTIVE

## The Scali Law Firm



From left, John Swenson, Jennifer Woo Burns, Monica Hartstock, Christian Scali and Dominique Nasr

Alexander Drecun / Special to the Daily Journal

**T**he car-sales industry requires a law firm with a high degree of specialization to understand regulations, contractual agreements and employer and business law needs, which is why clients value the expertise they find at Scali Law Firm.

The eight attorney firm, founded by Christian J. Scali in 2013 is dedicated to providing the value added service that comes from a deep understanding of the automotive industry, from state and national level laws and regulations to a network of automotive industry professionals. Scali Law firm works to stay on the cutting edge of new industry trends.

For its clients, which include auto dealer groups and storage and moving companies, Scali provides regulatory advice and counsel on specialized matters, including vehicle-sales advertising, transactional

### LOS ANGELES

matters and consumer and business litigation such as class actions.

“We know the trends, we know their issues, we are tied into the dealer associations, we keep abreast of all the different changes in the law as they come out,” Scali said “When you know your client’s industry as well as we do, it really gives clients a feeling that they don’t have with other law firms.”

The firm also helps teach auto dealers how to advertise compliantly, particularly in digital advertising. They give advice and counsel to dealers, help them create compliant advertising programs and advocate compliance offices.

They also have flexible rates allowing them to have clients at both the national and small dealer level.

“We are proud that we can repre-

sent the family-owned small dealer and the national groups because we have some flexibility in our rate structures,” Scali said. “They know how much they are going to spend every month and they don’t worry about picking up the phone every time they have an issue.”

The firm is currently defending a Texas-based dealership group in a \$10 million corporate raiding and trade secret lawsuit. It’s also defending a California automobile dealership against wage and hour claims in a class action brought by its service technicians. And the firm is representing a New York limousine dealership and upfitter in breach of contract litigation in California in a dispute over limousine customizations.

The firm is in the discovery phase of a lawsuit that will go into arbitration in 2016 in a case in which the

firm is defending a publicly-traded auto dealer group’s dealership in an age discrimination lawsuit brought by a former employee. The plaintiff is claiming the company did not have legitimate reasons for restructuring its business and therefore did not have reason to discharge or reassign several management-level employees.

Despite the firm’s client roster, Scali said he does not see the firm growing any larger than a boutique. He said he prefers clients continue to know the team and feel comfortable calling any of them with questions.

“Staying a boutique size is important to a lot of clients. A lot of our clients know the team they know almost every member of the team and they feel comfortable calling almost every one of those for a particular legal matter,” he said.

— Ryan Van Velzer