

Press Release

Akerman Appoints Former Amazon Counsel Michael Adler to Newly Created AI Governance Leadership Role

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The appointment positions the firm for the shift from governing AI tools to governing the autonomous systems enterprises now deploy.

Akerman today announced that Michael Adler has joined the firm as Director of AI Governance & Data Protection within Akerman Intelligence, the firm's platform for AI strategy, research, and thought leadership, and as a partner in its Corporate Practice Group. He is based in Washington, D.C.

The newly created role reflects Akerman's belief that the next frontier of artificial intelligence is not adopting AI tools, but building the governance and accountability required to deploy AI responsibly at enterprise scale. Adler will enhance the firm's own AI governance while expanding its capacity to help clients meet the legal and operational challenges of AI adoption.

As Director of AI Governance & Data Protection, Adler will work closely with the firm's CEO, General Counsel, and its technology and innovation leaders to further the development of Akerman's AI governance framework — the policies and oversight structures under which AI, including agentic systems, is deployed across the firm. He will also maintain an active practice advising clients on AI

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Michael Adler
Scott A. Meyers

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governance, data protection, technology transactions, and international AI regulation.

“The question now for every enterprise is whether its AI governance framework is equipped for the shift from obedient AI tools to autonomous agentic systems,” said Scott Meyers, Chairman and CEO of Akerman. “Very few legal advisors have had to answer that question from the inside. Michael has, at some of the world’s most demanding technology companies.”

Meyers continued, “That is why this role runs in both directions. Michael will help shape how Akerman governs and deploys AI inside the firm, and bring that same operator’s discipline to clients building governance for the systems they are running today. AI governance is becoming a strategic business function, and Akerman intends to lead that evolution.”

Adler joins Akerman after serving as Head of Global Data Privacy and AI at Highspot, a multi-billion-dollar technology company, where he developed the governance frameworks supporting its AI-enabled products and led its global data protection strategy. Previously, he was Senior Corporate Counsel at Autodesk, where he architected the company’s global GDPR compliance framework and advised on its AI-enabled generative design products, and Corporate Counsel at Amazon. Earlier in his career, he practiced at Kirkland & Ellis and Dechert, advising corporate clients on complex transactions and technology matters. Before entering private practice, Adler served as a senior intelligence officer with the Defense Intelligence Agency, where he focused on counterterrorism.

Adler earned a master’s degree from the University of Cambridge Judge Business School, where his dissertation on the General Data Protection Regulation was awarded a Distinction, and holds a J.D. from Vanderbilt University Law School. He remains active in Cambridge’s technology and

innovation community, strengthening Akerman's connections to the U.K.'s AI and technology ecosystem.

"Organizations are asking increasingly sophisticated questions about artificial intelligence," said Adler.

"The conversation has moved from whether to use AI to how to govern it responsibly while protecting sensitive information, managing enterprise risk, and maintaining accountability. I'm excited to help shape Akerman's own governance framework while working with clients to build approaches that hold up in practice."

More information about Akerman Intelligence and our AI Governance is available at <https://www.akerman.com/en/akerman-intelligence.html>.

Click here for more information about the AI Governance Sector Team:
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About Akerman

Founded in 1920, Akerman is an Am Law 100 firm recognized by Vault among the nation's most prestigious law firms. The firm has more than 700 lawyers and business professionals throughout the United States.