

Recap: Dom Perella, Snap Inc.

By Olivia Poppens, J.D. Candidate 2019 | January 31, 2017

On January 18th, the Berkeley Center for Law, Business and the Economy ([BCLBE](#)) held a speaker series entitled, “A conversation with Dom Perella, Deputy General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer of Snap, Inc.” Perella spoke to Berkeley Law students and faculty on his position at one of the world’s most popular startups, as well as his time at the Supreme Court and Appellate Litigation practice at Hogan Lovells.

Before working at [Snap, Inc.](#), Perella began his career covering the Fourth Circuit as a journalist and from there decided to go to law school. He went on to work in appellate litigation at a private practice where he stayed for 10 years. After spending time at Hogan Lovells, Perella decided to make the move in-house to Snapchat (now Snap, Inc.). He started at Snap when it employed only 48 people—as of now the company employs roughly 2000. Because he joined just as the company was starting out, the legal team was nascent and much of his work at the beginning consisted of “issue spotters” and answering general questions for the company’s younger employees.

Perella’s work at Snap today is primarily focused on trying to curb lawsuits before they can be brought. He and his team accomplish this by writing amicus briefs to courts to help shape law and by performing various types of contractual work. By writing amicus briefs, Perella hopes to influence legislation through his team’s careful drafting of statutes. In this role, Perella utilizes his immense knowledge of technology law to assist legislators and the courts.

Recently, Snap, Inc. introduced the “[Spectacles](#),” a pair of sunglasses that take Snapchats from a first-person view. Introducing a product outside of the app space required an immense amount of logistical planning and legal execution on the front end. Perella spoke on the necessary contractual issues at stake when introducing a hardware product, as well as the FDA regulations the company had to comply with. Some of the intricacies of the product required outside special counsel to help with compliance and other issues that arose when introducing a piece of hardware.

As Snap, Inc. grows, from a tech company to a media company, to a company that produces its own hardware, Perella’s legal work and expertise has expanded to help the company maintain its innovative edge.