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40 Under 40 2020

Nicholas Surmacz

**Age:** 38**Firm:** Kobre & Kim**Job role:** Partner**Location:** London

A significant case I've worked on:

As much as I would love to take a public victory lap in the pages of GIR, the truth is that many of my greatest achievements at Kobre & Kim have intentionally played out confidentially, and behind the scenes. Whether it has been developing strategies for companies and high net worth individuals to recover assets or restore their reputations, navigating and defending against the ever-changing landscape of US and global regulators, or fighting attacks on freedom of movement through abuses of Interpol and the extradition process, my nearly eight years of experience at the US Department of Justice, including as an assistant chief at the fraud section in Washington, have helped guide many of these aggressive strategies.

Another favourite part of my practice is the fact that I am permanently based in London, from where I am regularly, and often very swiftly, deployed across Europe, the Middle East and a number of African jurisdictions to solve client problems as they develop. Oftentimes, this involves guiding clients – in real time – through difficult situations they never contemplated when first deciding to go into business.

"Nick and I work closely together as part of Kobre & Kim's London-based team of four former US criminal and civil regulators, the largest such team in Europe. As the team's two former federal criminal prosecutors, Nick and I are perfect complements to each other. We spent a combined 15 years at the DOJ offices – in the Southern District of New York and at Main Justice's fraud section – handling some of the department's most significant matters. I've grown to trust Nick implicitly, as we often turn to each other for a gut check or to innovate in terms of the services we provide clients, including unorthodox approaches and novel tactics. That doesn't mean we completely ignore the tried and trusted methods: Nick and I have even been known to pull out good cop, bad cop from time to time, something we may need to retire for a while now that this is in print..."

Jason Masimore*Partner at Kobre & Kim*

An important person in my career:

It's hard for me to point to a single individual, as there have been so many influences on my career: from the colleagues I worked closely with as part of an amazing trio during my early days at a big firm in New York, to all the federal agents, lawyers and (especially) trial partners I worked with at the DOJ, it has always been important to me to seek out, and learn from, the best. It's no different today, where I get to add to the global success that Steve Kobre and Michael Kim have built at Kobre & Kim.

"Nick Surmacz stands out among his peers, not only for his intelligence and experience, but also for his level of preparation and effective client management. He makes himself available to his clients whenever needed, zealously advocating on their behalf and working day and night to put them in the best possible position. His experience prosecuting complex white-collar criminal matters on behalf of the US government gives him a unique perspective and valuable connections. I would not hesitate to recommend Nick to any relative or loved one, as I know they would be in good hands."

Joseph Nascimento

Partner at Ross Amsel Raben Nascimento (co-counsel and speaking on the record on behalf of a confidential client)

