

Rising Star: Dechert's Benjamin Sadun

By Allison Grande

Law360 (July 21, 2025, 4:00 PM EDT) -- Benjamin Sadun of Dechert LLP helped the developer of a "magic avatar" app shake a pair of sprawling and groundbreaking artificial intelligence-related lawsuits over the alleged mishandling of biometric data, earning him a spot among the cybersecurity and privacy law practitioners under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

The biggest cases of his career:

While Sadun has handled several "high-stakes, bet-the-company matters" during his more than decade-long legal career, the work he said stands out the most is Dechert's representation of Prisma Labs, the company behind the viral artificial intelligence-powered photo app Lensa.

Prisma, whose app was the most downloaded across Apple's and Google's app stores in December 2022, found itself facing two proposed class actions in Illinois and California federal courts, each seeking billions of dollars in damages and injunctive relief due to the company's alleged mishandling of biometrics contained in a third-party company's database it used to train the app's Magic Avatar feature.

In August 2023, a California federal judge agreed with Prisma in a proposed class action by Lensa users that their claims under Illinois' Biometric Information Privacy Act belonged in arbitration as users agreed to settle disputes out of court when they signed up for the app.

The following August, an Illinois federal judge tossed similar BIPA claims by a putative class of Illinois residents who had at least one photo of themselves uploaded to the internet. The judge in that case held the suit couldn't proceed because the plaintiff, who did not allege using or directly uploading his photos to the Lensa app, failed to show his information was part of the massive image database the company relied on.

"The case raised novel questions around standing, causation and how far Illinois' Biometric Information Privacy Act could stretch in the age of

2025



Benjamin Sadun
Dechert

Age: 37

Home base: Los Angeles

Position: Partner

Law school: Harvard Law School

First job after law school: Litigation associate at O'Melveny & Myers

generative AI," Sadun told Law360. "Had plaintiffs succeeded, the decision could have chilled AI development nationwide."

The dispute, which remains the largest proposed biometric privacy class action ever filed, was not only legally and technically complex but also generated public attention and regulatory uncertainty, making the matter "particularly challenging" for Sadun and his team, he said.

"Yet we ultimately succeeded in getting the case dismissed," he said. "It was a major win not only for our client, but for preserving space for AI innovation."

The biggest case he's worked on lately:

Sadun is gearing up to represent the developer of the menstrual cycle tracking app Flo in a trial set to kick off on July 21 in the Northern District of California over its allegedly unlawful sharing of personal health information with Meta Platforms Inc.

The certified class of app users accuses Flo Health Inc. of violating the California Confidentiality of Medical Information Act, and Meta, represented by separate counsel, of running afoul of the California Invasion of Privacy Act. They seek billions of dollars from Flo and Meta.

His proudest moment:

In the weeks after the U.S. Supreme Court's June 2022 decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* to overturn the constitutional right to abortion established in *Roe v. Wade*, Flo approached the Dechert team with concerns over how it could allow users who were worried about their personal health data now being used against them one day to delete these records while continuing to meet its legal obligations to preserve them.

After it became apparent "that we couldn't rely on off-the-shelf answers," Sadun — the first male in his family in multiple generations to not go to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and pursue a career in engineering — worked closely with Flo's engineering team on all aspects of the design and implementation of a novel feature called anonymous mode, which allows individuals to use the service without disclosing or associating any personally identifiable information with their account.

"What began as a crisis ended up being recognized as a leading innovation in privacy," Sadun said, noting the invention contributed to the Dechert team receiving several awards, including Law360's Practice Group of the Year in 2023. "I'm proud of the work not just because our solution was creative, but because it proved what's possible when lawyers work with engineers to redefine what's possible."

Why he's a cybersecurity and privacy attorney:

Sadun, who began his career as a general litigator, said he most enjoys handling the "tough cases, where the law is unsettled, and the stakes are high," the types of matters that there are no shortages of in the still relatively nascent cybersecurity and privacy arena.

That is particularly true when it comes to the rapidly emerging and growing area of AI, where "privacy is the last line of defense," he said.

"Strip AI down to its core, there are only three bottlenecks: processing power, algorithms and data,"

Sadun said. "Processing power is already being commoditized, and open-source models like DeepSeek have shown that with distillation, you don't need to invent new algorithms — you can copy and tweak. That leaves just one true differentiator: data."

This data is vital to the AI ecosystem, given that its quality and volume determine how "systems behave, who they serve and who they exploit," Sadun said. However, as AI gives both governments and corporations more reasons to collect as much data as possible and extract meaning from it, "the more privacy we erode," he said.

"Privacy, therefore, is the battleground where the future of society will be decided," Sadun said. "I chose this field because I want to be right where the impact is greatest — helping clients navigate the tension between privacy and progress."

His advice to young attorneys:

Having worked on an array of cases during his career, ranging from aiding in the appeal of former Enron CEO Jeffrey Skilling's conviction while Sadun was still at Harvard Law School, to representing Johnson & Johnson in trials alleging its baby powder causes cancer, Sadun said one of the lessons he's learned is that, "when a partner gives you edits you hate — when you're sure the suggested fix makes the writing worse — pause before pushing back."

"The mistake is arguing about the fix," he said. "If something's not working, and you don't like the proposed solution, find a better one. But don't waste time or energy rejecting the premise that it needs fixing. The fix may be wrong, but the problem is real. Learn to listen for the problem, not just the solution, and you'll get better — faster."

How the cybersecurity and privacy practice will change in the next 10 years:

As issues surrounding AI and the use and collection of data continue to gain notoriety, Sadun predicts cybersecurity and privacy law will begin to "consume everything," with these fields moving from being "just another practice group" to becoming "the connective tissue of every major legal issue."

"In the age of AI and ubiquitous data, everything touches data," he said. "M&A deals hinge on data assets and risk. Employment disputes turn on monitoring and algorithmic bias. IP cases are increasingly about training data. Even constitutional law is being reshaped by surveillance tech and AI in public life."

As companies face growing pressure to capture and monetize data to stay competitive, the legal and reputational consequences associated with that process will only increase as the law continues to evolve, Sadun said.

"That's why I believe cybersecurity and privacy lawyers won't just advise from the sidelines," he said. "We'll be leading the strategy room, setting the guardrails for innovation, and defining what's acceptable in a world where the line between person and profile keeps blurring."

--As told to Allison Grande. Editing by Drashti Mehta.

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2025 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,100 submissions. Attorneys had to be under 40 as of April 30, 2025, to be eligible for this year's award.

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