

# Daily Journal

COVER STORY

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## TOP 100

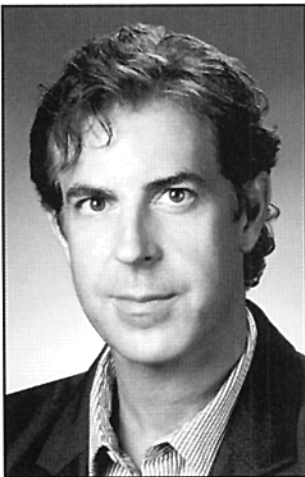
### California's Leading Attorneys of 2010

#### EDITOR'S NOTE

The Daily Journal's annual list of the 100 most influential lawyers in California has always been encompassing. The counselor to corporate boards sits alongside the prosecutor chasing down dangerous criminals, the consumer plaintiffs' lawyer next to the land use lawyer, and so on. The purpose of this list is to recognize the elite lawyers across all practices in California — those men and women who are making the most impact on the legal profession and on society right now.

— David Houston  
Editor

Los Angeles and San Francisco Daily Journals



#### Robert A. Darwell

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*Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton*

*Los Angeles*

*Entertainment, media and technology transactions*

Darwell works mainly behind the scenes, but the deals he structures for big-name clients tend to grab headlines. When cable giant Comcast Corp. announced it was acquiring entertainment conglomerate NBC Universal in a proposed \$30-billion transaction, Darwell already had been busy doing diligence on entertainment-related properties for NBC. If regulators sign off on the deal, it will be by far the largest media acquisition in recent years. In another news-generating transaction, Darwell represented the Walt Disney Co. in its sale of the Miramax film library to a group of investors. The sale, which is set to close by the end of this year, was a two-fold coup for Disney: The \$660 million sale of Miramax, which is made up of mainly art-house films, allowed the studio to focus more on big-budget franchises that spawn sequels, properties in multiple media and merchandise. But the deal also fetched far more for Disney than many expected, a feat accomplished at a time when falling DVD sales have eroded the value of all film libraries.