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Nutter law firm nabs new leader for data security group

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The Boston law firm Nutter McClennen & Fish has brought on a top executive from the cybersecurity firm Stroz Friedberg to lead its privacy and data security practice group.

Seth Berman is returning to the practice of law on Tuesday after a decade at Stroz Friedberg, where he consulted companies on cybersecurity issues and helped start the firm's offices in Boston and in several cities abroad. In his most recent role, he oversaw more than 150 employees in Stroz's Boston, New York and Washington offices.

Before joining Stroz Friedberg in 2007, Berman was a prosecutor of computer-related crimes at the U.S. attorney's office in Boston. At that point, "there really wasn't a way to become the defense equivalent of a computer crimes prosecutor," so he felt he had to go the consulting route, he said.

But in the ensuing decade, the legal industry has changed. "Many, many more lawyers have an understanding of what's going on with computer investigations," Berman said. Lawyers have become especially valuable in the cybersecurity space because their communications with companies are protected by attorney-client privilege, helping to prevent discussion of companies' cyber vulnerabilities from being exposed in a courtroom.

Now at Nutter, Berman wants to build up the firm's expertise in helping companies respond to cybersecurity incidents. To date, the firm has focused its expertise in the space more on compliance counsel-

New Nutter partner
Seth Berman.



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ing and risk assessment, he said.

Nutter's privacy and data security's team currently has 10 lawyers. Berman anticipates adding a couple of attorneys over the next year or so. Beyond that, "how large it goes really depends on demand in the market," he said. "I anticipate it will be very large, but time will tell."

This fall, Berman is a visiting lecturer

at Harvard Law School, teaching a class on cyber criminal law and procedure. His most recent law firm role was at McDermott Will & Emery LLP from 2000 to 2003, according to his LinkedIn profile.

In addition to his leadership role on the privacy and data security group, he's a member of Nutter's white collar defense group.