

Dr. Thomas Bähler

Attorney at Law, LL.M., Partner

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Business lawyer, strategic leadership

Thomas Bähler is an experienced attorney with a strong business background who provides close and comprehensive personal support to his clients in all corporate phases and through all challenges, often as an “external legal service” and a board member. Thanks to his entrepreneurial experience and insight into various industries and companies as well as his quick, straightforward and active support, he and his team meet the current demands and expectations of dedicated entrepreneurs, SMEs and listed companies. In addition to general business and contract law, he advises his clients in all matters relating to corporate law and legal compliance/corporate housekeeping, as well as in M&A transactions and succession solutions. His work focuses on supporting his clients’ business models (procurement, production, distribution and licensing law, market impact/growth, communication, digital transformation) as well as on cross-border/international legal issues. Thomas Bähler is also active in commercial administrative law as part of his trade association activities, with a further focus on start-ups, technology and financing, hospitality, events and entertainment.

Member of the Board Emeritus Council of SCG Legal in Washington DC/USA, a global network of 123 independent law firms with more than 12,000 attorneys in 63 countries.

For 25 years, Thomas Bähler has played an active role as chairman, vice-chairman, member or secretary of various boards of directors, including the listed companies Feintool International Holding Ltd. (until 2008) and Biella-Neher Holding Ltd. (until 2015). As Chairman of the Board of Directors, he led the Bernese Oberland Hospital Group Spital STS Ltd. from 2012 to 2021, and the Energy Utility Group Energie Service Biel ESB from 2012 to 2024.

Speaker on business and legal topics, lecturer in commercial law at the University of Bern (2001–2009), lecturer in the program “CAS in Entrepreneurial Leadership” at the University of Bern and at the Swiss Institute for Translational and Entrepreneurial Medicine (sitem-insel).

Co-initiator of the Swiss Economic Forum in 1998 and responsible for the Swiss Economic Award for 23 years, member of the Jury. During this time, Thomas Bähler got to know several thousand young Swiss companies, analyzing and assessing more than a thousand business plans in depth. In 2020, he co-founded and became the chairman of the board of the Sitem Startup Club, which runs the Bern MedTech Hub and the MedTech Booster program, among other projects. Member of the Impact Board of the Swiss startup days, expert at STAGE UP (entrepreneurship center at the University of Bern) and President of the Jury of NEWCOMERS, the leading Swiss Early Startup competition.

Alongside his professional activities as a lawyer, Thomas Bähler is also the Managing director of national trade associations (recycling and trade) by mandate.

Expertise

Energy, Infrastructure, and Environment

Employment and Social Security Law

Data and Privacy

Company & Corporate Law / M&A

Intellectual Property Law, Technology Law, Digitalisation, and Communication

Capital markets and listed companies

Antitrust and Competition Law

Life Sciences, Healthcare, Pharmaceuticals, and Biotechnology

Private Clients

Startup & Venture Capital Desk

White-collar crime, mutual legal assistance, internal investigations, crisis management, and compliance

Board of Directors

- President of Krummen Group AG, Kerzers (Logistics)
- Board of directors Hoffmann Neopac Ltd., Thun (Packaging)
- Board of directors Zumbach Electronic Ltd., Orpund (Machinery, Electrical and Metal Industry MEM)
- Board of directors Gossweiler Media Ltd., Bern (Media)
- Executive Chairman Mühle Hunziken Konzert Ltd., Rubigen (Music Club), Vice-chairman Gurtenfestival Ltd., Bern (Music Festival), VR AVRON AG, Lucerne (Event- and Media Technology)
- Vice-chairman OFFIX Holding Ltd. and Board of directors Papeteristen Einkaufsgenossenschaft PEG, Aarburg (Office Supplies, Wholesale Trade, eCommerce, Logistics, Shareholdings, Real Estate)
- Board of directors Krebser Ltd., Thun (Retail)
- Board of directors LUMA Beef AG (Food tech, Online butcher, Gastronomy), Neuhausen; Board of directors Lime Concepts AG/Restaurant Steinhalle, Bern (Gastronomy)
- President of OdA Abfall- und Rohstoffwirtschaft; Managing Director of the associations Recycling Switzerland – We the recyclers, e-Recycling FVG, Vereinigung des Schweiz. Tabakwarenhandels und Vereinigung des Schweiz. Blumengrosshandels

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Career

- Since 2003
  Partner at Kellerhals Attorneys Bern, now Kellerhals Carrard
- 1995–2002
  Freelance attorney with his own offices, alongside part-time employment at a corporate law firm in Bern from 1998
- 1995–1997
  Assistant to Prof. Dr. Roland von Büren at the Institute for Economic Law at the University of Bern

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Memberships

- Swiss Bar Association (SAV/FSA)
- Bern Bar Association (BAV)
- Swiss Association for Intellectual Property Law (INGRES)
- SwissBoardForum

Education

- 1998
  LL.M., Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, USA
- 1998
  Dr. iur., (magna cum laude); dissertation: “The Tailor-Made Company”
- 1995
  Admitted to the bar, Canton of Bern
- 1989–1995
  Studied at the Faculty of Law and Economics at the University of Bern

Languages

German, English, French

Publications & Presentations

«Sprechen und Schweigen» im Verwaltungsrat Jusletter 5. Mai 2025, pp. 2- 9	Thomas Bähler	2025
Die zehn Gebote des KMU-Verwaltungsrates: die Tätigkeit eines Verwaltungsrates ist Knochenarbeit VR Mandat.com	Thomas Bähler	2023
The Ten Commandments of the SME Board of Directors The work of a board of directors is hard work VR Mandat.com	Thomas Bähler	2023
„Lust auf Führen und Gestalten" Recht relevant für Verwaltungsräte, Ausgabe 1/2020	Thomas Bähler	2020
M&A in Switzerland Finance Monthly	Thomas Bähler	2015
The 10 Commandments for start-ups Swiss Venture Capital Report No 3	Thomas Bähler	2015
Virtual Currencies and Bitcoin Lawyer Monthly	Thomas Bähler	2014
"Damit es auch im Ausland mit rechten Dingen zugeht" ku International geschäften; November 2013	Thomas Bähler	2013
Spotlight on Holding Companies in Switzerland Finance Monthly	Thomas Bähler	2013
Intellectual Property & Antitrust 2013 GCR Global competition review, gettin the deal through, S. 123-128	Daniel Emch Thomas Bähler	2013
Intellectual Property & Antitrust 2012 GCR Global competition review, gettin the deal through, S. 131-136	Daniel Emch Thomas Bähler	2012
Company formation in Switzerland Lawyer Monthly, Sept 2012	Thomas Bähler	2012

Geschäftsbeziehungen mit China Swiss Export Journal 1/2011	Thomas Bähler	2011
Die massgeschneiderte Gesellschaft – Ausgestaltungsmöglichkeiten für kleine und mittlere Unternehmen am Beispiel der GmbH / Dissertation, Abhandlungen zum schweizerischen Recht ASR	Thomas Bähler	1999
Mitarbeit am Band VIII/6 «Der Konzern»	Thomas Bähler	1997
Gründe für die gesteigerte Attraktivität der GmbH	Thomas Bähler	1996
Eingriffe des Börsengesetzes ins Aktienrecht	Thomas Bähler	1996
Gründe für die gesteigerte Attraktivität der GmbH (überarbeitete Fassung)	Thomas Bähler	1996