

SPECIAL
FEATURE

LegalcommunityCH
Inhousecommunity Days 2024

AIPPI, steering
Intellectual property
into the future

Rewriting the narrative of healthcare rights

Interview with Alejandro Bes, new general counsel of Axmed

LegalTech as game changer

Dominic Rogger, Managing Partner of Pontinova Law,
on the importance of a boutique approach combined
with cutting-edge technology for the legal profession



Claudia La Via



Law goes “beyond” and becomes increasingly human-centric

In a globally complex period, the legislative context is also evolving. It's not just the nature of law that is changing: this is a revolution that starts with people. Law should and can no longer be a mere exercise in form but must genuinely acquire a more “human” touch, with the capacity to interpret, act, and support in a way that places the individual at the center through a holistic approach.

It's inspiring to see how the Swiss legal market continues to stand out as both a virtuous and solid ecosystem, setting trends and providing a global example of how the legal profession can be applied ethically.

The challenges are numerous: the widespread adoption of Artificial intelligence and other revolutionary technologies is bringing an unprecedented transformation. Equally unprecedented, however, is the risk that, without legal safeguards, it could become a double-edged sword — particularly when exploited maliciously to harm, deceive, or profit. With the rise of AI, the line between reality and

fabricated digital content has become alarmingly blurred. Deepfake technology now allows anyone with access to the right algorithms to create highly convincing digital imitations of faces, voices, and even full-body movements. While fascinating, this technology poses serious ethical and legal risks, particularly in media, intellectual property (IP), and privacy rights, raising urgent questions for legal professionals.

There are undeniable advantages to AI too, both for businesses and law firms. Simplifying and streamlining work are just a few of the benefits that technological innovation brings. But, like every “revolution”, this one must be managed with care and awareness. Above all, it should be harnessed to put people back at the center.

This approach is precisely what **Pontinova**, a boutique law firm, exemplifies. Pontinova values the benefits of its niche position, providing a personal and direct relationship with clients while making the most of what technology can offer to the legal sector today. We interviewed its managing partner, **Dominig Rogger**, who explained how technology is now a tool capable of putting people back at the center. Rogger recently co-founded beavr, an AI-powered legal tech startup that aims to revolutionize the legal field by automating essential workflows, enabling legal professionals to streamline complex tasks while maintaining complete control over quality and accuracy. He emphasizes that automation should empower legal professionals, not sideline them, affirming his vision for a future in which AI enhances the legal profession without replacing its human expertise and the “one-to-one” approach.

Another fundamental aspect highlighted in the stories we are sharing this month is the idea that law should serve as a practical bridge to innovation and societal impact. This perspective emerged in our interview with **Alejandro Bes**, recently appointed in-house counsel of **Axmed**, a startup founded with the goal of rewriting the narrative of healthcare accessibility as well as that of the legal profession, which can no longer be seen or perceived as separate from the business or its ultimate purpose: the safeguarding of everyone's right. For this reason today, lawyers and in-house counsels are called upon to play an active role in implementing ESG principles and to let companies and clients understand the value of integrating social impact goals into legal strategies. ■

2024

EVENTS CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

- Financecommunity Week Milan, 11-15/11/2024
- Financecommunity Awards Milan, 14/11/2024
- LegalcommunityMENA Awards Riyadh, 21/11/2024

DECEMBER

- The LatAm Energy & Infrastructure Awards São Paulo, 11/12/2024

2025

EVENTS CALENDAR

JANUARY

- Legalcommunity Energy Awards Milan, 30/01/2025

FEBRUARY

- Private Capital Talks and Drinks Madrid, 06/02/2025
- Legalcommunity Finance Awards Milan, 13/02/2025
- Iberian Lawyer Sustainability Summit - Spain Madrid, 20/02/2025
- Iberian Lawyer Labour Awards Madrid, 20/02/2025

MARCH

- Iberian Lawyer Inspirallaw Madrid, 06/03/2025
- Financecommunity Fintech Awards Milan, 13/03/2025
- Legalcommunity IP&TMT Awards Milan, 20/03/2025
- LC Sustainability Summit Milan, 25/03/2025
- LC Sustainability Awards Milan, 25/03/2025

APRIL

- LC Inspirallaw Italia Milan, 01/04/2025
- Legalcommunity Tax Awards Milan, 03/04/2025

MAY

- LegalcommunityCH Awards Zurich, 08/05/2025
- Legalcommunity Forty under 40 Awards Milan, 15/05/2025
- Iberian Lawyer Legaltech Day Madrid, 29/05/2025
- Iberian Lawyer IP&TMT Awards Madrid, 29/05/2025

JUNE

- Legalcommunity Week Milan, 09-13/06/2025
- Legalcommunity Corporate Awards Milan, 11/06/2025
- Rock the Law Milan, 12/06/2025
- Iberian Lawyer Energy Day Madrid, 19/06/2025
- Iberian Lawyer Energy Awards Madrid, 19/06/2025

JULY

- Italian Awards Rome, 03/07/2025

SEPTEMBER

- LC Energy Day Milan, 11/09/2025
- The Latin American Lawyer Women Awards São Paulo, 11/09/2025
- Legalcommunity Labour Awards Milan, 18/09/2025

SEPTEMBER

- Iberian Lawyer Forty Under 40 Awards Madrid, 25/09/2025

OCTOBER

- Inhousecommunity Days Milan, 1-3/10/2025
- Legalcommunity Real Estate Awards Milan, 09/10/2025
- Inhousecommunity Awards Italia Milan, 16/10/2025
- Legalcommunity Marketing Awards Milan, 20/10/2025
- Inhousecommunity Days Switzerland Zurich, 23-24/10/2025
- Legalcommunity Litigation Awards Milano, 28/10/2025

NOVEMBER

- Iberian Lawyer Inhousecommunity Day Madrid, 06/11/2025
- Iberian Lawyer Gold Awards Madrid, 06/11/2025
- FinancecommunityWEEK Milan

LEGEND

- Legalcommunity / LegalcommunityCH
- LegalcommunityMENA
- LegalcommunityWEEK
- Financecommunity
- FinancecommunityES
- FinancecommunityWEEK
- Iberian Lawyer
- The Latin American Lawyer
- Inhousecommunity
- Foodcommunity
- LC

ITALY

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ENERGY & INFRASTRUCTURE		
Research Period from	01/11/23	DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period to	31/10/24	
Deadline Submission	27/09/2024*	
Report Publication	Feb-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 22 November 2024

FINANCE		
Research Period from	01/12/23	DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period to	30/11/24	
Deadline Submission	11/10/2024*	
Report Publication	Feb-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 13 December 2024

IP&TMT		
Research Period from	01/01/24	DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period to	31/12/24	
Deadline Submission	08/11/2024*	
Report Publication	Apr-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 17 January 2025

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Research Period to	31/01/25	
Deadline Submission	06/12/2024*	
Report Publication	Apr-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 14 March 2025

CORPORATE		
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Research Period to	31/03/25	
Deadline Submission	17/01/2025*	
Report Publication	Jul-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 18 April 2025

LABOUR		
Research Period from	01/04/24	DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period to	31/03/25	
Deadline Submission	18/04/2025	
Report Publication	Oct-25	

REAL ESTATE		
Research Period from	01/07/24	DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period to	30/04/25	
Deadline Submission	16/05/2025	
Report Publication	Nov-25	

INHOUSECOMMUNITY		
Research Period from	01/07/24	
Research Period to	30/06/25	
Deadline Submission	23/05/2025	
Report Publication	Nov-25	

LITIGATION		
Research Period from	01/04/24	
Research Period to	31/03/25	
Deadline Submission	30/05/2025	
Report Publication	Nov-25	

FINANCECOMMUNITY		
Research Period from	24/08/24	
Research Period to	31/08/25	
Deadline Submission	27/06/2025	
Report Publication	Dec-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 29 August 2025

SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

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LABOUR		
Research Period from	01/12/23	DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period to	30/11/24	
Deadline Submission	20/09/2024*	
Report Publication	Apr-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 13 December 2024

IP&TMT		
Research Period from	01/03/24	DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period to	28/02/25	
Deadline Submission	15/11/2024*	
Report Publication	Jun-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 14 March 2025

ENERGY & INFRASTRUCTURE		
Research Period from	01/04/24	DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period to	31/03/25	
Deadline Submission	17/01/2025*	
Report Publication	Jul-25	

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SWITZERLAND

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SWITZERLAND		
Research Period from	01/01/24	DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period to	31/12/24	
Deadline Submission	15/11/2024	
Report Publication	Jun-25	

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MENA

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MENA		
Research Period from	01/05/24	
Research Period to	30/04/24	
Deadline Submission	27/06/2025	
Report Publication	Jan-26	

LATAM

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ENERGY & INFRASTRUCTURE		
Research Period from	01/05/24	
Research Period to	30/04/25	
Deadline Submission	30/05/2025	
Report Publication	Jan-26	

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On the Move



APPOINTMENT

Corinne Russi new legal counsel of SIG Group

Corinne Russi (pictured) has been appointed as legal counsel of SIG Group, a solutions provider of packaging employing 9.000 people worldwide in over 100 countries, founded and headquartered in Neuhausen, Switzerland. Russi is a legal professional with extensive experience in corporate law, M&A, and finance transactions. Prior to joining SIG Group, she worked at Partners Group's corporate legal department for a seven-month term, gaining valuable experience in their general counsel office. From May 2020 to November 2022 she was an associate attorney at Niederer Kraft Frey, focusing on high-profile international and domestic transactions. Early in her career, she gained foundational experience as a student trainee at various law firms including Pestalozzi, Schellenberg Wittmer, Rüd Winkler Partner, and OBT.

ARBITRATION

5Gambit Disputes reinforces arbitration with Leonid Shmatenko

Zurich-based boutique law firm 5Gambit Disputes has enhanced its arbitration practice with the addition of Leonid Shmatenko, a dual-qualified German and Swiss lawyer, as Counsel. Shmatenko brings extensive experience from his previous role at Eversheds Sutherland in Zurich, where he contributed significantly to complex commercial and investment arbitration cases, including securing a key Art. 185a PILA judgment at Zurich District Court. Shmatenko's career includes training at top law firms Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, Orrick Herrington Sutcliffe, and Derains & Gharavi across Düsseldorf, Paris, and Geneva. He has handled notable cases, including high-stakes arbitrations like Boyko v. Ukraine, BOTAS v. Gazprom, and UkrEnergo v. Russia. At Peter & Kim, he served as Tribunal Secretary in a Zurich-seated case involving Glencore, where the tribunal substantiated findings of bad faith against the company.





NEW ENTRIES

David Müller joins the CMS' banking & corporate department

David Müller (pictured) joined CMS Banking and Corporate Department as an attorney in Geneva. He will work alongside Mr. Pascal Favre, Mr. Jérôme Levrat, and Mr. Vaik Müller, as well as with the team members responsible for the department in Geneva. David Müller earned his Bachelor's degree in Law from the University of Lausanne in 2020, during which he completed a one-year exchange program at the University of Zurich. He then received a Master's degree in Law and Economics (HEC & Law) from the University of Lausanne in 2022.

LEADERSHIP

Dentons appoints Wendela Raas as new CEO for Europe

Dentons has announced the appointment of Wendela Raas (pictured), a partner based in Amsterdam, as the firm's new Chief Executive Officer for Europe. In her new role, Raas will oversee leadership and strategy for the firm's European region, which encompasses 23 offices across 18 countries in Europe and Central Asia. Raas has been a prominent figure at Dentons since the firm merged with Amsterdam-based Boekel De Nerée in 2017, where she previously served as Managing Partner. She is currently a member of Dentons' European and Global Boards and holds the position of Global Vice Chair. Additionally, she leads the firm's Global Consumer Products and Retail sector group.



BOARD

Lorenza Ferrari Hofer, new president of AIPPI

Lorenza Ferrari Hofer (pictured), partner at Schellenberg Wittmer, has been elected president of AIPPI, the world's leading non-profit association dedicated to the development and improvement of laws for the protection of intellectual property. Founded in 1897, the prestigious Zurich-based organization has over 9000 members worldwide, representing more than 110 countries. The election took place during the AIPPI World Congress in Hangzhou, China. She will preside over the organization for the next two years.

On the web



Renewable energy, healthcare and augmented reality set the path to global investments

Switzerland's legal landscape is buzzing with high-impact transactions that span industries and geographies, demonstrating the country's role as a strategic financial hub and the depth of its legal expertise. Recently, Swiss law firms have guided significant financing and investment rounds, each deal contributing to advancements in sectors ranging from renewable energy and healthcare to augmented reality and construction technology. These transactions not only reflect Swiss firms' prowess in handling complex cross-border deals but also underscore an emphasis on sustainable growth, innovation, and health-related advancements.

Prominent law firms like Homburger, Walder Wyss, and Niederer Kraft Frey (NKF) have taken center stage in these deals. For instance, Homburger advised SMBC on a substantial Samurai loan aimed at supporting Axpo Holding's renewable energy ventures, illustrating how Switzerland is fostering green energy finance at a global scale. Walder Wyss's work with 14Trees on a Series A-1 round backed by Amazon's Climate Pledge Fund reflects a similar commitment to sustainability, focusing on revolutionizing the construction industry through 3D printing technology that minimizes carbon footprints.

Innovation also emerges as a key theme. NKF's guidance on CREAL SA's Series B Prime financing highlights Switzerland's role in cutting-edge tech, as CREAL develops light-field displays with ZEISS, aiming to transform vision care through virtual simulations and diagnostics. This deal exemplifies the country's position at the intersection of technology and healthcare, while Homburger's support for Hevolution Foundation's investment in Vandria underscores a focus on health-span science, fostering research into therapies for age-related diseases.

These recent cases showcase Swiss law firms as essential facilitators of transformative, future-oriented transactions, with each deal contributing to sustainable development, technological breakthroughs, or improvements in healthcare. The breadth and complexity of these projects highlight Switzerland's robust financial and legal ecosystem and its commitment to shaping a forward-looking, resilient global economy.



DIETER GERICKE

Homburger Advises Kellenberger Family in Calida reduction stake

The Kellenberger family has significantly reduced its ownership in Calida Holding through two key transactions: a public buy-back offer and a direct share repurchase. Homburger served as legal advisor to the Kellenberger family, guiding them through both transactions. The team was led by **Dieter Gericke** (pictured) supported by a skilled group including Hansjürg Appenzeller, Daniel Häusermann, Cédric Berger, Thierry Burckhardt, Caspar Wehrle, and Marc Abplanalp from the Corporate/M&A team, as well as Reto Heuberger, Arbnor Sheholli, and Philipp Stiegeler from the Tax department.

PRACTICE AREA:*Capital Markets***DEAL:***Calida Holding***LAW FIRM:***Homburger***HEAD PARTNERS:***Dieter Gericke***VALUE:***Not disclosed*



DOMINIK HOHLER

Walder Wyss with 14Trees on the completion of a Series A-1 round

Walder Wyss has advised 14Trees on the completion of an exclusive Series A-1 round backed by Amazon's Climate Pledge Fund, alongside founding investor Holcim. The joint investment enables the rollout of 3D printing in construction and supports the company's transformation from a pioneer in Africa to a globally facing proptech start-up. 14Trees aims to improve construction speed and sustainability and become a global player in low-carbon 3D printing solutions across Europe and US. Walder Wyss' team was led by partner **Dominik Hohler** (pictured) and **Christian A. Schmid** (senior associate) and included **Marion Bähler** (partner), **David E. Graf**, **Carmen Stetter**, **Suan Jung** and **Viviana Montorfano** (trainee lawyers) from the corporate/M&A team as well as **Fabienne Limacher** (partner), **Natascha Rizzi** (senior associate) and **Daniela Hottiger** (associate) from the tax team.

PRACTICE AREA

Banking & Finance

DEAL

14Trees

LAW FIRM

Walder Wyss

HEAD PARTNERS

Dominik Hohler

VALUE

Not disclosed



ANDREAS MÜLLER



MARC ABPLANALP

Vandria Series A investment round, Homburger advises Hevolution Foundation

Homburger has advised Hevolution Foundation on its participation in a Series A investment round in Vandria, which raised a total of USD 30.7 million. Hevolution Foundation, a global non-profit organization dedicated to advancing health span science through grants and early-stage investments, joined other investors in providing additional funding to support Vandria's research and development efforts. Vandria specializes in discovering and developing novel small molecules that induce mitophagy, with a focus on treating age-related and chronic diseases. The Series A funding will enable the company to continue advancing its therapeutic solutions aimed at these critical areas of healthcare. The Homburger legal team advising Hevolution Foundation was led by **Andreas Müller** (pictured left) and **Marc Abplanalp** (pictured right) (both corporate/M&A), along with **Luca Dal Molin** and **Joel Fink** (both IP/IT) and **Jeremy Reichlin** (Employment and Executive Compensation).

PRACTICE AREA

Banking & Finance

DEAL

Vandria

LAW FIRMS

Homburger

HEAD PARTNERS

Andreas Müller and Marc Abplanalp

VALUE

Not disclosed



KARIM PIGUET

Creal secures Series B Prime financing with NKF

Niederer Kraft Frey (NKF) advised CREAL SA on its successful Series B Prime financing round, which was led by Carl Zeiss Vision International GmbH. NKF also advised CREAL on a strategic license agreement with ZEISS, marking a significant step in the Swiss startup's growth trajectory.

CREAL SA, a company pioneering light-field augmented reality (AR) displays, aims to revolutionize how digital content integrates into the physical world by projecting truly 3D images with natural focal depth. The fresh funding will enable CREAL to expand into new and existing markets and accelerate the development of innovative products.

In addition to the financing, CREAL and ZEISS are collaborating to develop a digitized vision care platform. This partnership will leverage CREAL's light-field display technology to introduce advanced tools for eye diagnostics and virtual simulations of ophthalmic and contact lenses. The goal is to modernize and streamline traditional vision tests, making them faster, more cost-effective, and user-friendly.

The NKF advisory team was led by partners **Karim Piguet** (pictured) and **Phidias Ferrari**, with senior associate Melania Sirbu, associate Tania Luminuku, junior associate Jonathan Fumeaux, and associate Boris Catzefflis contributing their expertise in Corporate/M&A and Technology law.

PRACTICE AREA

Banking & Finance

DEAL

CREAL SA

LAW FIRM

Niederer Kraft Frey

HEAD PARTNER

Karim Piguet and Phidias Ferrari

VALUE

Not disclosed



JÜRG FRICK

NATHALIE SCHERRER

Homburger with SMBC on a Samurai loan

Homburger acted as counsel to SMBC Group in its capacity as documentation agent in connection with an English law-governed JPY 42,000 million (around CHF 250 million) sustainability-linked Samurai loan with Axpo Holding as borrower and an international syndicate of banks as lenders for the financing of Axpo's business development in fields such as renewable energy in Switzerland and abroad. The Homburger team comprised **Jürg Frick** (pictured left) and **Nathalie Scherrer** (pictured right) (both financing and investment products) and Stefan Oesterhelt (tax).

PRACTICE AREA

Banking & Finance

DEAL

SMBC

LAW FIRM

Homburger

HEAD PARTNER

Jürg Frick and Nathalie Scherrer

VALUE

250 milioni di CHF



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INFORMATION



EVENTS



INTELLIGENCE



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DOMINIC ROGGER

LegalTech as game changer

Dominic Rogger, Managing Partner of Pontinova Law, on how a boutique approach combined with cutting-edge technology and support for independent practices is fostering creativity and a fresh, client-focused approach to the legal profession

by claudia la via

In a market often dominated by large, international law firms, boutique firms have carved out a unique space, prioritizing specialization, client-centric approaches, and high-quality service over sheer scale. Pontinova Law, based in Zurich and Abu Dhabi, exemplifies this model with a strong emphasis on cross-border expertise and a personal touch that resonates across industries. At its helm is **Dominic Rogger**, managing partner and specialist in FinTech, blockchain, and financial market law. Rogger brings a depth of knowledge and creative problem-solving to legal challenges at the intersection of traditional financial services and cutting-edge technology. He also recently co-founded *beavr*, an AI-powered legal tech startup, which aims to revolutionize the legal field by automating essential workflows, empowering legal professionals to streamline complex tasks while maintaining full control over the quality and accuracy of their work. "Automation must empower legal professionals, not sideline them", emphasizes Rogger confirming his vision for a future where AI enhances the legal profession without replacing its human expertise and the "one-to-one" approach. In this exclusive interview with MAG, Rogger highlights the values of being a boutique law firm with a "glocal" vision and an eye on innovation.

Pontinova is a boutique law firm specializing in international legal advice at the interface between Germany, Switzerland, and the United Arab Emirates. What are the key aspects of your business?

At Pontinova, we're committed to bridging complex cross-border legal matters for our clients, particularly within fintech, blockchain, and mergers and acquisitions. Our mission is to be the "bridge to your legal solutions," combining regulatory knowledge and innovative strategies to navigate the fast-evolving financial and technological landscape.

What are the positive aspects and main challenges of being a boutique law firm in your country and in an international context?

Operating as a boutique firm allows us to deliver highly specialized, personalized services.

«Our mission is to be the "bridge to your legal solutions" combining regulatory knowledge and innovative strategies to navigate the fast-evolving financial and technological landscape»

Flexibility and quick adaptability are essential, and they enable us to meet client needs efficiently, even for large-scale international projects. The biggest challenge we face is balancing our tailored approach while handling the demands of global projects and competing with the resources of large international firms.

In your core business, how important is competition with international and global law firms?

We focus on niche expertise and keeping a close eye on regulatory changes. Rather than competing with large firms on scale, we prioritize strategic partnerships and personalized client engagement. Our clients value our dedication to specialized service over broader, less tailored offerings.

How would you describe Pontinova with three words?

Human, Integrity, Reliability. These words reflect our commitment to client-centric service with an unwavering focus on ethical and reliable legal guidance.



PONTINOVA OFFICE FROM THE OUTSIDE

You specialize in both traditional financial market law and the areas of fintech and blockchain. What are the main challenges today for clients in these sectors?

Clients in these fields grapple with a complex regulatory landscape that's often slow to adapt to technological advancements. Cybersecurity and consumer trust also present significant hurdles, and for blockchain specifically, aligning business models with regulatory frameworks that may not fully recognize new technologies is an ongoing challenge.

From your perspective, what could be the positive aspects and challenges of corporate adoption of blockchain?

Blockchain technology offers advantages like transparency, efficiency, and enhanced data security. However, corporate adoption still faces challenges, particularly around regulatory uncertainty, privacy issues, and the technical difficulties of integrating blockchain with existing systems.

What are the most important projects in Pontinova's pipeline for the coming months?

A significant initiative we're working on is expanding our *Pontinova Law Group Association*, designed to support senior lawyers in launching

their own practices. We offer two models — Plug&Play and Affiliate — which allow these lawyers access to Pontinova's infrastructure and brand support. It's an empowering model that encourages independent practice while leveraging Pontinova's resources.

How have clients' needs changed recently? What do they expect when they get in touch with Pontinova?

Clients today are seeking more proactive legal support, especially with anticipating regulatory challenges. Additionally, there's a growing demand for digital solutions to streamline complex legal processes, allowing clients to operate more flexibly in fast-paced sectors like fintech.

How would you describe the Swiss legal ecosystem today?

The Swiss legal landscape is dynamic and highly innovation-friendly, particularly within finance and technology. With strong regulatory frameworks and a focus on client protection, Switzerland has become a fertile ground for legal and financial tech innovation.

What trends do you see emerging in the legal profession?

The legal field is experiencing major shifts,


largely due to digitization and the integration of AI. These tools have drastically improved efficiency and accuracy in tasks that previously required extensive time and expertise. Additionally, we're seeing considerable consolidation among mid-sized firms, a trend driven by evolving client expectations for more specialized and flexible services.

There's a lot of talk about AI in law today. You recently co-founded an AI-driven startup called beavr. What's the aim of this startup, and how could it benefit both the legal business and Pontinova's clients?

Beavr is an AI platform designed to automate key legal workflows, improving productivity and precision for law firms and in-house legal teams. For Pontinova's clients, this means faster service

and lower costs, as routine tasks like compliance checks and data processing are managed more efficiently. By allowing lawyers to offload repetitive tasks, we empower them to focus on high-value client interactions and strategic guidance.

How do you think AI will evolve within the legal ecosystem?

AI's role in law will go beyond automating administrative tasks. In the next 18 months, I expect AI to become integral in every law firm's operations, with tools that not only handle routine document review but also augment lawyers' analytical and strategic capabilities. With the right AI tools, a lawyer can significantly broaden their skill set, making their work faster, more precise, and strategically deeper than ever before. 



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ZÜRICH

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17.30	Welcome Cocktail	19.30	Standing Dinner
18.00	Roundtable		

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A portrait of Alejandro Bes, a man with short dark hair and light blue eyes, smiling. He is wearing a dark blue sweater over a light blue button-down shirt. The background is a neutral, light-colored wall. The entire image is framed by a thin orange border.

Rewriting the narrative of healthcare rights

Alejandro Bes, new Axmed general counsel, shares his vision on the importance of integrating social impact goals into the legal strategy, transforming law into a practical bridge to innovation and societal impact

by claudia la via

In regions where access to essential medicines is often hindered by geographic or economic constraints, Axmed is rewriting the narrative of healthcare accessibility. Based in Switzerland, this innovative B2B platform empowers governments and organizations in developing countries to source and secure critical medicines. With recent funding of 2 million dollars led by Founderful Ventures and an earlier 5 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Axmed is on a trajectory to bring affordable healthcare solutions to low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), with a strong focus on maternal and child healthcare.

The company's mission-driven approach is reflected in its leadership, particularly with the recent addition of Alejandro Bes as general counsel. Bes brings a rich background in corporate and pharmaceutical law, from his early career at Freshfields in Spain to legal roles at Apple and Novartis. His move to Axmed signals a strategic step for the company, especially as it navigates the complex intersection of healthcare, technology, and cross-border compliance.

As Bes puts it, "I was drawn to Axmed by the company's ambitious goals and clear mission to enhance healthcare accessibility — my motivation is anchored in a belief that law should serve as a practical bridge to innovation and societal impact". His perspective reflects the evolving role of in-house counsel in startups with global social missions, where legal strategy must harmonize rigorous compliance with the flexibility needed to serve diverse regions effectively.

How do you envision the role of general counsel evolving at Axmed, given the increasing role of technology and the company's strong focus on social sustainability?

The role of general counsel at Axmed will increasingly blend strategic risk management with proactive guidance on digital health innovations and ethical frameworks. I see my role evolving into one that's as much about being a strategic advisor on cross-border regulations (e.g., advising, mapping, and acting to ensure regulatory compliance in the countries where we are active) as it is about steering initiatives that reinforce our commitment to equity in healthcare.

What particular aspects of this role do you feel will drive the company's mission to make healthcare more accessible in underserved regions?

The legal team can support Axmed's mission by developing flexible legal frameworks and solutions that allow us to navigate local regulations without losing sight of our mission. Whether it's streamlining cross-border compliance or crafting contracts that enable smooth partnerships with local healthcare providers, my goal is to reduce legal barriers to accessible, quality healthcare.

With technology playing a transformative role in healthcare, how do you see it impacting your work as general counsel, especially when it comes to managing legal compliance and data protection across borders?

Technology expands our capabilities, but it also raises complex issues in data privacy and jurisdictional compliance. My role will include overseeing data protection frameworks that align with both GDPR and other country-specific regulations, while advising on cross-border data flows. Ensuring that our tech infrastructure supports scalability without compromising data privacy will be central.

What are some of the unique legal implications or challenges for a Swiss-based company like Axmed that operates across multiple, often underserved countries?

Operating from Switzerland, Axmed benefits from a stable legal framework and reputation. However, navigating diverse regulatory landscapes in underserved regions—each with unique compliance standards—is a challenge. Legal

«The role of general counsel at Axmed will increasingly blend strategic risk management with proactive guidance on digital health innovations and ethical frameworks»

implications often include adapting to variable regulatory frameworks, establishing clear legal protection in emerging markets, and negotiating with local entities to ensure regulatory alignment and operational stability.

What do you see as the most significant legal challenges facing the pharmaceutical industry today, particularly for startups focusing on accessibility in developing markets?

Access to affordable medicine, clean supply chains, regulatory compliance across diverse jurisdictions, and IP rights management are critical challenges. For startups, particularly those focused on developing markets, balancing cost with compliance, managing partnerships for local impact, and navigating varied regulatory frameworks require thoughtful legal strategy to both protect the business and foster accessibility.



«I look for firms with in-depth regional expertise, particularly in healthcare and regulatory law. But very importantly, I look for a cultural fit and understanding of Axmed's ethos»

When selecting a law firm to partner with, what are the primary characteristics you look for?

I look for firms with in-depth regional expertise, particularly in healthcare and regulatory law. But very importantly, I look for a cultural fit and understanding of Axmed's ethos. Agility, cross-border compliance expertise, and a collaborative mindset are key.

Do you believe that Axmed needs different partnerships with law firms in each of the countries it operates, and what are the key benefits or drawbacks of this approach?

Yes, in most cases, localized partnerships offer an advantage, as they bring specific knowledge of each country's regulatory environment. The primary benefit is a tailored legal approach that respects regional nuances. However, managing multiple firms can add complexity and cost, so the approach is strategic—leveraging core partnerships in key regions while consolidating where feasible.

Sustainability, particularly social sustainability, is a cornerstone of Axmed's mission. How do you see your role supporting initiatives that promote social impact and accessibility to quality healthcare?

My role will involve crafting policies and partnerships that support sustainable, accessible healthcare solutions while ensuring that




ONE OF AXMED DELIVERIES IN AFRICA

our operations and contracts respect ethical standards. This involves promoting transparency, ethical business practices, and integrating social impact goals into our legal strategy.

Given your extensive background in both corporate and pharmaceutical legal counsel, what leadership strategies do you plan to bring to Axmed's legal team?

I plan to foster a culture of proactive and pragmatic problem-solving, where the team views legal hurdles as solvable challenges rather than barriers. Emphasizing cross-functional collaboration, my goal is that the legal team operates in sync with other departments to anticipate needs and support strategic growth.

What advice would you give to other legal professionals interested in transitioning into the pharmaceutical and healthcare industry, especially for roles focused on emerging and underserved markets?

I'd advise them to develop a deep understanding of regulatory landscapes and the ethical implications of healthcare law, as well as gaining particular expertise in a specific vertical within the industry. Flexibility, cultural sensitivity, and a strategic approach to compliance are crucial, particularly in emerging markets. 

«My goal is that the legal team operates in sync with other departments to anticipate needs and support strategic growth»



The rise of GC and counsels within law firms

How new legal roles are shaping career paths,
strategic agility and work-life balance

A significant trend is emerging across Swiss law firms: the increasing presence of general counsels (GC) and counsels within firm structures. This development reflects a nuanced approach to career progression and work dynamics in the legal profession. General counsels act as key advisors, focusing on internal compliance and strategic governance, while counsels provide a specialized, client-facing role that balances high-level responsibilities with flexibility. This evolving model complements the traditional partnership track, offering diverse career paths that cater to the varying professional and personal goals of today's legal talent. By adopting these roles, Swiss law firms are creating a more adaptable structure that supports both firm growth and individual fulfillment.

GENERAL COUNSELS: THE STRATEGIC LEGAL ANCHOR

Traditionally, general counsels were responsible for ensuring a firm's compliance with regulations, but today's GCs have evolved into strategic leaders. "The role of general counsel within a law firm has evolved from being primarily concerned with legal compliance to becoming a strategic, multi-disciplinary

leadership position," says Kilian Schärli, Managing Partner at MLL. He emphasizes that modern GCs are essential not just for risk management but for steering the firm toward long-term sustainability. They are now integral to both strategic planning and operational oversight, supporting growth initiatives and safeguarding the firm's reputation.

In an era of heightened regulatory scrutiny, the GC's role is indispensable. They act as ethical anchors, ensuring the firm navigates complex legal obligations while maintaining high standards. "The GC ensures the firm remains legally sound, efficiently managed, and ethically responsible," Schärli adds, describing a position that has expanded from a compliance-focused role to one central to governance and business strategy.

THE COUNSEL ROLE: A BALANCED ALTERNATIVE TO PARTNERSHIP

While general counsels are focused on internal oversight, counsels are client-facing experts who provide specialized advice without the all-encompassing demands of partnership. As a hybrid role that falls between associate and partner, counsels manage their own mandates



and play pivotal roles in high-stakes cases. “The counsel position,” explains Ülkü Cibik, a counsel at MLL, “offers a level of responsibility with the opportunity to contribute to high-profile cases, but simultaneously allows for professional autonomy”. For Cibik, it’s an ideal step toward partnership, offering a chance to prove her value and align with the firm’s vision and, at the same time, also the firm can benefit from this position. Counsels are typically seasoned lawyers who bring focused expertise and client management skills to the firm, mentoring associates and cultivating client relationships. However, unlike partners, they avoid the extensive administrative and financial burdens. This role provides an appealing alternative to traditional partnership, particularly for professionals seeking work-life balance and flexibility without sacrificing meaningful responsibility.

DISTINGUISHING GENERAL COUNSELS AND COUNSELS: TWO PATHS, DIFFERENT PURPOSES

While both roles are crucial to a law firm’s success, general counsels and counsels address different needs. The GC is fundamentally inward-focused, ensuring that the firm’s practices align with legal and ethical standards. They act as the firm’s ethical guardian, safeguarding its compliance and strategic alignment. On the other hand, counsels are outward-facing specialists who engage directly with clients, manage cases, and help develop the firm’s business. For law firms like MLL, these roles meet complementary needs. Schärli explains, “Appointing a counsel in a big law firm leverages the attorney’s expertise, experience, and client relationships while offering an alternative career path to partnership”. The structure ensures senior attorneys can excel in complex cases without taking on full partnership responsibilities, while the GC maintains the firm’s internal regulatory standards and supports its strategic integrity.

BENEFITS TO LAW FIRMS: TALENT RETENTION AND STRATEGIC AGILITY

The counsel position has become an important



KILIAN SCHÄRLI

tool for law firms to retain talent, offering an alternative career path that appeals to experienced attorneys who might otherwise face partnership pressures. “Appointing a counsel,” says Schärli, “is a way to retain high-level talent, leveraging their skills while providing flexibility.” By integrating both GC and counsel roles, firms can benefit from specialized expertise without full partnership commitments, an attractive prospect as firms face increased competition for top legal talent.

The trend toward hiring counsels is particularly strategic for firms. As senior partners retire, law firms need a robust pipeline of seasoned attorneys who can assume leadership roles without an immediate push to partnership. This dual-track approach offers firms agility in succession planning, helping them attract and retain experienced professionals who contribute to growth without being forced onto a singular career path.

THE COUNSEL ROLE AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE: MEETING A GROWING DEMAND

As law firms recognize the importance of work-life balance, the counsel role has emerged as a viable solution. The high degree of autonomy and rather predictable workload allows counsels partially to focus on complex legal issues and meaningful client relationships without the exhaustive responsibilities of partnership. This



ÜLKÜ CIBİK

structure makes the counsel role also attractive for professionals managing family or personal commitments, an issue becoming increasingly important as firms diversify and modernize their work cultures.

For lawyers like Cibik, the counsel role offers an ideal balance between professional fulfilment and personal well-being. “The counsel role allows for a high degree of autonomy and involvement in high-profile matters” - she notes - “enabling professionals to further refine their technical skills and gain valuable experience without the pressure of managing the firm’s overall business operations”. As a result, counsels can enjoy a sustainable career while contributing significantly to the firm’s success — an approach well-suited to today’s evolving workforce.

In addition to offering a rather balanced career path, the counsel role also serves as a bridge to partnership for those seeking gradual advancement. Many firms now consider counsel positions as a preparatory phase, assessing candidates for their long-term fit before extending partnership offers. For counsels like Cibik, this phase acts as a kind of “engagement period” between counsel and partner, providing a framework for developing critical business and leadership skills that are essential for partnership but this is also a precious time for both the firm and the counsel to assess mutual

fit and long-term alignment. “This creates a win-win situation for both parties: I can continue to refine my leadership and business development skills, while the firm benefits from my expertise and commitment and own acquired mandates”, Cibik says.

Through this path, counsels can build client relationships and refine their expertise while working toward partnership status at a measured pace. The counsel role is thus both a destination and a stepping stone, creating options for lawyers who value structured growth. 📖





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- 19.15 Roundtable "*Bridging the Gap: Technology's Role in Enhancing Collaboration Between In-House Counsel and External Lawyers*"

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Abdullah Al Farha, Senior Governance Consultant, *Saudi Telecom Company*, Board Director, *ACC MENA*

Fahad Al Mubarak, the General Counsel, Executive Director, *Saudi Electricity Company in Saudi*

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Mohamed El-Mogy, General Counsel, *Siemens Energy UAE* & President, *ACC MENA*

- 20.00 Awards Ceremony
- 21.00 Seated Dinner

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Steering Intellectual property into the future

**Lorenza Ferrari Hofer, AIPPI's new president,
on the critical role of IP in a rapidly changing world
and her vision for a collaborative, forward-thinking organization**

by claudia la via

Collaboration, innovation, and legal stability are central to navigating the challenges and opportunities of today's rapidly evolving global IP landscape. This vision drives the International Association for the Protection of Intellectual Property (AIPPI) and its new president, **Lorenza Ferrari Hofer**.

AIPPI is recognized as the world's leading non-profit organization focused on advancing and harmonizing intellectual property (IP) laws globally. It recently welcomed Lorenza Ferrari Hofer, a distinguished partner at Schellenberg Wittmer, as its new president. Elected at the AIPPI World Congress in Hangzhou, China, Ferrari Hofer brings a wealth of experience and of IP knowledge and strategic vision to her two-year term. Under her leadership, AIPPI aims to build on its strong foundation while tackling the field's pressing challenges. In this exclusive interview with MAG, Ferrari Hofer shares her goals, anticipates the hurdles ahead, and reflects on the importance of collaborations in IP law.

When it comes to regulation in IP, it is essential to have a broader, global perspective. What can AIPPI do in this regard?

Regular engagement with legislative authorities has become essential to identify legal and regulatory needs and offer potential solutions. The academic legal work of AIPPI in law harmonization plays a central role, and this must be highlighted. Additionally, we increasingly collaborate with other international organizations to deepen the legal dialogue around intellectual property rights.

What challenges do you anticipate facing, and how do you plan to address them as AIPPI's new president?

The current geopolitical situation poses significant challenges, with political priorities sometimes overshadowing legal stability and harmonization. It's crucial to maintain open discussions on the importance of intellectual property protection for economic growth and social equity, despite these hurdles.



«Switzerland has a high concentration of innovative companies, from startups to international corporations, and benefits from a liberal legal framework that fosters the development of intellectual property»

How do you see AIPPI's role in advancing the global landscape of IP protection?

With nearly 9,000 members in 110 countries, AIPPI has a robust presence in the legal and regulatory landscapes of many nations. This extensive network is a key advantage in disseminating AIPPI's messages and fostering a shared understanding of intellectual property rights and their protection globally.

What are the most pressing challenges for IP protection today, and how can AIPPI help address them?

New technologies and artificial intelligence require a profound shift in our understanding of intellectual property. Machine learning makes it difficult to pinpoint human contributions behind inventions, works, and data, complicating ownership definitions. Future legislative efforts will need to address these issues, and AIPPI can play a role in guiding and informing these legislative changes.

What unique aspects of the Swiss IP landscape stand out to you compared to the broader European and global frameworks, and why is it important to act on a global level?

Switzerland has a high concentration of innovative companies, from startups to international corporations, and benefits from a liberal legal

«I want AIPPI to continue setting a standard for proactive legal dialogue and to be known as a resource that legislative bodies can turn to for informed, actionable insights in IP law»



framework that fosters the development of intellectual property. Strong collaborations between scientific institutions and industry also drive the development and commercialization of innovations. As a nation not part of any specific economic area, Switzerland relies on international agreements and this supports its traditionally global outlook.

How has your experience as a partner at Schellenberg Wittmer influenced your perspective on IP rights and advocacy?

Schellenberg Wittmer holds a prominent position in the Swiss and international legal arenas. As a full-service law firm, we recognize intellectual property rights as valuable assets for every economic player, which has reinforced my commitment to IP advocacy and my belief in its fundamental role in the economy.

What legacy do you hope to leave at AIPPI by the end of your term?

I hope to leave behind a professionally-led association, solidly established on national and regional groups. Ideally, my leadership will reinforce AIPPI's role as a key player in IP

law worldwide, one that consistently fosters international collaboration and remains responsive to new technologies and emerging global challenges. I want AIPPI to continue setting a standard for proactive legal dialogue and to be known as a resource that legislative bodies can turn to for informed, actionable insights in IP law. 

THE ASSOCIATION

Mission, structure and impact

The International Association for the Protection of Intellectual Property (AIPPI) is a politically neutral, non-profit organization established in Switzerland, focused on advancing and harmonizing IP laws worldwide. With nearly 9,000 members in 110 countries, AIPPI's objectives include improving IP protection and addressing emerging issues like AI. AIPPI operates through national groups and annual congresses where members propose and adopt resolutions influencing global IP policies. Key initiatives involve legal studies, advocacy, and fostering collaboration with legislative bodies, ensuring IP laws evolve to meet global and technological demands.



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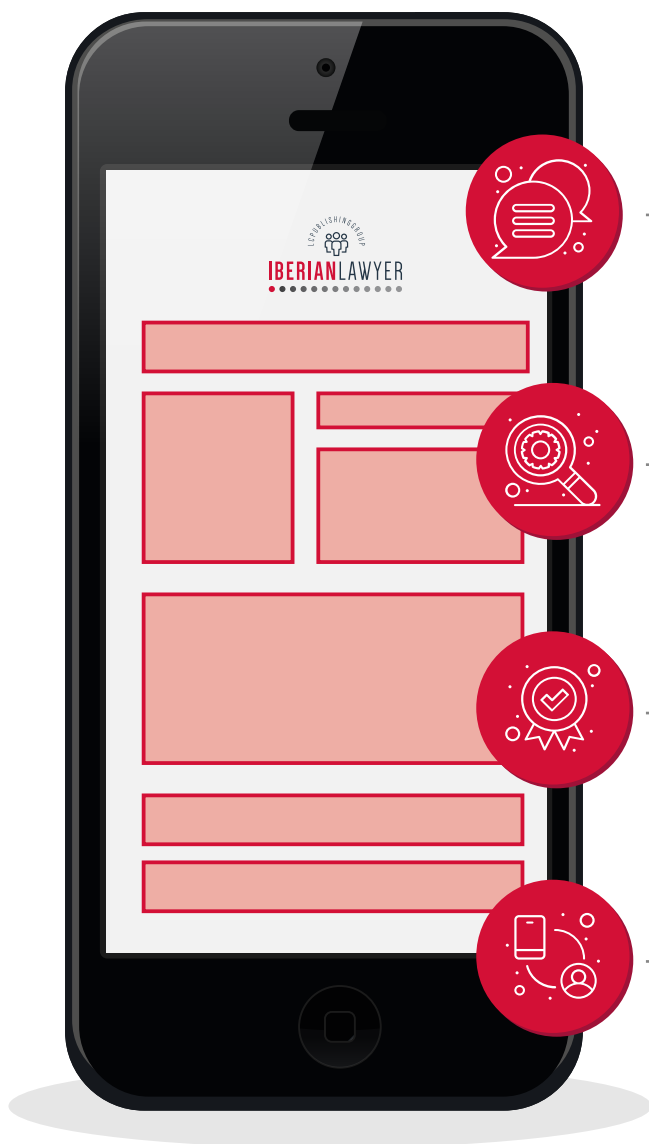


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Fighting “fake”

The emergence of deepfake technology
and its impact on law, media, and intellectual property rights

With the rise of Artificial intelligence, the line between reality and fabricated digital content has become alarmingly blurred. Deepfake technology — a term derived from "deep learning" and "fake" — now allows anyone with access to the right algorithms to create convincing digital imitations of faces, voices, and even full-body motions. This technology, while fascinating, poses serious ethical and legal risks, especially within media, intellectual property (IP), and privacy rights, raising urgent questions for Swiss legal professionals.

As deepfake technology gains traction, it places unprecedented pressure on the Swiss legal framework to address the misuse of AI-driven impersonations. This article aims to explore the current legal landscape in Switzerland, challenges for media and IP lawyers, comparisons with global regulatory efforts, and potential strategies to protect client rights in a digitally manipulated world.

THE MECHANICS AND MENACE OF DEEFAKE TECHNOLOGY

Deepfakes rely on advanced AI algorithms capable of learning and mimicking human expressions, voices, and gestures. By training on a vast array of real-world data, these models generate

synthetic media that can replicate individuals with alarming accuracy. As a result, deepfakes can be used to create fictitious yet realistic scenarios, like an altered speech by a public figure or a fabricated video of a celebrity, that can spread false information or damage reputations.

The risks are particularly concerning for the media industry, which relies heavily on visual and audio content provided by third-party sources. The speed at which deepfake content can spread online amplifies the damage, and unintentional publication of such content can lead to both reputational and financial repercussions for media companies. Swiss lawyers working in media and IP are increasingly confronted with the task of advising clients on managing these risks, as the verification of synthetic media becomes more challenging.

SWISS LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON DEEFAKES: WHERE THE LAW STANDS

Switzerland's legal system offers some tools to address issues raised by deepfakes, even though specific legislation targeting this technology is not yet in place. Instead, Swiss laws on privacy, identity, and intellectual property have been applied to address violations related to deepfake misuse.



PRIVACY AND PERSONALITY RIGHTS

Under Swiss law, individuals are protected from unauthorized use of their likeness or voice. Article 179 decies of the Swiss Criminal Code criminalizes the unauthorized recording and distribution of a person's image if it infringes upon their privacy or causes harm. This provision, though not specific to deepfakes, can be applied in cases where deepfake content misappropriates someone's image in a harmful context.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY CONCERNS

Intellectual property law intersects with deepfake issues in various ways, particularly regarding unauthorized use of an individual's image, likeness, or voice. If a deepfake employs a person's likeness without consent, it may infringe upon personality rights, which are protected under Swiss IP law if the likeness is considered an "original work." This is particularly important for celebrities and public figures, whose images are often appropriated without permission. Legal professionals working with clients in the media and entertainment industries are tasked with helping these clients protect their IP rights in a world where AI can replicate virtually any likeness.

CRIMINAL LIABILITY AND IDENTITY THEFT

While Swiss courts have seen few criminal cases directly involving deepfakes, existing laws around fraud, defamation, and identity theft can be enforced against those who create or distribute harmful deepfake content. For instance, if a deepfake is used to impersonate someone for financial gain or to harm their reputation, the perpetrator may face criminal sanctions. The law, however, is still catching up with the nuances of synthetic content, which makes it challenging to apply these provisions uniformly to all cases of deepfake misuse.

CHALLENGES FOR SWISS MEDIA AND IP LAWYERS

Legal professionals advising clients in media, publishing, and entertainment sectors encounter unique challenges when it comes to deepfakes. Media companies are constantly handling vast

amounts of digital content from various sources, and verifying the authenticity of each piece is an increasingly complex task. Failing to detect a deepfake could lead to lawsuits, reputational damage, and financial penalties if the published content is later discovered to be manipulated.

Lawyers must counsel clients on implementing thorough verification protocols, often suggesting the use of AI-driven deepfake detection tools. These tools, though not foolproof, can help detect subtle inconsistencies that indicate manipulated media, reducing the risk of accidental publication of deepfake content.

Another significant challenge is protecting intellectual property rights. Deepfakes can easily infringe on IP by recreating and distributing someone's likeness without consent. Lawyers

THE EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

Steps to tackle deepfake risks in the age of generative AI


In a decisive move to address the growing threats posed by generative AI technologies like deepfakes, the European Commission (EC) has initiated a comprehensive probe into how major tech companies manage AI-driven content on their platforms. Targeting companies such as Meta, Microsoft, Snap, TikTok, and X, the EC's investigation seeks detailed insights into each platform's strategies for mitigating the spread of false information, viral deepfakes, and other AI-related risks, including potential impacts on electoral processes and public opinion. The EC's probe is part of a broader regulatory push that includes the recently approved AI Act, the first significant AI legislation worldwide. This Act classifies AI applications into risk categories, enforcing strict requirements on high-risk systems and banning applications deemed to present unacceptable societal risks, such as government-run social scoring. For deepfake content, transparency obligations are now central, mandating platforms to clearly label and monitor AI-generated material.



may advise clients to include specific clauses in contracts to prevent unauthorized usage and protect the IP rights associated with their brand, image, or voice.

GLOBAL REGULATORY APPROACHES AND THE PATH FORWARD FOR SWITZERLAND

Switzerland's approach to deepfake regulation may benefit from observing international trends. The European Union's AI Act, for instance, is paving the way for transparency and accountability in synthetic content. Under the act, creators of deepfakes are required to disclose the synthetic nature of their content, establishing a regulatory standard that prioritizes transparency. These measures are meant to protect individual rights and ensure accountability in content creation and distribution.

Switzerland has the opportunity to implement similar principles, potentially adopting transparency labels or usage disclosures for deepfake content. As legislative developments are anticipated, there is a growing call for collaboration among Swiss regulators, tech developers, and legal professionals to create enforceable standards that balance innovation and accountability. Such standards could include requiring deepfake creators to obtain consent from individuals whose likenesses they use or implementing penalties for deepfakes that violate privacy or IP rights. 

FROM THE WORLD

California's New AI deepfake laws to target election misinformation

In a move to safeguard the integrity of Presidential elections, California aimed to protect election integrity by enacting new AI-related legislation. Governor Gavin Newsom signed three bills addressing the misuse of AI in politics, particularly targeting deepfakes. One key law prohibited the creation and distribution of election-related deepfakes starting 120 days before Election Day and extending 60 days after, empowering courts to halt the spread of such content and impose civil penalties. Another provision required political campaigns to disclose any AI-altered content used in their advertisements. However, enforcement proved challenging, as tracking digital content and identifying offenders across state lines posed obstacles. Some also questioned the time limitation, suggesting a year-round ban on election-related deepfakes might be more effective. Moreover, because these laws applied only within California, similar content from other states or countries remained unregulated, potentially diluting the impact. Achieving broader protection would likely require federal adoption of similar laws and improved mechanisms for tracking and penalizing digital offenses.



Reporting from the Inhousecommunity Days Switzerland 2024

Insightful discussions and networking at the event dedicated to the in-house legal community organized by LC Publishing group

Once again, the Inhousecommunity Days returned to the beautiful city of Zurich, Switzerland. Held at the luxurious **Park Hyatt Zurich**, this event gathered in-house legal professionals for two days of insightful discussions and networking. On October 24th and 25th, 2024, participants from across the legal field came together to explore pressing issues, share knowledge, and debate the future of the profession. Organized with the support of prominent partners, this year's edition offered a variety of discussions, workshops, and social events.

THE FIRST DAY: THE OPENING SESSION

The 2024 edition of Inhousecommunity Days kicked off on October 24th with a welcome reception and check-in at the prestigious Park Hyatt Zurich. The first event of the day started at 2:30 PM with the opening speech delivered by **Aldo Scaringella**, CEO of LC Publishing Group. His introduction set the stage for the thought-provoking discussions that followed, including key debates on the future direction of legal departments.

The first roundtable of the day, titled **"To Internalise or to Outsource? The Core Practices of Legal Affairs Departments"**, took place immediately after the welcome. The session was

moderated by **Ilaria Iaquina**, Editor-in-Chief of LegalcommunityCH. The speakers, including **Dahir Ali** (CNH Industrial), **Stefan Buerge** (Climeworks), **Claudio Elia** (STMicroelectronics), and **Jenny Hartmaan** (Axiom Law), delved into the decision-making processes behind internalizing or outsourcing legal services. Thoughtful questions about balancing in-house knowledge and external expertise generated a lively and insightful discussion.

After a quick coffee break, the day continued with the second roundtable, **"Legal Sustainability"**, moderated again by Ilaria Iaquina. This roundtable featured **Evelyn Acevedo** (Alnylam Switzerland), **Alejandro Bes** (Axmed), **Valérie Collaudin** (Gurit), **Juancho De Lassaletta** (Vifor Fresenius), and **Ueli Sommer** (Littler Switzerland). The discussion centered around how legal teams are taking on a greater role in advancing sustainability goals within their companies and how they handle the challenges of integrating sustainability into legal strategies.

The evening was marked by a cocktail reception and private dinner party hosted at Bar am Wasser, offering in-house lawyers an opportunity to unwind and network with their peers. This informal gathering included a DJ set, making for a memorable and enjoyable conclusion to the first day.



ROUNDTABLE: TO INTERNALISE OR TO OUTSOURCE? THE CORE PRACTICES OF LEGAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENTS



ROUNDTABLE: LEGAL SUSTAINABILITY



THE SECOND DAY: EXPANDING THE DISCUSSION

Day two of the Inhousecommunity Days began early on October 25th, with check-in starting at 8:15 AM. The formal sessions kicked off at 8:45 AM with another welcome message from Aldo Scaringella, together with an opening message by **Stéphanie Fougou**, General Counsel, Technicolor, Chairwoman of the Board, ECLA, and **Xavier Schops**, Chief Legal Officer & Head of M&A and Member of the Executive Committee medmix, Board Member & Treasurer, ACC Europe. The day's first roundtable, "**Technology for Conflict Resolution: Improving Timeline and Efficiency**", was moderated by Ilaria Iaquinta and featured **Alice Flacco** (MicroPort Scientific), **Stéphanie Fougou** (Technicolor), **Nicole Olsman** (Linxon), and **Leonardo Scimmi** (STOXX). Speakers shared their insights into how technology can streamline conflict resolution processes, reduce timelines, and enhance efficiency while addressing the legal and ethical challenges that arise with new technological advancements.

Following a brief coffee break, the fourth and final roundtable of the event, "**Crisis Management: Challenges of Cyber Incidents**", explored one of the most pressing issues in today's legal landscape. Moderated by **Ilaria Iaquinta**, the panel included **Elmar Büth** (Ivoclar), **Irene Comoglio** (Zucchetti Switzerland), **Nicolas Grunder** (ABB), **Kamila Pudlo** (swissQuant), and **Kees van Ophem** (Fresenius). The discussion focused on how companies can handle cyber incidents, manage sensitive data, and navigate the complexities of the various jurisdictions in which they operate.

The event closed with a final networking lunch, giving participants the chance to continue the conversations sparked throughout the two days.

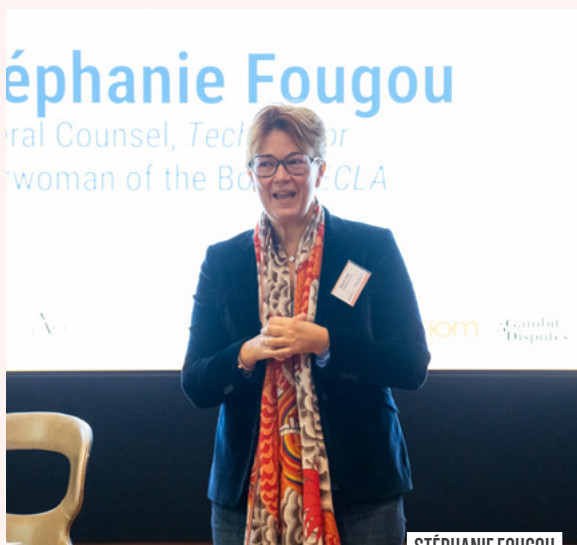
The Inhousecommunity Days 2024 in Zurich brought together an impressive lineup of speakers and a range of critical topics for the legal profession. From debates on outsourcing to the role of technology and sustainability, this event offered a unique platform for in-house counsel to share ideas, learn from one another, and engage with the broader legal community. 📺



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Marcello Dolores, head of Warner Bros. Discovery's legal office, shares the joys and challenges of a growing business

by michela cannovale

Marcello Dolores has had a whirlwind year. As Group Vice President of Legal & Regulatory for Warner Bros. Discovery in Italy and the Iberian region, he has managed the legal aspects of the company's latest ventures as it prepares to make a major leap in Italian television. With the arrival of Maurizio Crozza, Fabio Fazio, and Amadeus, coupled with the growing popularity of the Nove channel, Warner Bros. Discovery, which also owns Warner Bros., HBO, CNN, and Eurosport, is well-equipped to challenge industry giants and shake up the national television landscape. However, this success brings numerous organizational and regulatory challenges.

Public criticism of broadcast decisions

It's been a busy year, indeed. In January, Warner Bros. Discovery faced public criticism when it appeared that the decision not to broadcast the Australian Open final between Sinner and Medvedev live on free TV was theirs. But Dolores explains the situation was straightforward: European and Italian regulations outline a list of events of public interest that must be aired free-to-view. Unfortunately, this list dates back to 2012, which mandates free broadcast for events like the Davis Cup but not for Grand Slam finals featuring an Italian player. Since then, Italian tennis has rapidly grown, but the regulations have lagged, meaning that matches like the Australian Open final are not considered national events by law. In contrast, in Spain—another jurisdiction Dolores oversees—Grand Slam semifinals and finals with Spanish players are required to be broadcast on free TV.

Legal's approach to the issue

The legal department stepped in to address the situation. Warner Bros. Discovery has long-standing contractual agreements with Sky and Dazn that protect these partners' investments and subscribers. However, in the public's interest, they worked with their partners to agree on a same-day broadcast of highlights shortly after the match. Dolores and his team had just three days to advise their editorial and management teams on feasible options and negotiate a solution.

Managing disappointed tennis fans

Handling the fans' disappointment also fell

«We will certainly have to learn how to interact with AI systems. To this end, the group has already decided to exclusively use internal toolsets»

within their remit. "Absolutely," Dolores confirms. They collaborated closely with the press and PR departments to ensure the sector press understood that the inability to air the match was primarily due to legal and regulatory constraints.

The arrival of major talent like Amadeus, Crozza, and Fazio

The arrival of major talents like Amadeus, Crozza, and Fazio from Rai presented another challenge. Managing high-profile talents legally involves team effort and task forces, Dolores explains. Contracts must cover everything from the artist's performances and creative contributions to their ability to attract guests and other talents. Then, there's the matter of managing the legacy of past shows associated with them.

Balancing contracts for talent and their programs

Often, contracts are handled on two parallel fronts: with the production company for the programs and with the talent, who are usually represented by their own legal and agent teams. This requires evaluating the intellectual property associated with their programs, including show formats and titles that have become brands in their own right. For example, Amadeus's brand is closely tied to shows he hosted on Rai. A third aspect also comes into play—understanding the constraints linked to previous professional commitments, involving due diligence with

the talent's team on aspects like social media management and prior contractual obligations. Confidentiality as a top priority
Negotiations start with strict confidentiality, which is why meetings are limited to a small group, typically five people, including talent agents, lawyers, PR representatives, and company executives.

Managing talent deals in-house

Given its importance to the core business, Warner Bros. Discovery handled these talent agreements internally. Dolores emphasizes that this approach allows direct and efficient communication with internal stakeholders, as these contracts require tailored, "handcrafted" agreements negotiated piece by piece with internal contacts.

Looking ahead: legal challenges in the coming months

In the coming months, the legal department expects to focus on adapting to AI systems, using internal tools designed under global supply contracts to maintain confidentiality. In the legal office, AI will support simpler drafting tasks, document updates, and case law research.

Externally, Dolores foresees challenges surrounding the regulatory relationship between traditional TV and digitalization. One significant development will be the introduction of interactive and digital advertising on connected TVs. Advertisers will soon be able to replace main channel ads with targeted ads for larger viewer segments. This will require new regulations and standards to address compliance, privacy, and relationships with advertisers.

Boing CEO role: blending legal expertise with executive leadership

In 2023, Dolores was appointed CEO of Boing, a joint venture between Mediaset and WarnerMedia. He sees his legal background as an asset that enriches his executive role, providing a rigorous approach to management and decision-making processes. Understanding complex regulations has enabled him to navigate and enhance partnerships effectively, particularly in managing relationships and aligning engagement strategies among Boing's stakeholders.

«I would say I've experienced a natural evolution in the role of General Counsel, which is increasingly involved in business management and development»

Dividing legal and executive responsibilities

However, Dolores doesn't handle Boing's legal issues personally. "No, that would be too much!" He explains that legal matters are managed by RTI/Mediaset's legal department, which provides support on legal questions. Instead, Dolores focuses on budget management, team coordination, and advertising strategy, all geared towards achieving results that satisfy Boing's stakeholders. 📺





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Legal operations take off in Spain

CLOC launches its chapter in Spain, aiming to adapt the best international practices to the local context, fostering a more efficient and modern legal management. The vision of its leaders

by ilaria iaquinta

The revolution in legal operations has landed in Spain. In July 2024, the Spanish chapter of the Corporate Legal Operations Consortium (CLOC), the largest global community dedicated to legal operations, was officially launched, marking a significant milestone in the transformation of the country's legal sector. Led by top professionals such as Eugenia Navarro (partner at Lois and director of programmes at Esade), Gabriel Silva (legal manager at TravelPerk), María Pedrosa (head of legal tech & knowledge management at Repsol), and José María de la Jara (senior legal operations consultant at LOIS), this initiative heralds a new era of legal management, focused on efficiency, technology, and professionalism, promising to redefine work standards within Spanish law firms and legal departments.

CLOC Spain has a clear purpose: to create a community that addresses the specific challenges of the Spanish legal market by adapting the best international practices to local realities. Legal operations, which have already transformed the sector in the United States and the United Kingdom, are beginning to gain traction in Spain, although the level of adoption in the country is still developing. CLOC provides a collaborative space for professionals committed to modernising their legal departments and seeking greater efficiency.

WHAT ARE LEGAL OPERATIONS?

The definition of legal operations may initially seem ambiguous, as it encompasses multiple areas of work, from supplier management to the efficient delivery of legal services. As Navarro explains to Iberian Lawyer, "it is a set of processes and dynamics that enhance the efficiency of legal matters, both for the processes of an in-house department and for a law firm". This concept extends far beyond simple task management; it involves a complete reconfiguration of how legal services are delivered, aimed at achieving technical and operational excellence.

Navarro also emphasises the importance of measurement in this new paradigm: "What cannot be measured cannot be improved". This mindset is driving many law firms and legal departments to adopt models like CLOC's, which identifies twelve key areas of focus to achieve greater efficiency.

A SHIFT IN MINDSET

One of the most noticeable changes in legal departments is the growing demand for a more operational service. "They no longer want just technical excellence; they also want operational excellence", comments Navarro, highlighting the shift in mindset within the legal sphere. Legal departments and firms are no longer solely focused on the technical quality of advice; they seek to optimise processes, leverage technology, and enhance resource management to maximise their value within organisations.

De la Jara uses a metaphor to illustrate this change: "Legal departments are on fire. They face an overwhelming workload, with tight deadlines and disorganised documents. Legal operations is the fire brigade that helps extinguish that blaze, providing a structured approach to prevent problems from recurring". This shift has led many firms and legal departments to adopt more advanced planning and organisation strategies, moving towards a more agile and adaptive business management model.



«Legal departments are on fire. Legal operations is the fire brigade that helps extinguish that blaze»

José María de la Jara



LAUNCH PARTY FOR CLOC IN BARCELONA



«What cannot be measured cannot be improved»

Eugenia Navarro

THE LEGAL OPERATIONS PROFESSIONAL

The profile of those managing legal operations has evolved. What was once considered an exclusive role for lawyers now requires a multidisciplinary approach. Silva articulates this clearly: “I don’t think it necessarily has to be a position for a lawyer. Knowledge of the legal framework is advisable, but it must be a multidisciplinary role”. This profile demands skills in project management, technology, data analysis, and business acumen, alongside legal training.

For María Pedrosa, versatility is key: “If you are a lawyer and you work in operations, you need to have knowledge of business and management. And if you are not a lawyer, you must have an in-depth understanding of the legal sector”. This mixed approach reflects the changing nature of legal operations, requiring professionals capable of blending technical expertise with operational and managerial skills.

Moreover, training for these professionals is still in development. “At ESADE, we have started offering training courses in legal operations in collaboration with MIT, but there is still much

work to be done to consolidate this profession”, explains Navarro.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

One of the main challenges facing legal departments in Spain is resistance to change. Navarro notes: “Legal departments are made up of highly technical professionals and telling them they need to change their way of working, including the use of technology, is complicated”. The introduction of technological tools, such as artificial intelligence, presents another challenge. For Pedrosa, AI poses a particular hurdle for lawyers, as “we work with language, and AI uses language models that can profoundly impact our profession”.

Nevertheless, the potential of technology to transform the legal sector is undeniable. In Silva’s words, “technology is not an end in itself, but these days it is impossible to manage a legal department without it”. In fact, the automation of processes and the ability to manage large volumes of data enable legal departments to enhance their




«Technology is not an end in itself, but these days it is impossible to manage a legal department without it»

Gabriel Silva

efficiency and improve lawyers’ quality of life, freeing them from repetitive tasks. De la Jara adds that it is essential to adjust budgets to this new technological reality to fully harness the potential of the available tools.

THE FUTURE

The future of legal operations appears promising. According to María Pedrosa, “growth in Spain should be exponential because companies are realising that they need people to manage the legal department beyond just legal advice”. CLOC Spain positions itself as a key player in this process, aiming to create a community that shares experiences and fosters studies or use cases that reflect the realities of the sector. “Anything that helps us understand where we are is very important”, emphasises Navarro.

Legal operations have arrived to stay in Spain, addressing a genuine need within companies. As legal departments adopt new technologies and more efficient ways of working, the role of legal operations professionals will become increasingly crucial. 



«We work with language, and AI uses language models that can profoundly impact our profession»

María Pedrosa

THE CLOC I2 CORE COMPETENCIES REFERENCE MODEL

CLOC has identified 12 key competencies that every legal department should manage, with the aim of determining its level of maturity. These competencies not only serve to assess a department's growth but also to benchmark it against industry standards. Through this evaluation, legal operations can be classified into three stages: foundational, advanced, or mature, enabling continuous improvements to be made. The identified competencies are as follows:



Source: © 2018 Corporate Legal Operations Consortium, Inc.

COMPETENCY	DESCRIPTION
Financial management	Manage the departmental budget. Track accruals and forecasting. Work with Finance to identify spending trends, potential cost savings and efficiency opportunities
Vendor management	Create a vendor management program to insure quality outside counsel support at the right rates and under optimal fee arrangements. Hold regular business reviews. Negotiate fee agreements. Drive governance of billing guidelines
Cross-functional alignment	Create and drive relationships with other key company functions, such as HR, IT, Finance and Workplace Resources. Represent the Legal organization at CLOC
Technology & process support	Create a long-term technology roadmap including tools such as e-billing/matter management, contract management, content management, IP management, business process management, e-signature, board management, compliance management, legal hold, subsidiary management, etc
Service delivery & alternative support models	Drive departmental efficiency by leveraging the right resources for the right matters, including using managed services, LPOs, and other service providers and technology as appropriate
Organizational design, support & management	Deliver improved GC Staff and overall team performance by globalizing the team and creating a culture of growth, development, collaboration and accountability.
Communications	Work collaboratively across the legal ecosystem to create consistent global processes, from on boarding to complex project management support. Publish regular departmental communications, plan and execute all-hands
Data analytics	Collect and analyze relevant data from department tools and industry sources, define objectives to provide metrics and dashboards, that drive efficiencies and optimize spend, etc
Litigation support & IP management	Support e-discovery, legal hold, document review
Knowledge management	Enable efficiencies by creating seamless access to legal & department institutional knowledge through the organization and centralization of key templates, policies, processes, memos, and other learnings
Information governance & records management	Create a records management program including a record retention schedule, policies and processes. Support Intellectual Property Matters
Strategic planning	Create a long-term strategy, aligning yearly goals and corresponding metrics

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