

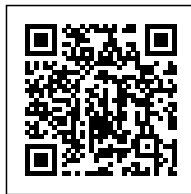
# ID EST AVOCATS, ON THE SIDE OF TECHNOLOGY

Posted on 27 November 2020



Category: [Interviews](#)

Tags: [Ex-Featured](#), [id est avocats](#)



**«*Id est*» is a Latin expression meaning «*that is to say*». It is mostly used in English, abbreviated *i.e.* But this choice of name already clarifies the intent of the firm: go beyond perfect knowledge of the law, enter into the merits, deepen. This is in fact the philosophy of id est avocats, a young brand in the Swiss legal panorama that has made its way above all in the technology sector. Also active in venture capital and private equity dealmaking, and in mergers and acquisitions, the firm relies on a very young team led by founding partner Michel Jaccard who tells *Legalcommunity.ch* about the evolution of the firm, from foundation up to present.**

## **Could you tell the history of *id est avocats*?**

id est avocats was born in 2012 and now has three partners and eight associates, following steady growth over the years. The firm services clients throughout Switzerland from its base in Lausanne. Our practice has focused since day one on helping innovative businesses, successful entrepreneurs, top VCs and global brands navigate today's digital, fast changing and volatile world. The firm's expertise is extensive in tech-heavy industries and in dealmaking.

## **In what industries do you focus? Why?**

We are passionate for innovation. As a result, we are mostly active in industries that are specially

impacted by, or rely on, technologies, data and machines – life sciences, social media platforms, cloud businesses, but also traditional sectors where understanding and properly leveraging technology is not only a competitive advantage, but a key existential differentiator - banking, insurance, healthcare, mobility, energy, and education.

## **What are the milestones up present?**

In just a few years, we have been able to act on some of the most significant financings and deals in the tech field in Switzerland. In line with our commitment to innovation and technology, we have been heavily involved in the Swiss innovation ecosystem and venture capital scene since our inception, and the market has identified us as the go-to firm for technology transactions in the Lake Geneva region. It is our privilege to serve some of the most active tech investors in Switzerland, and a significant portion of the most promising startups in software, AI, health and life sciences.

## **But there are also other technology challenges...**

Yes. As digitization, cybersecurity and data management are now impacting every single industry, we have also secured a pivotal role as a legal advisor of choice to prestigious Swiss financial and industrial groups in need to address technology challenges.

## **2020 was certainly a peculiar year and technology was in a way also protagonist. What results have you achieved?**

2020 has proved a bumpy year for many of our clients. We are happy to have been able to support them in their daily and strategic challenges. Our corporate practice has been busier than ever, with more than 25 financing rounds closed so far, even if a couple of M&A deals have been abandoned. We have also continued to represent investors in major financings, including the lead investors in one of the largest financing rounds this year in Switzerland (Sophia Genetics USD 110M Series C round).

## **In this uncertain scenario, what trends do you foresee in the legal market?**

Law firms will be increasingly challenged by clients not only on the price for their services, but on the value they create and their efficiency in delivery. Value-based pricing will become the norm in corporate and financing transactions.

## **How are you facing this crisis compared to the competitors?**

The Covid crisis has, so far, validated the choices already made within the firm a few years ago, e.g., use of e-signature throughout the firm in 2016, move to the cloud and full remote work capacity in 2018. As a result, we have been able to work seamlessly throughout the year, without any downtime nor loss of capacity. We feel that many traditional law firms in Switzerland have not achieved the same levels of digital readiness and agility in delivery yet.

## **A great number of deals you followed concerns start-up...**

That is true – we are lucky to represent many of the most promising startups in Switzerland and accompany them in their entire business life cycle, until exits. We also maintain a strong representation of venture capital and strategic investors and often act as local counsel on the buy side of international deals.

## **And what other services are you offering?**

A significant portion of our work is not related to deals or specific transactions but consists in helping SMEs, industrial groups and financial institutions on the use of technology – BPO, SaaS, cybersecurity and privacy compliance programs, and digital transformation initiatives.

## **Apart from Switzerland with what countries do you work in particular?**

We have developed a strong network of “good friends” in key European markets and US technology hubs based on trusted personal collaboration. As a result, we often work as local counsel on assignments originating in the US, the UK or the EU and refer work for our Swiss clients expanding abroad.

## **Is there a specific project the firm is working on? Could you tell more?**

Amongst our many projects, the one that clearly stands out for 2020 is the recent launch of our BCorp certification process. With our clients at the forefront of innovation, we inevitably asked ourselves where our firm was positioned in promoting positive changes within our profession but also in our ecosystem. This led to a more general internal reflection on how we position ourselves in terms of corporate social responsibility, what actions we have taken so far and how we could continue promoting social improvements. Pursuing a CSR certification appeared as the best way to move forward, and while being one of the most challenging of the existing certifications in the field, BCorp is also the most comprehensive and will push us to further explore possible undertakings in a variety of areas (environment, community, employees, etc.).

## **What's innovation for *id est* avocats?**

A state of mind fueled by concrete actions focusing on one sole goal: to get better at what we do for our clients and our team members.

[THE INTERVIEW IS ALSO AVAILABLE IN OUR MAGAZINE \*\*MAG\*\*.](#)