

May 24, 2016

## Miami attracts the World Technology Law Conference

The International Technology Law Association, which gathers 1,000 technology lawyers from around the world, held its ITechLaw Miami 2016 conference at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel from May 18 until May 20.

The Miami conference attracted 220 attendees from 38 countries, a majority coming from North America and Europe. Though, delegations from Latin America and China are more numerous each year due to the maturity of their legal markets in which legal practices are specializing and Technology law boutiques are emerging, together with practice groups within big law firms noticing the importance of this area.

The incoming President of the Association, **Susan Barty**, a partner at CMS Cameron McKenna in London, emphasized the importance of IT lawyers due to today's disruptive technology, and commented that the Association was focusing on the international reach and women. The Women group has a significant weight in the Association. A special event is held for them during the conference and a virtual group called I-WIN-ItechLaw Women's International Network- has been created to promote close contacts, referrals, networking and friendship.

The conference's hot topics included exciting matters such as the disruptive effect that technology is having on our lives and economic models. And of course artificial intelligence, the impact on the traditional civil liability rules brought by autonomous vehicles or the challenges of a sharing economy and its legal changes.

**Susan Barty** mentioned that cyber-security and cyber-breach are other challenges we face. We are increasingly seeing examples of cyber-breach, such as the Mossack Fonseca case, that really impact different jurisdictions.

**Jon Neiditz** from Kilpatrick Townsend in Atlanta, **Mark Mermelstein** from Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe in Los Angeles and **Meg Strickler** from Conaway & Strickler in Atlanta, participated in the workshop named "Data Breach War Room," which explored data-breach and cyber-breach topics.

**Aliya Ramji**, General Counsel at Figure 1 in Toronto, held a speech regarding another much discussed topic: data import by travellers, or how to cope with the legal barriers in a globalized world with no frontiers, "Navigating borders in a borderless world." She informed participants that when you cross a border, you need to declare that you don't carry either food nor a big amount of cash, but you never declare your most valuable goods: the data you carry on your mobile devices. Ms. Ramji also mentioned social media and the restrictions some countries are applying. As an example, **Caio Lima** from Opice Blum Advogados in Sao Paulo spoke about the Whatsapp blocking in Brazil.

**Naomi Assia**, from Naomi Assia Law Offices in Tel Aviv, stressed that shaming, or personal revenge through social media, is more and more common and requires a legal response.

**John Tomaszewki**, from Seyfarth Saw, dealt with the labor relations changes brought by technology, as well as Bring Your Own Device (BYOD: a new trend where employees and professionals bring their mobile devices to their company) and the wearables that can jeopardize the security of data that is highly guarded by IT departments.

In addition, interesting speeches on health and wellness devices were addressed.

But this year, personal data protection transcended all topics. It is no longer a boring subject for lawyers. Data analysis and protection has become the great asset of our time. The new EU General Data Protection Regulation, approved in May 2016, and its consequences were discussed at great length because, even if it won't come into effect before two years, it's a big challenge for companies due to the multi-million dollar penalties and its application outside of the EU. **Christian Frank**, a Partner at Taylor Wessing in Munich, spoke highly of the new Regulation and emphasized that it is paramount to set common rules for both consumers and companies.

**Charles Morgan**, from McCarthy Tetrault in Montreal and sponsorship co-chair of the conference, explained that the new technology used in financial transactions, Fintech, at the root of bitcoins as well as blockchains, destabilize the ecosystem and contractual links. Fintech is more secure because it eliminates intermediaries but lawyers are left with many legal questions that they'll have to face.

**Belén Arribas Sánchez** from Miliners in Barcelona and sponsorship co-chair of ITechLaw, reminded the participants interested in those exciting legal challenges that the debate would continue in Madrid during the European edition of the conference, ITechLaw Madrid, from 9 to 11 November, 2016.

*By Marie-Christine Battier, Attitude Consulting, ITechLaw Miami Media Partner*

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**ABOUT ATTITUDE CONSULTING, MEDIA PARTNER OF ITECHLAW MIAMI 2016**

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