

# COMPANIES' GROWING USE OF 'BIG DATA' IS OPPORTUNITY FOR LAWYERS - ROCA JUNYENT

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## **TMT lawyers will have a major role to play helping clients ensure they are complying with the new European Data Protection Regulation**

One of the biggest new trends in the technology sector will be companies leveraging the value of 'big data', according to Jordi Saldaña, senior associate at Roca Junyent in Barcelona.

"Data is beginning to play a central role in business and it is already one of the most valuable assets available to companies," says Saldaña. "The interconnectivity of all devices, alongside the information we provide daily, generates a large amount of valuable data, which becomes extremely valuable once cross-referenced and made anonymous."

Big data refers to large sets of data that can be analysed to reveal patterns of human behaviour, and one of its major advantages, says Saldaña, is that it enables companies to use it to make money without having to seek the consent of the data subject. "It means companies can offer products and services that are carefully tailored to customers' needs, specifically in terms of their spending habits," he explains.

As a result, Saldaña thinks harnessing big data will have a significant impact on public services and governments, "since such data may be used for security purposes, the evolution of smart cities, wearables or in e-science development". In the immediate future, Saldaña predicts that technology, media and telecommunications (TMT) lawyers will have a big role to play in helping clients ensure they are complying with data protection regulations and meeting the requirements of the new European Data Protection Regulation [law 2016/679, which will come into force in 2018]. However, due to the increase in the use of big data, in the long-term Saldaña envisages significant opportunities for lawyers to provide compliance and regulatory advice that is tailored to their client's specific business model. "Lawyers will be able to assess companies based on what they can and cannot do with data in order to obtain the highest yields from said data, within legal parameters."