

# THE KEYS TO IBM'S LEGAL DEPARTMENT

Posted on 21/03/2023



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"The current environment presents multiple challenges that, if properly managed, can be turned into great opportunities to continue advancing in the digital transformation of our society and business fabric," says IBM counsel **Manuel Aguirre Moscardó** in relation to the challenges that lie ahead for his sector in 2023.

According to the in-house counsel to Iberian Lawyer, the company is committed to technologies such as the Hybrid Cloud or Artificial Intelligence, assuring that they will be key for companies to boost their value and gain scale, security and agility in order to address major challenges such as inflation, cybersecurity issues and demographic changes, among others.

In this way, technology will play a catalytic role for businesses to address the various challenges they face, meet customer demands and operate their key processes more efficiently. "It will be essential to boost modernisation and automation in companies to optimise (energy) costs and supply chains and thus keep operations competitive and make them more sustainable," explains Aguirre Moscardó.

## What is your main activity as counsel within IBM?

As part of IBM's Legal Department, my main activity and responsibility is to support IBM's Business, both in its purely transactional dimension (including contract negotiation), but also from a broader point of view, including legal risk analysis and advice on legal and regulatory issues. In my case, I mainly support the Technology area, which includes the Hardware, Software and Cloud Services business lines.

**We saw that apart from operating in Spain, you also operate in Portugal, Greece and Israel. How**

## **is the experience of working in markets that, at first sight, seem so different?**

My international role is focused on providing an overview and knowledge of the IBM portfolio and the standards and strategies defined at corporate level, as well as serving as a liaison with the rest of the Legal Department in Europe and globally. This allows the local teams (including, where appropriate, my colleagues in those countries) to develop their activity in a way that is aligned with the company's policies, coordinated with the rest of the organisation and benefiting from a broader perspective.

## **How important is the legal department within IBM?**

The Legal function has a critical importance within IBM, which goes beyond our "job description" in the strict sense. We exist to help with our advice so that IBM's business and all supporting activities can run successfully, minimising risks and ensuring compliance with legal and internal policy requirements. But beyond this responsibility in the strict sense - which is tremendously important - in my experience the Legal Department brings an extra added value that is almost as important, which is our knowledge of the company: a deep knowledge of IBM's business, a "transversal" view of the company, its processes and its different support functions. Being involved in so many processes, and having an overview of the company's operations and strategy, we are often the "connective tissue" that involves the different functional heads and brings them into contact with each other.

## **What is the profile of the professionals that make up your team?**

IBM Legal is a tremendously diverse team in personal, cultural and professional terms, and I believe that this is one of our strengths as an organisation. In Spain alone, we have lawyers who have been with the company for decades and lawyers who have joined more recently. We have profiles with a background in law firms and lawyers with a background as corporate lawyers, with support in multiple areas, with a focus that oscillates between regulatory and transactional matters. All this diversity is further amplified if we take into account that the IBM Legal Department is a globally integrated department, with all the intellectual and cultural richness that this implies.

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