



Ann J. LaFrance, Esq.
Boston, Massachusetts

Primary Areas of Expertise

Telecommunications Regulation
Internet Policy
Data Privacy
Cybersecurity
Trustworthy AI/Regulation
Corporate Governance

Professional Summary

Former global law firm partner and past chief international counsel of a global telecommunications/ internet backbone provider. Advised governments and regulators in contentious and non-contentious proceedings. Served as arbitration advocate and arbitrator in various disputes involving the telecommunications sector. Extensive experience with international transactions, cross-border regulatory strategy and compliance. Specialized expertise in legal, regulatory and licensing issues involving emerging technologies, digital communications and services, data protection and governance, and electronic surveillance. Lead advisor on compliance assessments, internal investigations, enforcement actions, cybersecurity preparedness and breach response.

Profession

Attorney, Consultant, Adjunct Professor

Work History

Independent Consultant, 2023 - Present; Independent Board Director, BAMSI, 2023 - Present; Independent Board Director, WorldBoston, 2022 - Present; Adjunct Professor, University of California College of Law San Francisco, 2023-2024; Adjunct Professor, Cleveland State University College of Law, 2022-2023; Partner, Squire Paton Boggs, 2004 – 2022; Senior Vice President & Chief International Counsel, MCIWorldCom, 1996-2004; Associate and Partner, Squire Sanders & Dempsey, 1980 - 1996.

Experience

Advised internet service providers on issues raised by proposed drafts of the European Electronic Communications Code and compliance with same following passage, including the extension of telecommunications regulation to number-independent interpersonal communications services.

Advised regulatory authorities in Bahrain, Bermuda, Oman and Zambia on various legislative, policy and regulatory issues, including: the development of strategic plans for the telecommunications sector; international access and interconnection issues, consumer protection rules and dispute resolution; spectrum award proceedings and licensing issues; significant market power determinations and regulation; enforcement proceedings and penalty assessments; domain name registration procedures; internet exchange point expansion and security; and

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Neutral ID : 6190964

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regulatory disputes involving enforcement actions arising from license conditions, spectrum awards, international termination rates, and compliance with regulatory constraints imposed on providers with significant market power.

Advised enterprise customers and operators in various regulatory proceedings before the U.S. FCC, including those involving the regulation of "enhanced" versus "basic" telecommunications services.

Advised clients across all sectors on compliance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), including cross-border data flows, as well as the California Consumer Privacy Act and other U.S. state and federal privacy laws, Brazil's General Data Protection Law and China's Protection of Information Privacy Law.

Advised on data breach preparedness and training, the development of cybersecurity incident response plans and response requirements, strategy and crisis management coordination following actual cyber incidents involving the U. S., EU and other jurisdictions.

Advised telecommunications and internet providers on conflict of law issues arising from multi-jurisdictional data retention obligations within the EU and globally.

Advised users and developers of AI-enabled systems on the GDPR's requirements relating to notice and algorithmic transparency in relation to machine learning applications underlying recommender systems used in behavioral advertising and for individual profiling of high-net-worth individuals in CRM and marketing campaigns.

As Chief International Counsel of MCI and MCI WorldCom, based in Washington, Brussels and London led a global team responsible for advancing the company's legal and regulatory interests, as a global telecommunications operator and internet backbone provider, in Europe, Latin America and AsiaPac.

Oversaw the company's advocacy on internet governance and international telecommunications regulation, including participation in policy discussions involving the establishment and functioning of ICANN, internet policy and ITU regulation.

Led MCI's participation in the U.S. delegation to the WTO, leading to approval of the WTO Basic Telecommunications Services Agreement.

Led MCI's negotiations with EU competition regulators in securing clearance of various proposed mergers, including MCI-WorldCom.

As an adjunct professor, teach law school courses on Comparative Privacy and

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Cybersecurity Law, and author of a journal article on the new EU AI Act in preparation for teaching 2025 course on AI regulatory frameworks.

As a longtime nonprofit board member, advised on corporate governance best practices and drafted board-level policies, committee charters and director responsibility documents.

Alternative Dispute Resolution Experience

Appointed by the government ministry in the Middle East to serve as one of three international arbitrators in a newly created dispute resolution body charged with resolving challenges to decisions issued by the telecommunications regulatory authority as well as disputes between licensed operators on complex interconnection, numbering and competition issues; participated in the drafting of procedural rules for the dispute resolution process and in the review of four major decisions and the drafting of decisions concerning same.

Lead counsel to a major telecommunications company operating across the Middle East in an arbitration proceeding initiated by its main competitor, which challenged a new line of business undertaken by the client in cooperation with a third party as ultra vires the client's operating license, and (unsuccessfully) sought damages of USD \$2 billion.

Participated as a subject matter expert and advisor to the arbitration/litigation team representing one of the litigants in a highly complex international arbitration proceeding and related multi-jurisdictional litigation over a disputed mobile license valued at USD \$ 900 million that was issued by a post-Soviet republic.

Advisor to government ministries and regulatory authorities in Ireland, Czech Republic, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Bermuda and Peru on the drafting and application of alternative dispute resolution procedures involving the telecommunications industry.

Assisted with the drafting of a Dispute Resolution Plan and Confidentiality Policy governing the adjudication of challenges to the decisions of a relocation payment clearing house created as part of the C-Band relocation program established by the U.S. Federal Communications Commission.

Represented clients involved in regulatory investigations and enforcement proceedings in the U.S., the UK and Europe in competition law disputes, merger reviews, data protection complaints and telecommunications interconnection disputes.

Advisor to the Audit Committee of the Board of a global information technology company, engaged to lead an internal fact-finding investigation and independent assessment of the actions of a member of senior management following a whistleblower's allegations of intentional violations of applicable laws and regulations.

Represented clients in multiple 10-month postal rate proceedings (adjudications) before the U.S. Postal Rate Commission, including formulation of case, witness preparation and cross-examination, oral argument, discovery and briefs.

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Technology Proficiency	<p>Zoom & Team – Frequent user as host for large and small meetings and for teaching remote university classes, including screen share, break-out rooms and other features.</p> <p>Experience using time and billing software, client management software, and contract management software; experience using Consilio and Relativity e-discovery platforms in the context of GDPR data subject access requests and internal investigations.</p> <p>Proficient user of ChatGPT and Bing, including prompt training; have used AI-generated responses to formulate responses to final law firm exam essay questions, requesting students to critique the AI response.</p>
Education	<p>Georgetown University (Joint JD and MS in Foreign Service, with honors - 1980); Middlebury College (BA, summa cum laude - 1976).</p> <p>King's College (Diploma in European Community Competition Law - 2001).</p>
Professional Licenses	Admitted to the Bar: District of Columbia (1980), Massachusetts (2015), New York (2020).
Professional Associations	International Association of Privacy Professionals; National Association of Corporate Directors; Private Directors Association; The Boston Club.
Recent Publications & Speaking Engagements	<p>Publications</p> <p>"Regulation Under the EU Artificial Intelligence Act: Too Much, Too Little, Too Late?" (accepted for publication in the Cambridge Handbook on Emerging Issues at the Intersection of Commercial Law and Technology, Cambridge University Press – expected publication in Q3/2024).</p> <p>"The Boston Club/Bentley University 2023 Census of Women Directors and Executive Officers of Massachusetts Public Companies" (Dec. 2023).</p> <p>"Dark Patterns' Are Focus of Regulatory Scrutiny in the United States and Europe," Consumer Privacy World (May 5, 2022).</p> <p>"Takeaways from IIC Telecom and Media Forum Session on Privacy, Cybersecurity and Trust," Consumer Privacy World – International Panel Discussion (Jan. 6, 2022).</p> <p>"Colorado Becomes Latest State with a Comprehensive Privacy Law," Consumer Privacy World (July 9, 2021).</p> <p>"China's Personal Information Protection Law: What It Means to Companies," Consumer Privacy World (May 2021).</p> <p>"Voters Approve California Privacy Rights Act, Consumer Privacy World" (Nov. 4, 2020).</p> <p>"CJEU Invalidates EU-US Privacy Shield Framework but Leaves the Standard Contractual Clauses Intact, Subject to Major Caveats," Consumer Privacy World (July 2020).</p>

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Speaking Engagements

The Boston Club Corporate Salute, Presentation of Results of the "2023 Census of Women Directors and Executive Officers of Massachusetts Public Companies," Dec. 5, 2023.

Speaker, Foreign Press Centers Symposium for International Reporters on Tech Policy and Navigating Artificial Intelligence, presentation on Past Present & Future of AI and Journalism, Boston, Sept. 7, 2023.

Moderator, WorldBoston Great Decisions Series, "Latin America and the Active Non-Alignment Option" featuring Ambassador Jorge Heine, May 31, 2023.

Chair, Panel discussions on Cybersecurity Policy, Responsible AI, Cross-Border Data Flows, IIC Telecommunications and Media Form, Washington, DC, Dec. 14, 2022.

Chair, Panel on Cybersecurity Roles and Responsibilities, Current and Future Threats, IIC Annual Conference, Ottawa, Canada, Nov. 3, 2022.

Chair, Panel on Privacy, Security Data Protection and Trust – from Cookies to Metadata to AI to Localization – How to Enable Innovation and Competition while Protecting Consumers, International Institute of Communications Telecoms & Media Forum, Dec. 9, 2021.

Keynote Speaker, Korea Communications Standards Commission, Conference on Countermeasures against Disinformation in the Media, Nov. 2020.

Moderator, Keeping Pace with the Ubiquity of Artificial Intelligence – Policy, Regulation, Ethics & Trust, IIC Telecoms & Media Forum, Washington DC, Dec. 10, 2019.

Moderator, CISO Roundtable, Conference on Information Security and Operational Resilience, New York, New York, Nov. 7, 2019.

Moderator, Managing Data Subject Requests, The Inevitable/AI Conference, TextIQ, New York University, Oct. 3, 2019.

Keynote Speaker, Are EU Telecoms Companies Equipped to Master the Brave New Digital World?, Salzburger Telekom-Forum, Austria, August 26, 2019.

Citizenship

United Kingdom; United States of America

Languages

English

Compensation

Hearing: \$7500.00/Day

Study: \$900.00/Hr

Travel: \$1500.00/Day

Cancellation Period: 0 Days

Comment:

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