



**THE INFLUENCERS:  
DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION**

**TRANSCRIPT  
RUTH BRANDSTÄTTER**

Leo von Gerlach	Hello, everybody, and welcome to another edition of <i>The Influencers</i> , our podcast conversations on digital transformation and law. I'm Leo von Gerlach. And with me today is Ruth Brandstätter. Ruth is Senior Legal Counsel at Nestlé, the world's biggest and, by far, most prominent food and nutrition company, as senior counsel with a particular responsibility for Nestlé's intellectual property. Ruth operates on the most interesting intersection of digital transformation, driving change in her own department for a company that is a technology leader in the nutrition field, and with outside counsel, of whom she expects quite a lot. So Ruth, welcome.
Ruth Brandstätter	Hi, Leo, great to be with you. And hello to everybody listening.
Leo von Gerlach	Great to have you. So just tell me a little bit about yourself and your role at Nestlé. What's your task? And what is the task of your team? And how does that fit into the wide and big Nestlé organization?
Ruth Brandstätter	Well, I've been with Nestlé for seven years now, as a member of the German and Austrian team. Plus, I'm IP champion for a number of European countries including Germany, Austria, Benelux, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Norway. And I'm actually overseeing all IP matters in these countries locally.
Leo von Gerlach	That sounds like a very big task. Let's dig deeper - tell us how does that fit into the wide Nestlé organization? And how do you tie in all the contributions from your outside counsel?
Ruth Brandstätter	In my position as IP champion, I work closely with international stakeholders, external counsels and colleagues from various regions to develop and implement strategies for mostly IP protection enforcement. This includes, of course, driving IP projects and providing legal guidance to the local teams. I would say my main responsibility as IP champion is to safeguard Nestlé's IP assets to mitigate risks and support the company's business objectives by providing legal advice and assistance in IP enforcement matters. What sounds somewhat easy is actually a

	challenging role. But I'm genuinely as happy as a lawyer can be, because I'm surrounded by an incredible bunch of intelligent creative people every day.
Leo von Gerlach	So, we are now with your organization, the organization of your team, that I think comes to the question, how do you work and how do you draw in technology solution, perhaps even legal tech solution to help your team during the service delivery?
Ruth Brandstätter	Good question, well legal tech is our future and it's not as scary as lawyers think. In fact, we all use legal tech every day. I remember that when I was a young associate working for one of the law firms, part of my task was translating writs and contracts for our English speaking clients. Today, I simply hit the button that is embedded in our system, and I get translations within seconds. So speaking about Nestlé, there is of course, a lot going on here. Our teams at HQ are permanently working on new tools and developments. And with AI having come into our lives making systems and processes working even faster has just begun.
Leo von Gerlach	And how is the experience so far?
Ruth Brandstätter	Legal tech, especially AI and AI-based tools have the potential to help us achieve more with less effort. But still, while it offers endless opportunities, it also brings unexpected challenges. For example, we've observed an increase in AI copycat behavior with companies mimicking products deployed by their competitors, or implementing popular AI applications without considering their strategic and legal implications.
Leo von Gerlach	Staying for the second with the tools you are using, let's become a little bit more specific on the tools in the IP space and what you have tried out and what makes particular sense to you?
Ruth Brandstätter	The great thing with Nestlé is that we get not only legal tech tools available on the market, so we even have our own legal tech team and they're working on tailor made solution shins. To give you an example, Nestlé recently worked on a test project for a legal chatbot named Legs. The purpose of the project was to provide an alternative to personnel legal support by addressing standard questions. And our idea was to have something designed to be easily accessible and 24/7, making it convenient for users. To give you another example of a tool developed and implemented at Nestlé globally. It's a new tool called IP Tap. IP Tap stands for intellectual property transaction approval process...long word...and it's specifically designed for IP licensing transactions, including licensing in and out, ingredient branding, co branding, projects and others. This tool empowers the business to navigate through the process themselves, obtain

	necessary information, seek approvals and ensure legal and tax compliance.
Leo von Gerlach	So that sounds very proactive, which doesn't come as a surprise for a company like Nestlé. Any comment on the results that this has shown already, the impressions positive, negative or pointing in any direction that triggers after seeing those technologies doing that work?
Ruth Brandstätter	Sure. The IP Tap tool is indeed a fantastic achievement that significantly streamlines operations. It's not only saving hundreds of working hours every day, but it ensures also legal and tax compliance by design. So, I really love it.
Leo von Gerlach	So now we've spoken about the tech solutions that you use in your department and some new models and applications you're trying out. How does that fit into the wider technology digital technology strategy that Nestlé may have or run around it?
Ruth Brandstätter	I think that in the digital age, IP protection has become increasingly complex. Issues such as online piracy, counterfeiting, and infringement are on the rise. And a global nature of these challenges makes enforcing IP rights across borders more difficult than ever. So, to tackle these challenges, I believe we need to constantly challenge ourselves and to simplify our processes communicate in the fastest and most intelligent manner, and ensure that we're not stuck in outdated practices. I would say that at Nestlé, we embrace tools like AI and other technologies to do more with less streamline our operations and increase efficiency. However, we also recognize the need to manage associated risks and seize opportunities to further improve our services. And of course, protect our IP. In my opinion, is all about staying, you know, adaptable, innovative and forward thinking.
Leo von Gerlach	So ,that shows to us kind of you using the technology in your department that fits into the wider idea of how to approach this with the bigger Nestlé organization. And that's the Nestlé internal world. But then, there's also the external world of your legal service providers. Would you have similar expectations as to your own company and department in terms of technology progress for your external advisors?
Ruth Brandstätter	I would say definitely, yes. In my opinion, there's still two camps, but most firms are on track when it comes to digitalization. So, AI powered tools can streamline legal tasks such as research, document review, and more. And automation is always a huge advantage when it comes to communication, just to mention case management portals or secure document sharing tools. But of course, one must also know its limits, as for example, chatbots

	can also produce inaccurate information. And it's crucial to strike a balance between leveraging AI for efficiency and ensuring the accuracy of legal work.
Leo von Gerlach	So, is there something specific that you expect from your service providers in terms of specific applications and/or in driving efficiency in a measurable manner, by those new technologies?
Ruth Brandstätter	I believe it's important for law firms to manage stakeholder's expectations. So, when it comes to client service, we endorse any new tools or solutions that make our lives easier. Therefore, it's essential to put yourselves in the shoes of your clients and honestly ask, "Does this new tool or solution serve both our needs? Or is this just something that makes my life easier?" But, in general, we are of course happy about any new solutions that allow you to work more efficiently and carry out a task more quickly, or with a higher standard than before.
Leo von Gerlach	That's all very interesting Ruth. Also from my personal perspective as an outside counsel, just to really learn and understand what a great and forward looking organization expects from their service providers, so a lot of good lessons in there. And perhaps before we come to the end, look into the future, what do you expect shorter term? What do you expect longer term, your own department within the organization to evolve against the backdrop of this rapid pace of digital technology progress?
Ruth Brandstätter	I believe that progress is impossible without change. So change needs to be a constant to our life and we need to constantly challenge ourselves every day. But, I would say great things never come from comfort zones. Right?
Leo von Gerlach	That is just a wonderful word and wisdom to conclude our conversation. Ruth, it has been just most joyful to speak with you and I'm incredibly indebted that we could have that interview. And I'm, of course, most thankful for everybody to have listened in and I hope you'll join us again for the next session of The Influencers, which will be coming up soon. For now, take care and have a good day all.
Ruth Brandstätter	Thanks for having me Leo.