GENERAL COUNSEL IN THE AGE OF DISRUPTION: ADOPTING A DIGITAL MINDSET

Date: September 2017

The fourth industrial revolution and its innovative technologies are transforming the manufacturing industry. Digitization is a major driving force, impacting not only a company's business model but also every stage of internal operation from supply chain to distribution and e-commerce. Out of 200 general counsel and senior executives surveyed across Europe, over 85% report their companies are currently utilizing the Cloud, the Internet of Things (IoT), and predictive analytics.

These technological advancements are not only an opportunity — they also represent a considerable risk requiring general counsel to adopt a new legal mindset. Most manufacturers are critical infrastructure organizations with automated processes, intellectual property, and other sensitive information that may be vulnerable to cyberattacks. Cybersecurity ranks in the top three of the most important trends relevant to the organization from the legal perspective and as the area of legal expertise that will be the most needed over the next three years.

General counsel must be flexible, fearless, and forward-thinking to make sure their companies fully utilize technologies while adhering to regulations. At the same time, they must digitize the legal department to ensure better and faster collaboration with other functions and more effective monitoring.

For the benefit of its manufacturing clients, K&L Gates partnered with Forbes Insights to create one of the most in-depth studies conducted thus far on the pressures and challenges facing general counsel operating within the manufacturing sector. Based upon research collected from a detailed survey of 200 general counsel and senior executives across Europe, the report covers a myriad of issues, including regulation and emerging technologies, forces of disruption and risk, and future outlooks on the sector. **We encourage you to download this valuable resource for free here**.

This publication/newsletter is for informational purposes and does not contain or convey legal advice. The information herein should not be used or relied upon in regard to any particular facts or circumstances without first consulting a lawyer. Any views expressed herein are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the law firm's clients.

©2005-2026 K&L Gates LLP. All Rights Reserved.