id est avocats

Michel Jaccard

Partner

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A dealmaker's instinct. A counsel's eye. A mediator's ear. Focusing on meaningful matters.

ABOUT

About

Michel Jaccard is a partner at id est avocats, a Swiss-based B Corp law firm committed to responsible and sustainable business practices. He has advised on corporate finance and M&A transactions for more than 25 years in Switzerland and internationally, acting for entrepreneurs and owners, venture capital and private equity firms, industrial buyers, and financial sponsors. He also advises investment funds, large corporates, SMEs, and startups on governance, sustainability and ESG matters.

In addition to his corporate practice, Michel advises on innovation and technology projects (including AI, data protection, and cybersecurity) and supports clients in complex business disputes where technology and intellectual property licensing are central, including open source and open access strategies.

Building on his deal and technology background, Michel is available as mediator or mediation counsel in complex disputes at the intersection of technology, venture capital and shareholder relations, such as:

- **Technology, IP and data disputes:** software development and integration failures, AI vendor and customer disputes, open-source and licensing conflicts, cybersecurity incident allocation, data-sharing and joint R&D breakdowns.
- **Venture capital and M&A disputes:** term-sheet, down-round and liquidation-preference disputes, founder–investor conflicts, earn-out and post-closing disputes, SAFE and convertible-note enforcement.
- **Shareholder and governance disputes:** 50/50 deadlocks, minority protection, shareholders' agreement breaches, board-level conflicts of interest, MBO and family-business succession, mission-lock and impact-governance disputes.

Michel holds a JD and PhD from the University of Lausanne and an LL.M. from Columbia Law School (Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar, Fulbright grantee). He teaches regularly on innovation, technology licensing, digital law, AI, venture capital, impact investing and corporate law at UNIL, UNINE, EPFL, IMD and UNIFR. He is a co-creator of the LISI Impact Term Sheet and a member of the Swiss Corporate Finance Association (SECA) working group on convertible debt documentation.

Panels & accreditations (mediation): CEDR Accredited Mediator (London, 2021); ITDR Mediator, IT and Data Disputes (2019); WIPO List of Neutrals, Geneva (2023); ICC List of Arbitrators (Switzerland). Working languages: French, English, German (passive).

BACKGROUND

Experience & career

- 2024–
  Lecturer, AI and the Law CAS, University of Neuchâtel
- 2024–
  Guest Lecturer, Tech4Regeneration Program, EPFL, Lausanne
- 2023–24
  Faculty Lecturer in Master of Law in Innovation, University of Neuchâtel
- 2023
  World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) List of Neutrals, Geneva
- 2022–25
  Faculty Lecturer in Master of Science in Sustainable Management and Technology at Enterprise for Society Center (E4S), University of Lausanne - UNIL, IMD, EPFL
- 2022–
  Member of the Co-creation team of the Impact Term Sheet, Legal Innovation for Sustainable Investments (LISI)
- 2022
  Listed as a Recognized Expert (Legal) by the Capital Market and Technology Association (CMTA), Geneva
- 2021
  Accredited Mediator, Center for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR), London
- 2019
  Mediator, Institution for IT and Data Dispute Resolution (ITDR)
- 2018
  Accredited Special Coach, Innosuisse – Swiss Innovation Agency
- 2017–
  Advisory Board Member at Swiss Legal Tech Association (SLTA)

CREDENTIALS

Education

- 1999
  Admission to the Swiss bar
- 1998
  Admission to the New York bar
- 1997
  LL.M., Columbia Law School New York (Fulbright grantee, Harlan Fiske Stone scholar)
- 1996
  Ph.D. Law, University of Lausanne – UNIL (honors)
- 1993
  MLaw, University of Lausanne – UNIL (honors)

- 2015–19
  Trainer at Startup Board Academy
- 2014–
  Jury, Mentor and Coach at MassChallenge, VentureKick, FIT Digital, Business Experience, Venture Competition
- 2012
  Founding partner of id est avocats
- 2006
  Partner at BCCC avocats
- 2003–04
  Foreign Associate at White & Case LLP (New York)

CLIENTS

Clients

Michel Jaccard's client base reflects the strength and diversity of the regional innovation ecosystem, with a strong focus on impact and the purpose-driven economy. He counts as clients a broad range of traditional and impact investors, technology-driven companies, including early stage startups and unicorns as well as technology providers in software, platforms, AI, and IT services committed to transformative innovation.

He regularly advises biotech and medtech startups, healthcare providers, and life sciences foundations working on breakthrough therapies and public health solutions. He also acts for top-tier consulting, legal, audit, and HR firms that support the innovation economy.

His portfolio includes numerous corporates, venture capital firms, accelerators, and investment advisors with a growing emphasis on sustainability and responsible investing.

He also works with leading academic and research institutions, cleantech and renewable energy pioneers, and internationally active NGOs and philanthropic foundations — all contributing to a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient economic future.

FOCUS

Sectors

- Computing, Data & AI
- Healthcare Life Sciences & Biotech
- Energy, Infrastructure & Renewables
- Media, Platforms & Entertainment
- Non-Profits, NGOs & Purpose Economy
- Venture Capital, Corporate Finance & Private Equity

RESEARCH & PERSPECTIVE

Selected publications & presentations

AI Contracts Drafting in Practice – Key Considerations and Best Practices, Bern 2026

Contrat de développement de logiciel, Recueils de contrats commerciaux: Modèles commentés selon le droit suisse, Basel, 2025 (2ème édition)

Negotiating deals for positive impact – What's so special about the financing and governance of sustainable Businesses?, CEDIDAC Lausanne 2025

Purpose, mission lock and capped profits: can steward ownership appeal to private equity?, EIZ, Private Equity Symposium, Zurich 2024

IA et prestations de soins : gouvernance et questions juridiques, Congrès CIPIQ-S, 2024

Capital-Risque et durabilité sont-ils compatibles ?, CEDIDAC Lausanne 2024

Impact Investing – how does it differ from traditional venture capital deals?, Tech4Regeneration Program, EPFL, 2024

Scaling Up your business – Incentive Plans, IMD/Innovaud program, 2024

Le conseil d'administration face à la durabilité – risques, responsabilités et opportunités, Séminaire Expertsuisse 2023

Venture Capital, ESG and Sustainable Investments – Where do we stand? What needs to be done?, RSDA/SZW 3/2023 (with Anh-Thu Thai)

Intelligence artificielle et prestation de services, Réflexions juridiques et pratiques autour des contrats de l'intelligence artificielle, CEDIDAC Lausanne 2023

Venture capital and human rights due diligence – time to act, Business and Human Rights Symposium, University of Lausanne, 2023 (with Christof Cardinaux)

Les données industrielles, Présentation de contrats modèles, Centre Patronal, 2023

Supply Chain et Cybersécurité, Questions choisies, Clusis, 2023

Negotiating your term sheet with a VC, MassChallenge Switzerland, since 2022

CR/CO II Commentaire des Articles 772-803 CO (Droit de la société à responsabilité limitée / LLC law), Commentaire romand, Basel (with Fernand Chappuis)

Les défis actuels de la profession d'avocat, Demi-journée de la profession d'avocat, CEDIDAC Lausanne 2021

Indemnification mechanisms in equity investment agreements – Critical overview with impact assessment of new legislation, GesKR 2|2021, p. 267-276 (with Mehmet Toral)

Smart contracts – de la théorie à la pratique, Bern 2020 (with Mehmet Toral)

Les conflits entre actionnaires de sociétés anonymes; enseignements pratiques pour la rédaction de conventions d'actionnaires, Lausanne, 2016

Le "privilège de liquidation" en cas de revente des titres : affaire de notaire ou affaire d'actionnaires ?, Lausanne, 2015

De la protection des données personnelles à la sécurisation des données connectées, Livre anniversaire du Marathon du droit - Chapitre de la protection des données, Geneva, 2015

Internet, médias sociaux, applications : terrains propices à la déloyauté commerciale ?, in Challenges of Unfair Competition Law, Geneva, 2014

Conventions d'actionnaires et PME – Quelle utilité ?, in L'Expert-Comptable suisse, 2014

Swiss Chapter, The International Free and Open Source Software Law Book, Open Source Press, 2nd edition, 2014

Protection des données : kit du praticien, Revue de l'avocat 09/2014, 2014

Commentaire des Articles 39a à 39c et 69 LDA (Propriété intellectuelle), Commentaire Romand, Basel, 2013

Contrat de développement de logiciel, Recueils de contrats commerciaux: Modèles commentés selon le droit suisse, Basel, 2013

Couvrir les risques de l'administrateur, CEDIDAC no 89, Lausanne, 2012

Le management dans un processus de MBO – Enjeux, conflits d'intérêts et particularités contractuelles, L'Expert-Comptable Suisse (ECS) 6–7/2011, pp. 457-462, 2011

Le conseil d'administration au service des actionnaires majoritaires – Risques, conflits d'intérêts et best practices en cas de cession d'actions, RSDA 5/2010, 2010

Sociétés anonymes privées en crise : l'actionnaire majoritaire démuni face au minoritaire ? Réflexions critiques sur la protection renforcée du minoritaire en cas d'assainissement, GesKR 2|2010, Zürich

Les contrats informatiques, Publication of the Centre d'études juridiques européennes, Zürich 2009

L'équilibre des pouvoirs dans le cadre de la révision du droit de la SA – Réflexions à partir des nouvelles règles sur la rémunération, l'organisation, la transparence et la gestion des conflits d'intérêts au sein du conseil d'administration, RSDA 2/2008

L'organisation du conseil d'administration, la transparence et la gestion des conflits d'intérêts selon le projet de révision, CEDIDAC no 76, Lausanne, 2008

Capital-risque et financement par étapes: de nouvelles perspectives suite à la révision du droit de la Sàrl?, in GesKR, Zürich, 2007

RECOMMENDATIONS

Selected recommendations & accolades

Rankings

Included in multiple practice areas, e.g. Venture Capital, M&A, Media law and Information Technology & named 'Lawyer of the Year' in 2022 in Lausanne for M&A (Best Lawyers since 2010), Recipient of a Client Choice Award (2019).

Recommended as a Global Leader in data protection, privacy, data security, and information technology (WhosWho Legal – WWL, since 2018).

> *"An acquisition can be quite stressful for companies, and Michel is very calm and always there to help to ease the process."*
>
> CHAMBERS EUROPE 2026

> *"Michel is a very strong senior lawyer who is also a sparring partner. He is at ease in drafting documents as well as strategising."*
>
> CHAMBERS EUROPE 2026

> *"Michel Jaccard provides added value and no-nonsense advice. He is totally business-oriented and pragmatic."*
>
> CHAMBERS EUROPE 2026

> *"He is solution-oriented and has excellent responsiveness."*
>
> CHAMBERS EUROPE 2026

> *"a tremendous lawyer who has always had an extremely acute commercial sense and understanding of his clients' businesses."*
>
> CHAMBERS EUROPE 2025

> *"able to cut through difficult issues with a very pragmatic and problem solving attitude. He is a real asset in any negotiation."*
>
> LEGAL500 EMEA 2025

> *"Michel has been at the forefront of TMT and tech specifically for many years. He has been a visionary and innovator who has a 360-degree view and is very well connected in the wider tech sector, which gives him a great ability to anticipate issues."*
>
> LEGAL500 EMEA 2025

> *"very pragmatic", "good people skills", "customer oriented and always looking for solutions"*
>
> CHAMBERS EUROPE 2023

> *"amazing knowledge and wonderful ability to translate it into practical advice; so valuable that I consider him to be an adviser for the strategy of the company"*
>
> CHAMBERS GLOBAL 2022

> *"ability to listen, political and strategic intelligence; remarkably sharp on the subjects entrusted and has a quick understanding of the client's needs and expectations."*
>
> CHAMBERS EUROPE 2022

“one of the greatest experts in the area of IT outsourcing I ever had the pleasure to work with. He provided excellent legal advice in a highly complex case”

LEGAL500 EMEA 2022

“to the point, experienced and entrepreneurial”

CHAMBERS GLOBAL 2021

“always sharp and willing to find the best solutions for his clients”

CHAMBERS EUROPE 2021

“able to give valuable advice quickly, which makes the exchanges very efficient. His approach is very pragmatic and solution-oriented, and he understands the specificities of early-stage businesses and how to deal with the problems that can arise.”

CHAMBERS EUROPE 2020

“an outstanding lawyer and personality who provides practice-oriented and economically viable solutions”

LEGAL500 EMEA 2020

“one of the most highly experienced and highly regarded TMT lawyers in Switzerland; he focuses on cross-border technology transactions, M&A and venture capital investments for technology clients”

CHAMBERS EUROPE 2019

“a strategic thinker” who is able to “find a solution beyond just the legal viewpoint to align with commercial needs”

CHAMBERS GLOBAL 2019

“very skilled at talking to and managing big financial institutions - he's a real deal-maker. He stands out for his deep understanding of cutting-edge technologies”

CHAMBERS FINTECH 2019

“boasts a top-tier TMT practice with a strong international focus [and] regularly provides assistance on areas including advanced technologies, data protection and digital transformation”

WHOSWHO LEGAL 2018

“extremely pragmatic, goes straight to the point and provides strong leadership”

CHAMBERS GLOBAL 2018

“has an outstanding reputation for data protection and privacy matters”

CHAMBERS EUROPE 2017

“an experienced, pragmatic and charismatic negotiator”

LEGAL 500 EUROPE 2016

“a highly respected authority in the field of data protection, IT and technology”

CHAMBERS EUROPE 2016

“understands all the aspects of a transaction and doesn't focus on the timesheet but the success of his client”

CHAMBERS EUROPE 2016

“noted for his expertise in both IP and IT, and sources are quick to describe him as a ‘brilliant lawyer’”

CHAMBERS EUROPE 2015

> *“continues to impress market commentators with his skill in assisting start-ups on M&A matters”*
>
> CHAMBERS GLOBAL 2015

> *“provides pragmatic and efficient solutions, and very good value for money”*
>
> LEGAL 500 EUROPE 2015

> *“provides very focused legal and technical advice but also takes into account the commercial side of the transaction, and can translate his advice into lay terms”*
>
> CHAMBERS EUROPE 2014

> *“a dynamic practitioner with substantial market expertise and knowledge of venture capital transactions”*
>
> CHAMBERS GLOBAL 2014

> *“passionate and extremely knowledgeable about technology, so really understands how we work”*
>
> CHAMBERS EUROPE 2013

> *“a very intelligent person who quickly gets the important facts and understands without much explanation. He's always thinking at least two steps ahead”*
>
> CHAMBERS EUROPE 2013

> *“recommended for his firm but realistic negotiation style, and responsive and commercial approach”*
>
> LEGAL500 EUROPE 2013

> *“a pragmatic expert with the presence to get things moving”*
>
> CHAMBERS EUROPE 2012