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2023

Marco Imperiale

Founder and Managing Director, Better Ipsum

A Legal Innovation Trailblazer

Marco Imperiale is the founder and managing director of Better Ipsum, a consultancy focused on legal design, legal innovation, and legal wellbeing. He has extensive experience in legal design, legal tech, and sustainability, and he enjoys exploring new global trends in law and leveraging new technologies to deliver high-value services to clients. In addition to this role, he is a member of multiple associations, a distinguished lecturer, and a frequent public speaker. Recently, he co-authored the first Italian book on legal design alongside

Barbara de Muro, which was published by Giuffrè Francis Lefebvre.

Impressive Academic Background

Marco considers himself fortunate to have had the opportunity to learn from prestigious institutions such as Bologna University and Harvard Law School. Despite his belief in the “learning by doing” theory, his immersive experiences at these educational institutions have been unmatched. Bologna, the oldest university in the world, instilled in him a love for the law and provided a strong foundation in philosophy, legal history,



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and economics. On the other hand, Harvard, the world-renowned Ivy League institution in the United States, played a pivotal role in shaping his character and accelerating his professional growth.

Drawing from his personal journey, Marco shares, “I still firmly believe that investing in education is the wisest choice in our complex world. If you have any doubts about pursuing a master’s degree, I encourage you to go for it. My motto is that money spent on concerts, travels, and education is always well invested!”. Marco came back to Harvard in 2022 as a visiting researcher, and had the

opportunity to lecture the course on Legal Design at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

Starting in the music world

Marco’s career started in the copyright and entertainment field. Because of his interest in the music world (Marco is also a songwriter and a musician), he saw the opportunity to utilize his law degree in a field he was truly passionate about, enabling him to be productive and provide added value to his clients. Reflecting on those early days, he shares, “It was exhilarating to be a first-year trainee working with stadium artists, collecting

societies, and production companies involved in Hollywood movies. I had the chance to gain a comprehensive understanding of this incredible world known as show business.”

However, juggling multiple roles and working full-time proved to be challenging for Marco. The initial years were demanding as he simultaneously worked for a label, a booking agency, and an organizer of TV events. Nonetheless, with an optimistic perspective, Marco considered these experiences valuable as they provided him with profound insights into the music industry. It was during this period that he recognized the parallels between

the challenges of the music business in 1999 - when Napster emerged and disrupted the industry paradigm - and the legal landscape. He explains, “When the value of services changes, you must find new revenue streams, much like a surfer recognizing a massive wave approaching. At that moment, I had two options: ride the wave or be carried away by it. You can probably guess my decision!” Marco reveals. Despite his current focus on innovation, Marco is still a teaching fellow for the CopyrightX course, offered by Harvard Law School in conjunction with the Berkman Center for Internet and Society.

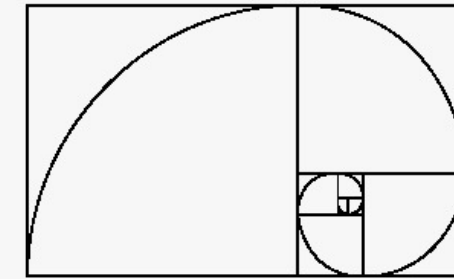


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From the music world to the innovation

After several years in the music business, Marco made a pivot-change in his career, becoming one of the first European Head of Innovation for law firms, and leading the digital transformation at LCA, one of the major Italian firms. In this role, he shaped and developed several initiatives regarding sustainability, tech, and artificial intelligence.



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He managed a Digital Innovation Hub for the realization of an a.i. based platform for search engines, coordinated two social reports, and worked tirelessly on legal design projects. Marco looks back at his LCA years with gratitude. “I have been very lucky doing something I loved, collaborating with amazing professionals, with the main focus of providing great advice to the clients and having a relevant impact both inside and outside the firm. We were able to represent a model not only to our clients, but to Italian and foreign law firms as well. Moreover, we were speaking about innovation, legal design, and sustainability before it was cool”.

From law firms to entrepreneurship

His commitment to innovation and sustainability lead him to start – with a group of renowned

professionals – Better Ipsum, a consultancy focused on legal design, legal innovation, and legal wellbeing. “Our idea is pretty simple, yet disruptive. The legal field lacks a humancentric approach to problems, people, and challenges. Whether we are talking about legal design, legal innovation, or sustainability, there is a general agreement regarding the need of intervening, but a lack of effort and focus on the implementation of the various initiatives. For example, most of the corporations and law firms in my network want to use legal design approach in their contracts and policies, or start/improve a digital transformation strategy. They want to deliver annual social reports, strengthen collaboration among professionals, or address better Gen Zs requests. Unfortunately, despite the need, they don’t know how to do it, and when they are



searching for external professionals, there are no players who are able to provide those services. We are the ones addressing this need. Our track record with multinational companies, relevant institutions, and law firms put us in the perfect spot to understand their requests, whether explicit or implicit, and help them deliver value both internally and externally”.

Marco started the consultancy with a group of lawyers, psychologists, designers, and sustainability experts. “We are already earning significant traction on continental Europe, and we are planning to start several business units in US, UK, Asia, and middle-East in a 3-year timeframe. The Copernican revolution affecting the legal business doesn’t have barriers, and while there are differences



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regarding specific countries, most of the needs are pretty much the same”.

The Evolution of Legal Design Landscape

Overall, Marco’s dedication and contributions to the legal design field have not only helped shape its growth but have also positioned him as a leading figure in the movement toward more user-centric and innovative legal practices. In

discussing his latest book, written with Barbara de Muro, Marco introduces the concept of legal design as a discipline focused on creating user-centric legal documents and processes. He highlights its exponential growth and how the landscape has transformed over the years. “What was once a small group of players and companies interested in legal design has now expanded into a thriving field. Today, numerous institutions are actively prototyping contracts and policies, and corporations are dedicating specific budgets to legal design. Universities are also offering legal design courses, leading to increased student involvement. Notably, major events like the Legal Design Summit have gained significant popularity, with tickets selling out within days”.

The Next Big Thing

According to Marco, mental well-being is poised to become the next significant trend to watch in the future of legal and business world. He believes that stress management, talent retention, and performance anxiety have become prevalent in our daily lives, painting a somewhat gloomy picture. However, he notes that businesses and legal departments are starting to take this matter seriously, driven by the requests and challenges faced by Gen Z and the aftermath of the pandemic.

“One positive development is that individuals now have the ability to effectively calculate the costs and benefits of mental well-being, which is a first in history. Conducting a thorough economic analysis will shift the conversation from theoretical to practical. And the impact of mental well-being will help companies and firms redefine their policies to create better and more inclusive workplaces”



Roadmap to the Future

Looking ahead, Marco acknowledges that there will be both tough challenges and exciting opportunities on a global scale. He recognizes the need for smart and savvy professionals who can tackle these challenges and explore the possibilities that arise.

“Even in the legal world, there is a growing demand for skilled professionals who can navigate unforeseen challenges and adapt to the future. For this reason, embracing change and cultivating flexibility will be essential prerequisites for success. As the landscape continues to evolve rapidly, individuals and

organizations must be open to new ideas, technologies, and ways of doing things. By embracing change and remaining flexible, professionals can position themselves to capitalize on the opportunities that emerge and effectively address the challenges they encounter”.

Marco’s outlook reflects the dynamic nature of the business world and the importance of continuous learning and adaptability. By recognizing and embracing the need for change, professionals can position themselves to thrive in an ever-evolving global landscape. ■