

Rising Star: Covington & Burling's Elizabeth Canter

Law360, New York (August 2, 2017, 2:03 PM EDT) - Covington & Burling LLP partner Elizabeth Canter has had a hand in helping a range of companies navigate the tricky privacy and regulatory issues that are increasingly popping up in major transactions, including Microsoft's \$8.5 billion acquisition of video call service Skype, earning her a spot as one of four cybersecurity and privacy practitioners under 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

During the course of her career — which has largely centered on advising a wide variety of multinational companies on privacy, cybersecurity, and technology transaction issues — one matter that has stood out to Canter in particular is the six months that she spent leading a comprehensive gap analysis of the privacy and cybersecurity practices of a major global technology company.

As part of the analysis, which spanned from May through October 2013, Canter conducted interviews with more than 30 people at locations all over the world, directed Covington's efforts to prepare a 230-page report with her team's analysis of potential risks and recommendations, and then held several workshops to help the company prioritize and operationalize the recommendations.

"The most challenging parts of the project were tackling the novel privacy questions that were raised by some of the client's innovative products, but it was an incredible opportunity to really understand the client's business and shape its privacy program," Canter said.

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STAR



Elizabeth Canter
Covington & Burling

Age: 35

Home base: Washington, D.C.

Position: Partner

Law school: University of Virginia School of Law

First job after law school: Law Clerk for Judge M. Blane Michael of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals

When recounting notable matters she has handled thus far, Canter — who was named partner in October — also pointed to the opportunity that she's had to "work on some large transactions with interesting regulatory issues," including Microsoft Corp.'s \$8.5 billion acquisition of Skype in 2011.

WHAT MOTIVATES HER:

Given that her practice is largely advisory in nature, it's "sometimes hard to measure the wins," Canter said.

"But it is always extremely rewarding to help a client solve a tough problem," she added. "Often, that is stepping back from a particular commercial transaction or regulatory issue and thinking more broadly about other ways to tackle the problem that protects the client."

For Canter, those around her have proven to be a primary driver that have helped her excel in her work.

"I am fortunate to have incredible colleagues and clients, and I don't want to let them down," she said.

WHY SHE BECAME A PRIVACY ATTORNEY:

Unlike other practice areas, the privacy and cybersecurity space is relatively nascent, and the legal and compliance issues that arise are typically cutting edge and unprecedented. This atmosphere is what appeals most to Canter about this practice area.

"I learn something new every day, whether it is a novel legal issue or how a new technology works," she said.

HER ADVICE FOR YOUNG ATTORNEYS:

Canter urges her younger colleagues to avoid getting boxed into the matter at hand, but rather to strive to put the issues they are faced with in a broader context.

"In the midst of client emergencies and urgent tasks, it is difficult to find time to think more broadly about your clients and their industries," she said. "But I would encourage new attorneys to try and find time to read what they can in the trade press and general media. It will help you add value and understand where your clients are coming from."

— *As told to Allison Grande*

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2017 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,200 submissions. This interview has been edited and condensed.