

## ROBERT C. PIASENTIN



**Categories:** [People](#), [Lawyers](#)

Robert Piasentin is the national co-lead of McMillan's Technology and Technology Transactions Group, the national lead of McMillan's Technology Law Group, the national lead of Ascent, McMillan's national Startups and Emerging Companies initiative, and a key member of the firm's Business Law team. As a business and technology lawyer who delivers practical legal advice, he helps drive the success of his clients' businesses in all respects.

Having served as the general counsel, corporate secretary and privacy officer of a leading North American technology and management consulting firm for more than 13 years, Robert brings a highly business-oriented perspective to his clients. His experience allows his clients to be highly strategic and on the cutting edge with respect to their transactions and negotiations with partners, customers and third parties. He provides his clients with strong industry knowledge, expertise and connections to allow them to expand their footprint and be true leaders in their communities and industries.

Robert has contributed significantly to the growth of a wide range of businesses within Canada, the United States and globally, particularly in innovative technologies (such as AI, crypto and other frontier technologies), IT and technology outsourcing transactions, software development and licensing solutions, strategic IP and technology commercialization arrangements, online and e-commerce initiatives, venture capital funding, mergers and acquisitions, and privacy and cybersecurity issues. Robert firmly believes that all companies are technology companies because technology plays such an integral role in business operations, administration and growth. Offering this critical legal expertise, Robert works with businesses across all industries and sectors including software, consulting, media and communications, sports and entertainment, forestry, mining, retail and banking.

In the technology space, Robert is a leading advisor to the full spectrum of companies including those in the fintech, proptech, healthtech, ESG, regtech, edtech, biotech and cleantech areas, SaaS, PaaS, IaaS, CaaS and other as-a-service offerings, cloud computing businesses, telecommunications providers, crypto-currencies, blockchain and AI enabled platforms, smart vehicles, smart-homes, and smart-products, and software, app and technology developers generally. Robert is also a key thought leader with respect to legal issues related to frontier and innovative technologies including AI, AR/VR, eSports and crypto.

Robert provides a unique, practical and deep understanding of the business and legal challenges facing today's technology companies. Clients place immense value and confidence in Robert's insights when developing, operating and marketing global technology solutions, implementing strategic growth initiatives and addressing day-to-day operational challenges.

Robert was named one of Business in Vancouver's Top Forty Under 40 in 2013, and in 2014 he was recognized as one of the Association of Corporate Counsel's Top 30-Somethings (one of the top 30 in house lawyers globally under the age of 40).

In addition to his professional pursuits, Robert is an active contributor to his local community on a number of levels. He has or is serving as the chair or board member for the Frontier Collective (as well as serving as their Legal Lead), the Alzheimer Society of Canada, the Alzheimer Society of B.C., the Alzheimer's Research Foundation of British Columbia, Baseball BC and the Baseball BC Governance Committee, the Red Resort Association, Strike out the Stigma, and the Canadian Technology Law Association. He is also a founding member of both the Association of Corporate Counsel – BC Chapter and the St. Thomas More Catholic Lawyers Guild of British Columbia.

**Email:** [robert.piasentin@mcmillan.ca](mailto:robert.piasentin@mcmillan.ca)

**Expertise:** Media, Communications & Entertainment, Startups & Emerging Companies, Technology, Privacy & Data Protection

**Language Spoken:** English, French

**Location:** Vancouver

**Phone:** 604.893.7636

**Position/Title:** Partner, Technology

**Community Involvement:**

- Alzheimer Society of Canada Director (2020 – current)
  - Vice Chair (2024 – current)
- Baseball BC: Director (2022 – current)
  - Chair, Governance Committee (2024 - current)
  - Discipline Committee (panel member, 2022 – current)
- St. Thomas More Catholic Lawyers Guild of BC: Founding Member and Board Member (2011 – current)
- Red Resort Association: Director and Secretary (2017 – current)
- Strike Out the Stigma: Founding Member and Board Member (2023 - current)
- Alzheimer Society of B.C.:
  - Board Chair (2018 – 2021)
  - Director (2015 – 2023)
  - 1st Vice Chair of the Board (2016 – 2018)
  - Chair, Governance Committee (2016 – 2018)
- Alzheimer's Research Foundation of British Columbia: Director (2015 – 2023)
- Coquitlam Little League:
  - Director & Umpire-In-Chief (2018 – 2020)
  - Coach (2012 – 2019) – Canadian Little League Majors All Star Champions in 2019
- Coquitlam Moody Minor Baseball: Coach (2020)
- All Saints Parish:
  - Member, Parish Vision Team (2023 – current)
  - Member, Parish Council/Leadership Committee (2015 – 2019)
  - Volunteer Teacher, Parish Religious Education Program (2011 – 2022)

**Directorships & Affiliations:**

- Frontier Collective, Board Member and Legal Lead (2021 - current)
- Canadian Technology Law Association (Can-Tech), Board Member (2021- 2023)
- Innovatio Awards (Canadian Lawyer InHouse / Thomson Reuters), Advisory Panel and Judge (2014 – 2019)
- Canadian Law Awards (Key Media) (successor to Innovatio Awards), Judge (2020 – 2023)
- BC Technology Association, Web/IT Services CEO-Council Roundtable Co-Chair (2014 – 2019)
- University of British Columbia Allard School of Law, Student Externship Program Mentor (2018 – 2020)
- Association of Corporate Counsel:
  - BC Chapter, Founding Member (2011)
  - BC Chapter, Board Member (2011 – 2018)
  - BC Chapter, Board Chair (2011 – 2016)
  - BC Chapter, Co-Chair, Sponsorship Committee (2011 – 2016)
  - ACC Global, Board of Directors' Nominating Committee (2015)
  - ACC Global, Judge, "Top 30-Somethings" (Awards 2015 – 2021)

#### **Publications:**

- "[Technology Sourcing 2022, Canada Chapter](#)," International Comparative Legal Guides, 2nd Edition (July 2022)
- "[Couldn't Scrape By: BC Court Rejects Certification of Class Action Against Facebook](#)", Internet and E-Commerce Law in Canada, Vol. 23, No. 1 (May 2022)
- "[A primer for integrating automation technology](#)", co-author with Anika Klassen, Manufacturing Automation Magazine, Vol.36, No.6, p.14 (October 2021)

#### **Education & Admissions:**

**Degree:** Called to the British Columbia Bar

**Year:** 2000

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**Degree:** Called to the England and Wales bar

**Year:** 2004

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**Degree:** LLM

**University:** Queen Mary, University of London, Center for Commercial Law Studies

**Year:** 2004

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**Degree:** LLB

**University:** University of Toronto

**Year:** 1999

**Media Mentions:**

- "[#TheFeed: Congress' Online Privacy Bill + Canada's New AI Plans](#)," The Feed with Amber Mac and Michael B, SiriusXM (April 25, 2024)
- "[Open banking could be coming to Canada. Here's what you need to know](#)," CTV News (March 11, 2024)
- "[Robert Piasentin discussed Canada's Upcoming AI Defence Strategy](#)," The Feed with Amber Mac and Michael B, SiriusXM (February 19, 2024)
- "[Employers are racing to catch up as workers experiment with AI without knowing the risks](#)," by Marisa Coulton, Financial Post (July 4, 2023)
- "[Who owns the code? If ChatGPT's AI helps write your app, does it still belong to you?](#)," by David Gewirtz, ZDNET (June 19, 2023)
- "[The legal pitfalls for companies using proptech](#)," by Natalka Falcomer, Real Estate Magazine (March 1, 2022)

**Rankings & Recognition:**

- Recognized by Best Lawyers in Canada (2025) as a leading lawyer in the areas of Information Technology Law, Privacy and Data Security Law, and Technology Law
- Recognized by *Best Lawyers* in Canada (2024) as a leading lawyer in the area of Information Technology Law and Technology Law
- Global Counsel Awards – General Commercial – top 6 lawyers globally (2017)
- Association of Corporate Counsel "Top 30-Somethings" (2014)
- *Business in Vancouver* "Top Forty Under 40" (2013)

**Speaking Engagements:**

- IP/Tech 101: Protect, Commercialize, Monetize Vancouver Startup Week 2020  
- September 28, 2020

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- IP/Tech 101: Protect, Commercialize, Monetize Emerging Companies Webinar  
- September 10, 2020

### **Representative Matters: Operations:**

- Leading and managing multiple technology outsourcing projects across various industries
- Responsible for managing all legal aspects of \$1B IT services outsourcing project
- Lead negotiator and legal advisor on \$50M global IT services pursuit
- Strategic leadership on all business planning, operations and development activities
- Advise and draft all customer, supplier, commercialization, professional services and leasing agreements and related business communications

### **Licensing and Sponsorship:**

- Responsible for licensing global sports, athletic and leisure brands globally
- Identifying, negotiating with and securing global manufacturers, suppliers and distributors
- Negotiating and closing material sponsorship agreements for major sporting personalities and events globally including the Championships at Wimbledon (tennis), the French Open (tennis), Professional Golfers Association, English Football Association, World Boxing Association, and the English and Wales Cricket Board

### **Compliance:**

- Responsible for company compliance with all legislative changes and requirements
- Implement and lead global protection and commercialization program for IP portfolio
- Privacy Officer ensuring compliance with Privacy and related legislation
- Develop and implement internal compliance training programs around privacy and security risk mitigation strategies, employee tax risk, governance and related company strategic initiatives
- Lead internal insurance compliance strategy

### **Corporate and Commercial:**

- Lead negotiator on multiple technical and complicated transactions with numerous public and private sector entities
- Lead or key advisor on domestic and international M&A
- Canadian legal advisor on acquisition of Sierra Systems by NTT DATA
- Advise on, negotiate and finalize contracts across all aspects of a business including IT outsourcing, M&A, licensing, IP commercialization, strategic partnerships, supply chain, manufacturing, distribution, subcontracting and financings in multiple industries such as IT, retail, natural resources, financial services, insurance and health
- Advise and provide leadership to all company units, including finance, marketing/communications, HR,

IT and operations on all relevant matters including enterprise wide initiatives

**Retail:**

- Key legal advisor on securing supply for international retail chain
- Coordinating prosecution against individuals and businesses selling counterfeit and grey goods
- Representing retail clients in government investigations including consumer complaints and anti-competitive practices

**Dispute Resolution:**

- Lead crisis response and coordinate with affected business units (communications, finance, HR, operations) to develop appropriate and timely strategic responses
- Led winning breach of contract claim for \$7M
- Led successful dispute over the commercialization of technology resulting in \$2M win
- Led negotiations in defense of and settled a US\$13M claim for US\$1.5M
- Settled a dispute with seller in an M&A transaction for CDN\$117K

**Teaching Engagements:**

- Speaker: “Legal Issues in Privacy & Cyber Security Compliance and Best Practices” (Late Spring 2020 temporarily postponed due to COVID-19) (Infonex)
  - Panel: Are You Meeting Legal Obligations to Safeguard and Protect Client/Customer Information?
  - Panel: How Will You Be Judged in the Aftermath of an Attack? Best Practices in Responding to Data Breaches.
- Speaker: “The Future of Law Firms”, BC Legal Innovation Forum (2018) (ADB Insights)
- Speaker: “Negotiation Technology Consulting Contracts”, 18th & 20th Annual Negotiating and Drafting Major Business Agreements (2014-2015) (Federated Press)
- Speaker: “Corporate Counsel’s Role in Business Operations, 14th Mini MBA for Lawyers (2014) (Federated Press)

**Industries:** Media, Communications & Entertainment, Startups & Emerging Companies, Technology

**Office:** Vancouver



**Practices:** Privacy & Data Protection