

Bryony Hurst

Partner



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London

Commercial Litigation
Cyber/Data/Privacy
Class Action Litigation
Consumer Protection
CooleyREG

Bryony is an experienced trial litigator, but she works with clients from a far earlier stage of the risk life cycle – before disputes are brewing – using her knowledge of the industries in which they operate to help identify potential threats and challenges and take action to protect their brand, core values and commercial goals. Her in-house work at a global media company and at the UK's data protection regulator, along with her years spent as a reputation management lawyer and deep experience handling internet-related disputes, give her a unique and varied toolbox with which to tackle clients' problems. Her approach is commercial and pragmatic, recognising that forceful litigation has its place but is not always the be-all-and-end-all solution.

Bryony works with a range of technology, media and telecom (TMT) businesses – including online platforms, web operators, digital publishers and broadcasters, IT providers, and software companies and their customers. These clients call upon Bryony for an array of needs, from commercial disputes and data litigation to advice on upcoming digital laws, such as the UK's Online Safety Act. Bryony's work handling cybersecurity incidents and data breaches has a broader client base, having assisted global airlines, international retailers, recruitment companies and public bodies with these challenges. Her experience managing reputational issues spans work for social media companies, gambling operators, sports bodies, luxury retailers, senior managers and executives, and high net worth individuals.

Bryony's representative work experience includes:

- Defending data privacy group litigation – for example, representing a web operator facing action from more than 1,000 individuals accusing the business of long-running misuse of personal data for commercial gain
- Defending consumer class actions – for example, assisting a gambling platform in a claim brought by its former customers alleging breaches of consumer protection law
- Managing cybersecurity incidents – for example, leading the response (in the first 72 hours) to a data breach suffered by a global IT consultancy, including liaising with regulators, clients, media, internal stakeholders, service providers and customers
- Handling a follow-on investigation by a data protection regulator, managing a dispute with a consultancy's commercial client and defending 100+ compensation claims from affected individuals
- Handling regulatory investigations – for example, representing an online platform in an investigation and follow-on enforcement negotiations with the Irish Data Protection Commission related to the platform's treatment of user-generated content; another example is representing a web-hosting platform
- Challenging regulatory enforcement – for example, advising an online platform on its appeal against a very large fine handed down by the Information Commissioner's Office in relation to alleged breaches of the

UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

- Defending online content disputes – for example, acting for an online review site in a claim asserting liability for user-generated content; another example is responding on behalf of a global communications app to a Norwich Pharmacal application requesting user data
- Advising on digital regulation – for example, advising a global technology company on compliance with aspects of the European Union’s Digital Services Act; another example is assisting various clients with submissions during the consultation phase for the UK Online Safety Act, including drafting proposed amendments and advising on aspects of compliance
- Crisis management – for example, advising a US multinational on a very high-stakes reputational crisis involving false allegations made in a documentary broadcast around the world; another example is bringing a defamation lawsuit on behalf of a global beauty brand in respect of a brand-damaging online article

Education

Oxford Institute of Legal Practice
Legal Practice Course (LPC), 2005

University of Cambridge
BA, 2004

Admissions & Credentials

England and Wales

Court Admissions

England and Wales

Rankings & Accolades

The Legal 500 UK: Recommended Lawyer – Media and Entertainment (including Media Finance) (2022)

The Legal 500 UK: Recommended Lawyer – TMT: Digital Content & Social (2024)