



## DISTINGUISHED LEADER: LISA SOTTO

# HUNTON ANDREWS KURTH

**Q&A What are some of your proudest recent achievements?** I’m deeply proud of our privacy and cybersecurity team and the practice we have built from the ground up during the last two decades. Hunton was among the first U.S. law firms to enter the privacy arena when we created the practice in 2000. With only a small team at the beginning, we have grown to nearly 50 lawyers and privacy professionals globally. I am also proud to have worked with and mentored a number of female associates, counsel and partners that have grown up within our team and have advanced within the firm and the field.

Our team’s clients are industry leaders and technology innovators, and I am proud to work alongside them—all of them are uniformly committed to ethical data use. I recently was named a 2022 BTI Client Service “Super All-Star” “for delivering the absolute best client service.” This honor is attributable to the strong partnerships I have cultivated over the years with our clients. We are constantly learning together and building new global frameworks to address this expanding area of law.

**Name a lawyer or mentor whose leadership inspired you.** Marissa Mayer. As the CEO of Yahoo at the time the company announced that it had suffered the biggest data breach in history, Marissa was fully engaged in overseeing the response. She maintained her equanimity throughout and led the team with the utmost integrity.

**How are the business and profession of law changing, and how should lawyers adapt for the future?** When I first started practicing privacy and cybersecurity law, businesses were just beginning to understand the need for data and how to use it responsibly. Now we understand that data is the lifeblood of nearly every

organization, and in many cases is a business’s most important asset. Companies are still learning how to manage data responsibly, use it ethically, and safeguard it carefully. In the United States, we are in the midst of a seismic shift, with five U.S. states recently having enacted comprehensive state privacy laws. We need



Lisa Sotto Courtesy photo

to be nimble in keeping up with these landmark laws and others that will follow. As to the challenge of keeping data safe, today’s cybercriminals unfortunately are often one step ahead of us, committing more sophisticated—and more audacious—cyber crimes than we could have imagined 20 years ago. From ransomware to cyber extortion to doxing, we now must navigate these threats on a daily basis. As practitioners in this space, it’s our job to help our clients to keep data secure, and also to assist them in using data in responsible and beneficial ways.

**What is the best advice for someone considering a career in law, or someone already in the profession who is seeking to make a greater impact?** Our profession is extremely rewarding. You create relationships that often last throughout your career, from your law firm colleagues to the client relationships you develop over time. These relationships are critical to one’s success as a lawyer. Building trust takes time, and it’s important to be respectful of everyone and to create partnerships based on trust along the way.

It’s also important to not be afraid to ask questions. Most mentors are happy to discuss their areas of expertise and eager to teach a willing student.