



LAUREN ASTE



Collaborative, commercial C-suite leader who develops strategic solutions to drive business growth and deliver positive outcomes. Significant global experience advising Boards, managing corporate transactions and transformation, and leading through crisis.

PROFILE

Strategic executive and experienced leader with a strong commercial mindset. Oversees global legal & compliance matters for a leading global travel management company, managing corporate governance, government affairs, data privacy and risk management functions. Committed to developing people and driving corporate social responsibility initiatives. Positive and adaptable team player driving organizational change. Extensive Board, corporate governance and international public speaking experience.

EXPERIENCE AND SELECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CWT (formerly Carlson Wagonlit Travel) | Executive Vice President, Chief Legal Officer & Company Secretary

2007 – Present | London, England & Paris, France

Leading global travel management company operating in ~150 jurisdictions with approximately 11,000 employees; issuer of publicly traded debt listed on European markets subject to public disclosure requirements

- Leads CWT legal and regulatory matters and supports integration planning in connection with the acquisition of CWT by Amex GBT (NYSE: GBTG) announced in March 2024
- In 2023, successfully led the company through a recapitalization to consolidate its shareholder base, reducing group company debt by \$450M and seating a new Board
- In 2021, successfully led a balance sheet restructuring through a one-day Chapter 11 process to equip the company with financial resources to emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic, including by reducing debt by over 50%, adding significant new equity capital, and seating a new independent Board
- In 2020, advised CWT on a global cyber incident, providing strategic oversight for communications with clients, suppliers and regulators, and advocated for legislation to support the travel industry in the wake of Covid-19 resulting in the \$454 BN US CARES Act
- From 2016 – 2019, created business and legal structure to support CWT's digital transformation to become a global travel technology platform, by establishing Roomlit, a new hotel booking platform; developing CWT's online booking platform in China; and centralizing CWT's technology stack into a "single pane of glass" to allow CWT travel counselors to provide services more efficiently to clients
- Oversaw 10 acquisitions from 2007 – 2019 to help CWT achieve over \$25BN in traffic
- Established CWT's investor relations function and managed compliance with public securities disclosure requirements
- Grew Legal & Compliance team from approximately 25 to 50 members from 2014 – 2019 to respond to company commercial growth and to establish data privacy, risk management and government affairs functions
- Executive management of CWT's head office at Canary Wharf, London since 2014
- Experience handling complex matters in high-risk jurisdictions (Brazil, Russia, India, China, Egypt and Ecuador)
- Significant experience on Board and executive leadership team transition matters to support CWT's strategic plan
- Previously served as VP & Deputy GC managing EMEA and APAC (2009-2014) and VP & Assistant GC managing finance, investor relations and M&A (2007-2009)

Dechert LLP | Senior Associate

2005 – 2007 | London, England

Global law firm

Lead counsel to US, UK and European clients in various industries including travel, foreign currency exchange, mining, technology, and investment fund management. Completed mergers, acquisitions, JVs, financings and international securities offerings with complex collateral requirements. Listed securities on various stock exchanges, including on AIM Market of the London Stock Exchange and Euro MTF Market of the Luxembourg Stock Exchange. Advised US and foreign private issuers on compliance with US SEC reporting requirements and on Delaware and New York law.

Chadbourne & Parke LLP | Associate

1998 – 2004 | New York, NY USA

Global law firm, now part of Norton Rose

Advised buy-side and sell-side clients in various industries including manufacturing, automotive, semiconductor, beverages, and defense. Completed mergers, acquisitions and reorganizations of public and private companies, including spin-offs and domestic and international JVs. Completed SEC registration statements and prospectuses, private placement memoranda, registration rights agreements, indentures, debentures, warrants and employee stock option plans. Seconded to international pharmaceutical client to oversee contracts portfolio.

BOARD AND OTHER EXPERIENCE

The World Childhood Foundation, Inc. | Board Chair

2018 – Present | New York, NY, USA

Founded by Her Majesty Queen Silvia of Sweden to fight violence against children. Successfully led Executive Director transition and annual gala, raising \$1M for programs. Supported launch of the Out of the Shadows Index with Economist Impact at the UN in NY (2018) and Washington D.C. (2022) to measure the responsiveness of 60 countries and 12 US states to child abuse.

Saint Pio Foundation | Advisory Board Member

2023 – Present | Tuckahoe, NY, USA

Foundation that supports underserved communities to address hunger and spiritual need.

The Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children (a UN Affiliate) | Board Member

2023 | New York, NY, USA

Public-private partnership to end violence against children, succeeded by a new Roundtable on Child Protection in Travel & Tourism that I launched in January 2024 together with the UN Secretary-General on Violence against Children.

INTERPOL Independent Expert's Committee against Human Trafficking and People Smuggling | Member

2019 – Present | Lyon, France

Invitation-only committee representing law enforcement and private sector.

World Travel & Tourism Council | CEO Delegate & Founding Member of Government Affairs and Anti-Human Trafficking Task Forces

2017 – Present | London, England

Membership organization that advocates for the travel & tourism sector.

Travel Tech & EU Travel Tech | CWT Delegate

2018 – 2023 | Washington, DC, USA & Brussels, Belgium

Membership organizations that advocate for travel technology businesses.

EDUCATION

BPP Law School

2005 – 2006 | London, England

Qualified Lawyers Transfer Test Study Program

New York University School of Law | JD

1995 – 1998 | New York, NY, USA

Vanderbilt Medal for Outstanding Contributions to NYU Law School

New York University Graduate School of Arts & Sciences | MA (French Studies)

1996 – 1998 | New York, NY, USA

Wellesley College | BA (French & Political Science)

1990 – 1994 | Wellesley, MA, USA

Summa Cum Laude / Phi Beta Kappa

NATIONALITY & LANGUAGES

Nationality – US, British & Italian Tri-National

Languages – French (fluent)