

 [Click to Print](#) or Select 'Print' in your browser menu to print this document.

Page printed from: [Law Technology News](#)

Women Leaders in the Legal and Startup Worlds Provide Advice for Lawyers

Sarah Feingold of Etsy and Noha Waibsnaider of Peeled Snacks share advice at the New York State Bar Association annual meeting

Juliana Kenny, Legaltech News

January 27, 2016

The opportunities for women attorneys in the startup world, both tech and otherwise, are expanding, and leaders in startups, as well as the tech and finance worlds, came together this week to shed light on the changes in those industries and to discuss what it takes to break into the industry as a female lawyer at the New York State Bar Association annual meeting.

Legaltech News spoke with one of the speakers Sarah Feingold, a jeweler and senior IP and privacy counsel at Etsy, a global online jewelry, apparel, and retail business, on the journey as an attorney in the startup world, and what advice she has for women who want to obtain jobs in tech. Feingold was the 17th employee at Etsy, so has seen the ground-up work done to launch the company into the global spotlight.

She noted that one of the challenges she has seen as a lawyer in the tech world has been communicating with engineers and other tech-minded colleagues. She noted that lawyers are used to speaking a certain language, and other team members might have their own languages. Melding the two can be an issue, but the work lies in figuring out how to meet the needs of the team, and how to move forward.

Noha Waibsnaider, Peeled Snacks founder and CEO, spoke on the specific legal needs of a startup and mentioned that one of the key elements she ignored at the beginning of her company's launch was investing in getting a solid legal team in place. "I made costly mistakes," she noted. "Since then I have upgraded, and we have a great set of attorneys in our space." As a company that outsources most everything, she says she has pieced together superb counsel.

And while Peeled Snacks isn't as huge as Etsy, Feingold emphasized that smaller companies have the same legal needs as bigger companies, just on a smaller scale.

In terms of women specifically breaking into tech, whether it be on the legal side or not, both Feingold and Waibsnaider said that women need to go where the experts are. "If you want to

learn about an industry, go to the experts and learn from them,” Feingold said. If you want to learn about tech, attend the trade shows and conferences to make connections with experts and learn how best to counsel them, should you be in the legal realm.

And Waibsnaider echoed that sentiment: “Get to know the space,” she said. “Learn the idiosyncrasies and the various players so you have more of that industry knowledge.” About her business specifically, she highlighted:

“There is so much going on, there is so much need for legal help. We think of our attorneys not just as people who process legal documents; they are partners who help negotiate deals, bank loans, vendors, etc. They are proactively sitting at the table. They know the business and the ups and downs and issues that we encounter.”

As aspiring attorney or leader in the startup world, regardless of industry, would do well to take some of these pro tips.

Copyright 2016. ALM Media Properties, LLC. All rights reserved.