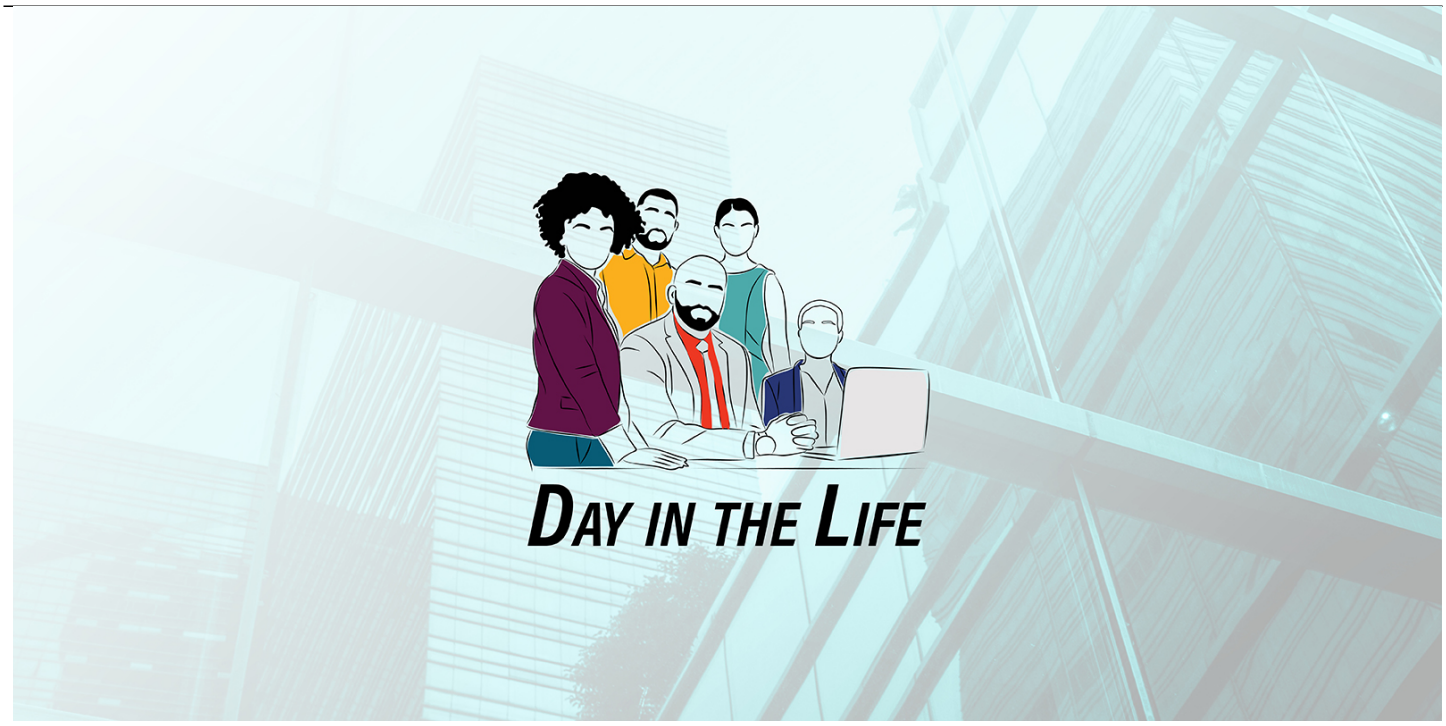


Day in the Life: Maria Crabb

Career Development


DAY IN THE LIFE

???



Name: Maria Crabb

Title: Director, JAPAC Employment Counsel (Basically, I keep things fair and fabulous for our people)

Company: Palo Alto Networks

Location: Singapore (where the sun shines and the food calls!)

6:30 am

Rise and shine (and sweat!)

Before the emails start piling up, I'm out the door for some serious self-care. Bootcamp, a brisk walk, or a dip in the pool — whatever gets the blood pumping and convinces my brain it's time to wake up. It’s my secret weapon and a rare time of day when I’m not on my phone and focusing on me.

8:00 am - 10:00 am

The early bird catches the American conference call

While most of Singapore is just stirring, my brain is already working at full speed. Palo Alto Networks' mothership is nestled in sunny Santa Clara, California, which means my mornings are full of transatlantic calls. I'm usually juggling global projects, often translating complex regional differences, and local practices in Asia so that everyone's on the same page. We have a great culture where all voices are heard and the cultural nuances aren’t lost.

10:00 am

Office oasis, ahoy!



Time to brave the Singapore humidity and head into our Tanjong Pagar office. And let me tell you, we are *spoiled*. Forget boring cubicles; we're talking an actual herb and salad garden (yes, we grow our own lunch garnish!) and "Places Team" angels who regularly shower us with delicious treats. Their mission: to ensure we're all well-fed, happy, and therefore, brilliant at making the digital world a safer place. My role involves navigating employment laws across 14 Asia Pacific countries — often with a language barrier that even my fluent Spanish can't crack (sadly, "hablo Español" isn't super helpful in South Korea).

Working in cybersecurity is also very exciting. We work in a high paced environment and our vision is to make each day safer and more secure than the one before. This purpose really resonates with me and I see this in how we work and in the products and solutions we offer. My focus is to manage our people issues fairly and with empathy with the least disruption to the business so they can continue protecting our digital way of life.

3:30 pm

Employment legal leader by day, community builder by afternoon

Beyond my Palo Alto Networks hat, I also wear an "ACC Singapore Chapter Board Member" badge. We've seen an increase in membership and engagement recently, and it's been genuinely rewarding to bring our in-house legal community together. I dedicate about 30 minutes daily to connect with my fellow board members, strategize our next big event, and offer support to our members — because even legal eagles need a flock.

4:00 pm

My legal sisterhood

As the sole employment lawyer for the Asia Pacific region, building my network isn't just a good idea, it's a crucial part of how I work. Luckily, I've cultivated a magnificent group of strong, brilliant women who are my legal sounding boards, my cheerleaders, and my sanity savers. They're the ones I can call when I'm wrestling with a particularly thorny legal conundrum, knowing they'll either have the answer, a helpful suggestion, or be free to meet for a glass of wine!

Join legal professionals from around the globe at the
2025 ACC Annual Meeting | Philadelphia, PA, USA | Oct. 19-22

5:00 pm - 6:00 pm:

Tying up loose ends and tomorrow's blueprint

As the afternoon winds down, I dedicate this hour to ensuring I'm ready for whatever tomorrow brings. It’s a mix of wrapping up any urgent tasks, responding to last-minute emails, and then mapping out my priorities for the next day. A little planning goes a long way in keeping the legal ship sailing smoothly.

Evening escapades (when the legal pad is put away!)

6:30 pm:

The great balcony unwind

The moment I kick off my shoes, it's straight to the balcony. My personal mini-sanctuary. I love just sitting there, watching the world go by in Singapore — the city lights twinkling, the distant hum of traffic, maybe a random pigeon performing aerial acrobatics. It's the perfect way to decompress and shift gears from "legal brain" to "human brain."

6:30 pm - 8:00 pm:

Culinary adventures, singapore style


Maria Crabb enjoying a champagne toast on her beautiful wedding day.

This is where Singapore truly shines! My favorite way to unwind is to embark on a culinary quest. Whether it's a bustling hawker center with sizzling satay, a hidden gem serving up the best Laksa, or

just trying a new noodle dish and seeing how much spice I can handle! Exploring the local food scene is pure joy. It's an explosion of flavors and a fantastic way to experience the vibrant culture.

8:00 pm - 10:00 pm:

Winding down (and avoiding midnight legal thoughts)

The final wind-down. Maybe a read of a non-legal book, watching something fun on TV (Welcome to Wrexham always makes me smile), a little stretching, or just scrolling through holiday ideas. With South-East Asia on my door step, planning a weekend break is the best way to relax! The goal is to gently coax my brain into "sleep mode" rather than letting it focus on tomorrow's questions.

10:00 pm:

Zzzzzzz ...

By 10 pm, it's lights out for me. While my California colleagues are just kicking off their day, I'm already happily drifting off, perhaps dreaming of my next delicious Singaporean meal or where my next mini-break might be. Then it's recharge time, ready to tackle whatever tomorrow brings! And through it all, I'm lucky to have my husband by my side — we've been together 19 years, and he's my number one fan, who also happens to take no nonsense!

Join ACC for more member profiles!

Disclaimer: The information in any resource in this website should not be construed as legal advice or as a legal opinion on specific facts, and should not be considered representing the views of its authors, its authors' employers, its sponsors, and/or ACC. These resources are not intended as a definitive statement on the subject addressed. Rather, they are intended to serve as a tool providing practical guidance and references for the busy in-house practitioner and other readers.

Maria Crabb



Director, JAPAC Employment Counsel

Palo Alto Networks

Maria Crabb is an Australian and UK Admitted Solicitor with 16+ years' experience in employment law, industrial, and employee relations. She is a fluent Spanish speaker with strong HR advisory background, including complex investigations, non-compete matters, dispute resolution, policy management, enterprise bargaining negotiations and ER/employment law compliance.