



## Mumbai law firms bag phoren projects

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Taking Business Processing Outsourcing a step further, several Mumbai firms have bagged legal outsourcing projects from law firms in the USA, Canada, UK and Japan over the past one year.

Five Mumbai firms have jumped on the business bandwagon, pegged to generate \$17 billion (Rs 74,970 crores) by 2010. So, from patents to litigations, legal research to document analysis, many Indian lawyers are now catering to overseas clients.

Take Pangea3 for example. This firm started off at Nariman Point last year with 12 lawyers. Now, it has 55 lawyers to attend to its 40 clients spread over USA, Canada, UK and Japan.

But Sanjay Kamlani, Pangea3 co-founder, insists that his firm is not strictly into legal outsourcing. "We help overseas lawyers in their cases with our own lawyers," he explains. Kamlani says the US legal sector stands tall at \$200 billion. "The Indian legal outsourcing market will only grow by the day," he adds.

ALMT Synergies, for instance, began its legal wing, ALMT Legal, a year ago and brought in UK-based senior lawyer Matthew Banks, to head it.

"Considering the potential for outsourcing from UK and US, many BPOs and legal firms have begun focusing on legal outsourcing," Banks observes. "With 20 overseas clients, we cannot be casual about the assignments we bag. And hence, the demand for competitive and experienced lawyers, familiar with international law is spiralling," he says.

### Patent rules

Considering the volume of patent-related work, LPOs are focusing more on bagging such assignments. ALMT Legal has hired five experienced lawyers specialising on patents.

Be it drafting patent applications, doing research on the inventions, interacting with the inventor or environment screening, LPOs are taking up legal assignments fervently, observes an associate of Nishith Desai Associates, Vivek Khatpalia.

### Value addition

As for lawyers, LPOs are undoubtedly a better proposition than working for a law firm.

Contracts lawyer Agnipushp, for instance, left a high-profile career with a reputed automobile company to join Pangea3. "Advocates get exposure to international market and get assignments that go beyond courtrooms," he explains.

### Four times cheaper

Be it a civil or a criminal litigation, Indian lawyers are considered reliable and focused by international clients. "Plus to the overseas client, an Indian LPO expert comes at least four times cheaper than lawyers in his home country. What more could you ask for," remarks Khatpalia.

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