

# **RANCHI LEGAL SOLUTIONS: MARKETING LEGAL SERVICES BEYOND 2020**

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Vineet Boris was having his usual sip of coffee at his balcony looking into the hustle on the streets and thinking about how life has completely changed over in the last two years. A few months earlier he used to have his coffee over the same place and looked over into the empty streets. During the end of November 2021, life has just again begun to be normal as the pandemic seemed waning off. But he also realized that life will not be the same again.

Boris (28 years old) the owner of Ranchi Legal Solutions (RLS), has done Bachelor's & Master's in Law and begun his career with great hope and enthusiasm. He has had strong academic background and was ready to put his knowledge into practice. Being young and dynamic, he was looking at the possibilities of how the marketing of legal services would shape up in the post pandemic era. The future is unprecedented, but he hopes that he would adapt fast into the new ways of working and build a successful career around his passion towards law. An early adopter will have the first mover's advantage, and the RLS wants to be that one. In order to achieve this, he has to plan in the short, medium and long term to ensure that his services reach the target clients. Before other legal service providers would capture the available opportunity, Boris wants to take the first mover's advantage.

## **INDIAN LEGAL INDUSTRY**

The Indian legal profession is one of the largest in the world, with over 1.4 million enrolled advocates nationwide. The Indian legal profession has grown over a short period of less than 50 years to become the world's largest branch of the profession. In 2010, the total value of the Indian legal market was estimated to be approximately \$1.25 Billion USD. The predominant service providers are individual lawyers, small or family-based firms. Most of the firms are involved in the issues of domestic law and majority work under country's adversarial litigation system.

Prior to the emergence of the corporate legal sector, jobs available to law graduating lawyers were mostly assisting as junior advocates that paid little or nothing. Law was, thus, not always a viable profession for students. In the late 1980s and 1990s National Law Universities were set up with the objective of supplying well-trained lawyers so that access to justice is enlarged and the quality of the justice to the common man is improved and strengthened. This has generated bunch of young and knowledgeable graduates who see legal profession as a lucrative job.

Many large and mid-sized law firms are aiming to build a pan-India presence, adding more practices and

expanding their reach by acquiring smaller firms. Due to globalization, the effects of the world economy are being felt, with foreign law firms seeking entry into the Indian space and Indian law firms handling transactions with global implications. However, the core practice of law still revolves around the courts in India.

Legal services is seen as a 'noble profession' rather than services. There is a stringent and restrictive regulatory machinery which is justified on the grounds of public policy and 'dignity of profession'. The judiciary has reinforced these principles, which can be reflected in words of Justice Krishna Iyer, when he noted, Law is not a trade, not briefs, not merchandise, and so the heaven of commercial competition should not vulgarize the legal profession. However, over the years courts have recognized 'Legal Service' as a 'service' rendered to the consumers and have held that lawyers are accountable to the clients in the cases of deficiency of services.

## **BACKGROUND OF RANCHI LEGAL SOLUTIONS**

Ranchi Legal Solutions (RLS) is an upcoming law firm based in Ranchi. Vineet Boris and a Ruchika, two co-founders of the law firm RLS, had graduated from National Law University with a Master's Degree with distinction. They were doing well in their respective careers under guidance of the senior and experienced Advocates. However, they had always envisioned to start their own law firm. This vision brought them together and they decided to start a new firm.

The journey was not easy as they had no prior experience in starting or managing a firm. Again, the onset of pandemic made them rethink their strategies so that the firm remained relevant in the challenging times. The background work for starting the firm, was made easier due to the entire process of incorporation being conducted online, which reduced the hassle of physically moving around offices to get the work done. They are keen on finding out a suitable strategy to market their legal services.

## **LEGAL SERVICES DURING 2020**

The global Coronavirus outbreak has led to destabilization of the world economy, a loss of earnings for companies as well as individuals, rise in the unemployment rate and a significant drop in the stock markets. The Indian legal landscape has also been disturbed and severely impacted by this pandemic. With the social distancing obligations and the nation again under lockdown orders, law firms in India and the Indian judicial system have had to close their doors to the public. Many of the judicial officers and staff members of various courts have tested positive for the virus and some have also succumbed to this deadly disease. During these quarantined times and keeping in mind the public health concerns, the Indian Courts have been hearing only extremely urgent matters only at all levels. The cases which do not fall under the aforesaid categories have been adjourned, depositions have been cancelled or rescheduled, and various deadlines have been extended. The pandemic has thrown a harsh light on

the outdated way justice is dispensed, law is taught, and legal services are delivered.

The judiciary and the whole legal system per se have been playing an important role in making sure no one suffers amid the pandemic. The pain of migrant labourers is immense as they got hard hit by both the coronavirus and the lockdown. As per several news reports, lawyers appeared on the frontline alongside doctors and security personals in the battle against the pandemic to help their fellow countrymen and the migrant labourers. Several lawyers across the country came forward to help migrants moving back to their native places during the lockdown. Along with providing material assistance to them, they ensured that none gets harassed at the hands of the authorities.

Many cases of contractual disputes had emerged, especially the ones invoking force majeure (FM). From B2B to Company and employee disputes, the lockdown had serious implications on the private sector. Lawyers had made the process easier by the process of arbitration so that nobody could feel stressed at the time of the pandemic.

As a result of the pandemic, considering that a complete shutdown of the Indian justice system is unfavorable, the law firms had implemented work from home policies and the judges have had to focus almost exclusively on the most urgent cases before them and postpone less-pressing matters. The law schools had transitioned to online schooling and learning.

In the age that we have, which sees an expansion in the information technology landscape, the pervasive role of the internet and technology cannot be ignored. The concept of 'access to justice' was subjected to a unique challenge, never faced before. Commendably, the judiciary responded remarkably by, without hesitation, harnessing technology to ensure that access to the courts is not impeded. The rapid response in adopting technology and devising e-courts and video-conferencing has ensured that the disruption due to the pandemic was transitory.

Recent steps towards digitization have resulted in contemplating the virtual courts and electronic filings. This includes introduction of e-courts portals/apps, ensuring the availability of soft-copies of court orders and immediate access to case-status. It is also pertinent to mention that the Supreme Court of India, has come up with mobile application to improve access to case information. It is heartening to see the tremendous amount of hard work and tireless efforts being contributed by support staff in adapting to the new system.

The impact of the pandemic has been majorly seen in the Indian courtrooms. To adhere to social distancing norms and to curb the spread of the infectious virus, the Indian Courts had resorted to Virtual Court Rooms to ensure that administration of justice remains uninterrupted. The concept of Virtual Courts is not a novel concept in India. In 2003, Mr. V. Prafulla Desai in the State of Maharashtra held

the recording of evidence to a Court through video conferencing shall be as per the procedure established by law. Since then, several subordinate Courts in India have already framed guidelines in this respect and have held judicial proceedings through video conferencing.

Of course, not all are conversant with technology, but current circumstances demand that efforts should be made in this regard so that near future will be the time of technology and automation and those who do not keep up with the pace will be superseded. Despite such giant leaps in various sectors of our economy, the legal profession has generally been slow to adapt to technological changes. Disruption-averse, our law firms and corporate legal sector continue to be driven by inefficient practices and dependency on manual systems—a far cry from the increasing automation and innovation in our world. However, this practice will inevitably change in the future with new innovations in the sector enforced due to the pandemic.

## **MARKETING AND EXPANSION PLAN**

Service marketing is a strategy which promotes and showcases the intangible benefits and offerings delivered by a company to drive end customer value. This can be for standalone service offerings or complementary services to tangible products. Service marketing is a concept which focuses mainly on the business of non-physical intangible goods. It is done for company given benefits which cannot be seen, touched, felt etc. These are benefits

which are driven mostly by people, process and cannot be kept by a customer. As services are essentially intangible, they do not result in the ownership of anything. Its production may or may not be tied to a physical product.

Both the founders of RLS, have been local inhabitants of the city of Ranchi since childhood. So, their neighbours, friends, relatives, and acquaintances are the immediate and easy contact base of potential customers for the firm. As the nearby areas comprise of residential colonies and societies, they have already earned a name for themselves in their localities. Across the city, every church has a provincial area in which a particular church operates. Being a member of church, both Boris and Anju may have access to potential customer base if they build a good rapport with other church members.

Again, both the founders have been alumni of different schools, before joining National Law University for their professional studies. Boris' schooling was from St. Xavier's School and Bishop's Westcot. Ruchika's schooling was from Loreto Convent and D.A.V. Public School. Both Boris and Ruchika have work experience in separate law firms before starting the RLS. They may utilize their existing customer contacts to market the services offered by their firm. Boris has few Chartered Accountants in his friend's circle. Being associated with a CA firm may provide a win-win situation for both the CA firm as well as for RLS. To expand the potential

customer base and increase awareness among students about the firm, the founders have the option of recruiting young interns for Summer Internship especially from their alma mater, National Law University. This will give them an opportunity of marketing and creating awareness about the legal services of RLS, among the potential customers of the state.

## THE DILEMMA

The first decision the owners of the RLS have agreed to make is to decide who they are trying to reach as defining the target audience is critical to developing the correct strategic approach. They are still trying to figure out whether they should restrict their services to the same city or look for a pan India presence. After the Covid-19 scenario, it's possible to capture other state's client, as the legal services are being offered through online mode. They are not sure if their financial situation will help, they grow in more than four places in the next three years. They are also confused to start with retail customers only or target corporate customers as well. They also need to figure out how to position the firm as they are not looking forward to be just like any other legal firm. Boris has specialization in Constitutional Law whereas Ruchika has specialization in Criminal Law. As both the partners specialize in different areas, they might have to decide the core offering of the firm based on the demand for their services. They may have to also find the right marketing channel to increase access to their services.

The spread of coronavirus has changed the lives of humans forever. Individuals, countries, health sector, international organizations, and private industry amongst others, all were caught unprepared as the deadly virus spread rapidly. Unsurprisingly, the economic challenges presented by COVID-19 have led to numerous restructuring and retrenchment mandates for lawyers to handle. As the unlocking begins in phases, normalcy has started to resume in the lives of Indians. The partners at RLS are determined to devise the right strategy for their firm. Their decision regarding the right target customers, positioning and marketing channels will help them keep their professional aspirations afloat amidst these challenging times. In such a scenario like pandemic, first mover will reap the benefit of adopting to suitable service offerings being provided to its clients. Now, RLS is in a situation where, it has to take the decision before its competitors grab the opportunity of being the first mover.

### Exhibit 1: Prices of various legal services offered by RLS.

(Price mentioned in Rupees; USD 1\$ = Rs. 75 approx)

Service	Price (in Rs.)
Consultancy	1,000
<b>Drafting + Filing</b>	
Writ Petition	15,000
Civil Suit	10,000
Bail/Anticipatory Bail	10,000
Appeal/Revision	15,000
Miscellaneous Petition	10,000
Quasi-Judicial Petition	5,000
Legal Notice	3,000
	1,500
Court Appearance	

Miscellaneous	
Certified Copy	1,000
Typed Copy	30 per page
Clerical work	1,500
Other	Depending on nature of work

Exhibit-1 : Pricing of the Legal Services

## TEACHING NOTE

### Ranchi Legal Solutions: Marketing Legal Services Beyond 2020

#### Synopsis of the Case

Ranchi Legal Solutions (RLS) is an upcoming law firm based in Ranchi. Vineet Boris and Anju Ruchika, two partners of the law firm had graduated from National Law University with a Master's Degree with distinction. They were doing well in their respective careers under guidance of the senior and experienced Advocates. However, they had always envisioned to start their own law firm. This vision brought them together and they decided to start a new firm. Again, the onset of pandemic made them rethink their strategies so that the firm remain relevant in the challenging times. The background work for starting the firm was made easier due to the entire process being conducted online which reduced the hassle of physically moving around offices to get the work done.

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are not sure if their financial situation will help them grow in more than four places in the next three years. They are also confused to start with retail customers only or target corporate customers as well. They also need to figure out how to position the firm as they are not looking forward to be just like any other legal firm. Boris has specialization in Constitutional Law whereas Ruchika has specialization in Criminal Law. As both the partners specialize in different areas they might have to decide the core offering of the firm based on the demand for their services. They may have to also find the right marketing channel to increase access to their services. RLS has to take decision before its competitors make the move. An early adopter will have the first mover's advantage, and the RLS wants to be that one.

As the unlocking post advent of COVID-19, begins in phases, normalcy has started to resume in the lives of Indians. The protagonist has to make a decision regarding the positioning of legal services offered, to target right segment of customers, and to decide the optimal pricing for marketing channels, to keep the professional aspirations afloat amidst the challenging times of Covid pandemic.

#### Learning Objective of the Case

This case gives students an opportunity to apply different marketing frameworks to support their analysis of a potential business opportunity. The case provides the following learning:

- Concepts of Marketing
- Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning (STP)
- Marketing of Services
- Pricing Strategy

**Bloom's Taxonomy:** The learning objectives as per the Bloom's taxonomy is summarized below-

### Remember

By the end of this case study, the student will be able to

- Define Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning, Service Marketing
- List the features of service marketing and types of service marketing

### Understand

By the end of this case study, the student will be able to

- Give examples of service marketing
- Describe the pricing strategies available for service marketing

### Apply

By the end of this case study, the student will be able to

- Determine the prices of different services
- Apply concepts of STP to segment a market, find target customers and position a service

### Analyze

By the end of this case study, the student will be able to

- Differentiate between marketing

of services and products

- Analyze the available strategies to segment a market, find target audience and position a service

### Evaluate

By the end of this case study, the student will be able to

- Compare and contrast the available strategies for STP
- Determine the appropriate pricing strategy for the services to be introduced

### Create

By the end of this case study, the student will be able to

- Design an appropriate pricing strategy for the services to be introduced
- Formulate a framework for segmentation of market, finding target customers and positioning its services

### Level and Position of the Case in the Course

This case is suitable for Post-Graduate level courses in subjects such as Marketing, STP (Segmentation, Target, Positioning), Marketing of Services and Pricing Strategy. This case to be positioned towards the middle of the total marketing lectures.

### Relevant Readings

- Book: The Management and Marketing of services; Author: Peter Mudie and Angela Cottam
- Article: A service-orientated approach to marketing of services; Author: C Gronnoos

- Article: Bloom’s Taxonomy; Author: Mary Forehand, The University of Georgia
- <https://eduaspirant.com/demand-and-supply-of-lawyers/>

**Relevant Videos**

- Managing Through Crisis: How To Market During COVID-19 - YouTube
- **BLOOM’S TAXONOMY OF EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES : COGNITIVE DOMAIN #TET#HT ET#CTET#NET#SET#KVS#NVS #CDP - YouTube**

**Assignment Questions**

Describe Christian Gronroos service marketing triangle model.

Describe the basic features of service marketing which makes it different from the usual marketing.

- Explain the types of service marketing.
- Analyze the legal services industry in India.
- What are the segmentation options available to the owners of the firm?
- What are the target marketing strategies?
- What positioning strategy should be employed by the firm?
- What are the marketing channels to be followed in the post pandemic era?
- How should the pricing of the legal services be done?

**Teaching Plan: Pastures**

This case is designed for a 90-minute class discussion as follows:

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<b>Concepts of Marketing:</b> Different types of marketing for products/ services. Difference between sales and marketing.	20 min
<b>Segmentation:</b> Take examples from students about what they understand about segmentation and how will they do it.	10 min
<b>Targeting:</b> Take examples from students about what they understand from targeting and how will they do it.	10 min
<b>Positioning:</b> Take examples from students about what they understand from positioning and how will they do it.	10 min
<b>Marketing of Services:</b> Differentiation between service marketing and product marketing.	20 min
<b>Pricing Strategy:</b> Discuss on different types of pricing. How to arrive at best suitable pricing.	20 min

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**Analysis**

Describe the basic features of service marketing which makes it different from the usual marketing.

Some basic features of service marketing are- intangibility, use of tangible products, no stock maintenance, low price sensitivity and value creation process.

- **Intangibility-** The service is considered as an intangible product which cannot be seen or touched or physically felt but can only be experienced. In case of a service, the consumer’s buying decision is wholly based on his understanding of the service offering. He/she spends ample time and efforts in decision making, especially for those services which involve huge investment and risk. The marketer’s assurance on the performance of the service influences the consumer’s decision. However,



even a little negative publicity may lead to consumer turnover.

- **Use of Tangible Products-** The service providers make use of various tangible or real products to deliver appropriate service to the consumers. The products absorbed for providing services create value for the customers. For instance, when a family goes to a restaurant for dining(service) they look forward to a good meal(product).
- **No Stock Maintenance-** The services are intangible and are provided then and there; thus, unlike products, no inventory needs to be maintained in such cases. The profitability in the service industry depends upon the excellence of the service provider and business operations. For example, a photographer is known for his/her skills, clicks and portfolio, and he/she doesn't need to maintain any stock. On the contrary, a person selling cameras and albums is known for the product quality and needs to keep sufficient inventory.
- **Low Price Sensitivity-** In the service industry, the consumers are not price-conscious but are more concerned about the quality of service they get. A zero-defect service product has the highest earning potential. Consumer's price sensitivity towards service is inversely related to the level of performance expectation.
- **Value Creation Process-** The four significant elements or 4P's of a service which is responsible for consumer satisfaction and value creation are the paces, people, proof and process involved. The service marketing mix constitutes of these elements along with the traditional marketing mix elements, i.e., product, price, promotion and place. For instance, ola cab services are known for the instant booking of cabs, humble drivers, facility of 'one-time password' and easy app accessibility.

### Explain the types of service marketing.

Three types of service marketing:

- **B2C-** This is the customer service provided by companies to its end customers. For example, telecom, hospitality, financial services, repair provided by providers.
- **B2B-** Many companies provide services to enterprises and organizations. These can be networks, finance, travel, technology services etc. The motive is to show business value to an organization through usage of their service. For example, many technology services firms showcase their references and case studies where they derived value for similar organizations as the target customer. The value can be in terms of cost savings, revenue increase.

- **Post Purchase Service-** This category focuses on the add on and complementary services offered by companies in addition to the core product (or service in some cases). These can be warranty services, customer support, service request resolution, helpdesk, repairs etc. These services can be differentiating factor for customers when they buy the core offering. For example, when a person buys a phone but gets an year of free warranty service and support. This can become a differentiator and forms part of the service marketing done by the phone manufacturer.

### **Analyze the legal services industry in India.**

The Indian legal profession is one of the largest in the world, with over 1.4 million enrolled advocates nationwide. The Indian legal profession has grown over a short period of less than 50 years to become the world's largest branch of the profession. In 2010, the total value of the Indian legal market was estimated to be approximately US \$1.25 Billion. The predominant service providers are individual lawyers, small or family-based firms. Most of the firms are involved in the issues of domestic law and majority work under country's adversarial litigation system.

Prior to the emergence of the corporate legal sector, jobs available to law graduating lawyers were mostly assisting as junior advocates that paid little or nothing. Law was, thus, not

always a viable profession for students. In the late 1980s and 1990s National Law Universities were set up with the objective of supplying well-trained lawyers so that access to justice is enlarged and the quality of the justice to the common man is improved and strengthened. This has generated bunch of young and knowledgeable graduates who see legal profession as a lucrative job.

Many large and mid-sized law firms are aiming to build a pan-India presence, adding more practices and expanding their reach by acquiring smaller firms. Due to globalization, the effects of the world economy are being felt, with foreign law firms seeking entry into the Indian space and Indian law firms handling transactions with global implications. However, the core practice of law still revolves around the courts in India.

India currently has nearly 10 lakhs of lawyers but, only 20 percent of them are considered as expert enough to fit the requirements to practice law in the courts. Hence, inspite of having this much lawyers there are still a demand of lawyers in the market or to say there is demand of qualified lawyers in the market. The Bar Council of India often express its concern about young lawyers not joining the Bar. India has 3.3 crores of pending cases in all of its courts and according to a study India has only 19 judges per 10 lakhs of people. This provides a great opportunity for the future lawyers as there is a great demand of talented lawyers in the market There are also many vacancies in the courts for the

post of judges. Young candidates can grab this golden opportunity to become successful in this career but, they have to be hard working as well as logical thinker. Again, to meet the requirement of skilled lawyers, law schools like, NLSIU, NALSAR have been established to focus on producing skilled lawyers.

**What are the segmentation options available to the owners of RLS?**

- **Demographic segmentation:** It is based on measurable characteristics of population such as income, age, gender and occupation or demographic trends such as married couples, smaller family size, higher income or high standard of living.
- **Psychographic segmentation:** It involves grouping people in terms of their attitude, values and lifestyle. It gives understanding of customer mindset and consumer behaviour.
- **Behaviour segmentation:** It focuses on how often and how much people consume a service. Segmentation depends on usage rates (heavy, medium, low, non-user) and user status (non-users, first time users, regular users).
- **Benefit segmentation:** It focuses on perceived success rate, revenue generated and chances of publicity.
- **Service segmentation-** It involves identifying services in demand with highest potential to generate revenue or based on expertise of lawyers of the firm.

- **B2C or B2B segmentation:** It segments the market based on B2C(retail customers) or B2B(corporate customers).

**What are the target marketing strategies?**

The target market strategies include:

Strategy	Target Market
Mass marketing	Everybody everywhere
Differentiated marketing	Large groups within the total market
Niche marketing	High penetration within smaller, specialized segments
Micromarketing	Individual customers or localized microsegments

RLS can employ mass marketing for retail clients and niche marketing for corporate clients.

**What positioning strategy should be the employed by the firm?**

RLS should be positioned as a professional end to end provider of quality legal services.

**What are the marketing channels to be followed in the pandemic era?**

RLS should follow both offline and online marketing channels for marketing of its services. In the pandemic times, it should adhere to permissible government norms. In online mode, it can use online video conferencing facilities and telemarketing channels.

## Options available for pricing of the legal services?

The pricing strategies available are-

**Value-based pricing :** With value-based pricing, you set your prices according to what consumers think your product is worth.

**Competitive pricing:** When you use a competitive pricing strategy, you're setting your prices based on what the competition is charging. This can be a good strategy in the right circumstances, such as a business just starting out.

**Price skimming:** Here the prices are set as high as the market will possibly tolerate and then lower them over time. The goal is to skim the top off the market and the lower prices to reach everyone else.

**Cost-plus pricing:** This is one of the simplest pricing strategies. Here take the product production cost and add a certain percentage to it.

**Penetration pricing:** In highly competitive markets, it can be hard for new companies to get a foothold. One way some companies attempt to push new products is by offering prices that are much lower than the competition. This is penetration pricing.

**Economy pricing:** This strategy is popular in the commodity goods sector. The goal is to price a product cheaper than the competition and make the money back with increased volume. **Dynamic pricing** - It involves constantly changing the prices to

match the current demand for the item.

RLS can employ value-based pricing, competitive pricing and cost-plus pricing.

## Theoretical Underpinning:

The case introduces.

- Principles of marketing. Different types of segmentation, selecting the right target customers and positioning of the product or services.
- Different types of pricing strategies used in marketing of products and services. If pricing need to match the target market, then which pricing strategy is suitable for service marketing? How do marketers arrive at a value-based prices?
- Different factors in service marketing. Value creation through marketing of intangible services during unprecedented times. How such situation provides an opportunity for service marketing. What are the different types of service marketing?

Case describes a situation during Covid pandemic of year 2020, till the starting of the year 2022.