



INDIANA UNIVERSITY
MAURER SCHOOL OF LAW
Bloomington

Corporations B653
Prof. Henderson (Fall 2013)
Law & Technology Assignment

The goal of this project is two-fold. First, to obtain knowledge on the basic elements of what it takes to start and run a successful business. And second, to create a window on the burgeoning legal tech and legal process industry. As I wrote in the syllabus, we can accomplish these two goals in a single assignment.

Assignment: Select and profile a company that is operating in the legal industry but is not a traditional law firm. Your work product has three components:

1. A written summary of your profile company (2,500 word limit)
2. Summary of your research methods and sources
3. A class presentation of your company profile (8 minutes max)

Due Date: November 18

Similar to the presentations in the 1L Legal Professions course, the Law & Technology Assignment is to be completed as a team.¹ The assignment itself can be broken down into four steps.

1. Selecting a Company. There is no shortage of companies to choose from. On OnCourse, I have been adding links of companies that I think would be excellent profiles. The Excel spreadsheet lists over 220 companies that were exhibitors at the NYC LegalTech Show. The only requirement is that the company must be contributing to some portion of the legal supply chain (though it could also be serving other industries as well), including specialization in critical subtasks such as business development, managing services, legal process outsourcing, writing software, project management, sourcing contract labor, or creating legal communities that share resources.

Please email your selection no later than Friday, **October 11**. There will be no duplicate profiles. This assignment is first-come, first serve. When a group selects a company, I will announce it via an OnCourse message. So generate some back-ups during your team discussions.

2. Written Company Profile. Begin your profile with an overview that provides a short history of the company (when was it founded, its pattern of growth, etc.) and explains how it makes money (or hopes to make money). Organize the rest of the profile in a way your team deems best, but please attempt to provide answers to the following questions:

- a. Who owns the business? Who controls its?

¹ To the IU Law graduate students, each JD student takes a course during the 1L years called The Legal Profession. During the entire semester, students work in six to eight person teams.

- b. What is the form of the business (LLC, Corporation, something else)?
- c. How many employees does it have?
- d. Describe its geographic footprint (where does it have offices or facilities).
- e. Describe the background of the management team (the three to five top executives who run the company operations)
- f. If the company has a board, who serves on it? What do they bring to the table?
- g. If the company has outside investors, how did the company raise these funds (friends and family, angel investors, venture capital, public offering)?
- h. What problem does the company solve (or what need does it fill)?
- i. Who are the company's biggest competitors?
- j. Is this company potentially disruptive to the traditional legal services market? Why or why not?
- k. What are the company's biggest strategy concerns or threats over the next 2 to 5 years? (Note: a good business lawyer would ask company insiders this question, albeit after learning quite a bit about the company beforehand).
- l. What are the company's human capital needs? Are there opportunities for law school graduates at this company?
- m. Is this a company that some members of your team would be interested in joining?

(2,500 word limit)

3. Summary of Research Methods and Sources. The year is 2013, so I realize that the Internet and Google will be your workhorse. But explain to me your strategy for fact-gathering. Further, the year is 2013, so it is all-too-easy for the younger generation to forgo the telephone. That would be a huge mistake. In my experience, the people inside companies love two things: talking about their business and helping students. And they will likely be impressed that they are talking to law students – they will assume you are all very smart (btw, they are right – some day you'll believe it too).

There is no word limit here, but impress me that you went the extra yard to really understand your company. I would not be surprised if one or more students got summer internships out of this assignment. When you make contact with these companies, bring your "A" game. Under no circumstances should you ask any question that you could have found the answer to on the company website.

4. Final Presentation. Here, organize your presentation around a simple premise: What should your fellow classmates know about your company? Your grade will be based on creativity, effectiveness of communication, and quality of content. You are free to use any medium at your disposal, including making an 8 minute video. To reduce stress, I am allocating class time on **Nov 12-13** for team meetings.

One suggestion. I would strongly encourage teams to do some serious research before settling on a company. Thereafter, convene a meeting where this information is shared. (I have allocated class time on **Oct 8-9** for team meetings.) We will be having 16 presentations. If your group is not fully committed to this project, it will be very difficult to get a good grade – the sheer mediocrity will have no place to hide.

Grades. This assignment is worth 15% of your grade in the class. This amount is divided as follows:

- 3% for the research methods and sources (measured by effort, completeness, ingenuity in finding information);
- 5% for your written summary (measured by organization, completeness, and clear, crisp prose with strong declarative topic sentences); and
- 7% for your final presentation (measured by creativity, effectiveness of communication, and quality of content).

To mitigate free riders, I will circulate a 360 tool at the end of the assignment (the same one used at the end of the Legal Professions class). Based on the information gathered, I reserved the right to adjust this 15 % up or down for each student. If you are an equal contributor to a high performing team, I can guarantee you an A on this assignment. So organize your effort accordingly.