

# US lawyers find jobs in India

## Slump-Hit American, British Law Firms Discontinue Existing Contracts

Mini Joseph Tejaswi | TNN

**Bangalore:** Indian law firms and legal process outsourcing outfits have been attracting many American and British law professionals in the past few months. The reason: The recession has severely impacted the global legal practise industry with one out of every 10 lawyers in the US said to be laid off. To cut cost, many corporations are discontinuing their contracts with external law firms or are outsourcing a substantial portion of their engagements to countries like India. This has resulted in a flood of US/UK lawyer CVs to India.

Mumbai-based legal process outsourcing (LPO) firm Mindcrest recently hired five senior US lawyers. It plans to hire another 10 this year. Pangea3, another Mumbai-based LPO firm, recently hired three American legal professionals, while two others are expected



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to join in a month. SDD Global Solutions, a Mysore-based legal practices outsourcer, is also hiring many foreign lawyers. Mindcrest MD Rohan Dalal said US corporates are significantly downsizing their corporate legal departments. "Besides, having India on their CV will give a multi-culture dimension which could help them in future. It's also good for Indian lawyers as

they get global mentoring and guidelines." Mindcrest, which specialises in litigation documentation, litigation support, corporate law, contracts drafting, due diligence, compliance of laws, business analytics and case analysis, plans to employ 1,000 lawyers by the end of the year; up from the current 616. Pangea3 co-CEO Sanjay Kamlani said a large number of US

lawyers have been getting in touch with them. "Some are personally coming to India and meeting us to explore options."

Russel Smith, president of SDD Global Solutions, said outsourcing to India is enormously cost effective because US lawyers are very expensive. "They are paid \$300/900 an hour while it is less than 1/10 of that in India. Globally, traditional hour-based working style of law firms are changing. Companies today prefer smaller firms who believe in flat rates," said Smith.

SDD Global does legal research, strategic legal analysis, and legal opinion-drafting for upcoming motion picture releases from 20th Century Fox, Sony Pictures and Universal Studios. According to Sajay Singh, partner and head for technology in law firm J Sagar Associates, apart from reputed legal practitioners, a large number of interns are also looking at India.