



# Meet the experts

**India Business Law Journal introduces 50 Indian law firms that international IP owners and their legal advisers should know about**

*Rebecca Abraham reports*

**T**he increasing complexity of intellectual property (IP) jurisprudence and the rising cost of not getting it right ensure a steady flow of work for IP specialist firms across India.

“We look for firms who inspire confidence in their ability to pay attention to detail,” says Gregory Maurer, a partner and IP lawyer at Klarquist Sparkman in Portland, Oregon, who has worked with IP lawyers across India.

Finding such firms can be a challenge for international

lawyers and for in-house counsel both in India and outside. Few would argue with Tim Behean, general counsel IP of Adidas Group, who cautions: “IP work in India is challenging, and there is in my view a very mixed profession, with in some cases rather low standards, where promises are made and ignored, and instructions not followed.”

After working with several firms in India “with bad results”, Behean reports that Adidas now uses the services of **Ranjan Narula Associates**, a Gurgaon-based

# Strength in Depth

Practice does lead to perfection



## Service Offering

- Corporate & Commercial Laws
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New York  
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Beijing  
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firm headed by Ranjan Narula, who was formerly a partner at Rouse, an international IP firm. Ranjan Narula Associates is the Indian associate of Rouse but Narula emphasizes that the two firms work independently.

“It is for us very positive to work with Narula, who are very professional in their work, report clearly, and follow instructions,” says Behean adding that his company has used the 11-lawyer firm for about five years. Adidas uses Ranjan Narula Associates for both trademark filing, prosecution and oppositions and anti-counterfeit enforcement and Behean says the firm has “achieved some good results in a difficult environment”.

Adidas is one of many companies that have found mid-size and smaller IP firms with the attributes they seek.

### Making an impact

Karen Law, IP counsel at Alibaba Group in Hong Kong, shifted the company’s IP work in India to **Aditya & Associates**, a 12-lawyer firm, when she joined the company in 2009. Until then Alibaba had used Anand and Anand – arguably India’s leading IP firm (see page 26 for more on the larger IP firms and IP practices at full-service firms).

“I chose Aditya & Associates mainly because of the quality of their work – the professionalism in terms of expertise and efficiency ... the costs they charge are very reasonable,” says Law, who started using the firm 10 years ago, when she was in private practice.

Vipul Bhuta set up Aditya & Associates in 1999 after 10 years at a Tata group company as an in-house lawyer. The firm has offices in Mumbai, Chennai and Pune and says 50% of its clientele is from outside India. Since

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Tim Behean  
General Counsel IP  
Adidas Group



2011, the firm has had professional indemnity insurance, which is extremely unusual across India. Law firms of all sizes rarely have such cover and if they do chances are that it is relatively limited.

### Getting the job done

Lynn Sullivan, an IP attorney at Leydig Voit & Mayer in Chicago, was initially disappointed by her experience with IP firms in India: “Generally I found Indian law firms to not be responsive to my status inquiries or to take a very long time to get information.”

But Sullivan praises **Aggarwal Associates**, a 17-lawyer firm in New Delhi, which she has used for the past five years. She says the head of the firm, RK Aggarwal, “responded very quickly with very detailed explanations and advice” and she was “impressed by his knowledge of the trademark office and his recommendations on how to handle certain problems I was having with the trademark office having lost some of our files”.

Mary Squyres, the chair of the international trademark

## Meet and greet

The following lawyers are pictured on the cover

**Top row (from left):** Mahua Roy Chowdhury, Solomon & Roy; Nikhil Krishnamurthy, Krishnamurthy & Co; Dev Robinson, Amarchand Mangaldas; Jatin Trivedi, YJ Trivedi & Co; Pravin Anand, Anand and Anand; Sunil Krishna, Krishna & Saurastri; Anuradha Salhotra, Lall Lahiri & Salhotra; Jose Madan, Khaitan & Co; Prathiba Singh, Singh & Singh.

**Second row:** Sharad Vadehra, Kan & Krishme; Sunita Sreedharan, SKS Law Associates; Ashwin Julka, Remfry & Sagar; Amarjit Singh, Amarjit & Associates; Sudhir Ravindran, Altacit Global; Malathi Lakshmikumaran, Lakshmikumaran & Sridharan; Vikrant Rana, SS Rana & Co; Nandan Kamath, Law office of Nandan Kamath; Sanjay Kumar, Perfexio Legal.

**Third row:** Neha Chugh, IPR International Services; Manoj Singh, Singh & Associates; Rajendra Kumar, K&S Partners; Mohan Dewan, RK Dewan & Co; Manisha Singh

Nair, Lex Orbis; Raja Selvam, Selvam and Selvam; Gunjan Paharia, ZeusIP; RK Aggarwal, Aggarwal Associates; Saikrishna Rajgopal, Saikrishna & Associates.

**Fourth row:** Binu Radhakrishnan, Kris Law Chambers; Nandan Pendsey, AZB & Partners; Rajeshwari, Rajeshwari & Associates; Chander Lall, Lall & Sethi; Vipul Bhuta, Aditya Associates; Pranit Nanavati, Nanavati Associates; Tarun Khurana, Khurana & Khurana; Gayatri Roy, Luthra & Luthra; Rajesh Acharya, HK Acharya & Co.

**Fifth row:** Nishant Kewalramani, Brain League; Himanshu Kane, WS Kane & Co; Francis Groser, Groser & Groser; Essenes Obhan, Obhan & Associates; Karnika Seth, Seth Associates; Hemant Singh, Intl Advocare; Ranjan Narula, Ranjan Narula Associates; Vaibhav Vutts, Vutts & Associates; Shwetaree Majumder, Fidus Law Chambers.

*The photographs appear in no particular order.*



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Saikrishna & Associates is a Tier-1 Intellectual Property Law Firm in India which specialises in all the aspects of Intellectual Property including Trade Marks, Copyrights, Patents, Trade Secrets, Confidential Information, Internet Law, Technology, Media & Entertainment and Competition Law. In addition to this, the firm extensively deals with allied areas of law such as Sports Law and Broadcasting Law, etc. The Firm's individuals are ranked as leading practitioners of IP and the Firm is ranked as a Tier-1 top-of-its-game IP law firm.

While we are adept at prosecuting or litigating to protect client IP, we are equally efficient transactional lawyers creating, advising on and negotiating business documentation around our clients' IP needs.

We are industry specialists and thrive on domain-specific knowledge, which is why we represent most of the leading industry groups. Some of the world's largest IP owners trust us implicitly with their Intellectual Property, and rightly so; we haven't let them down yet.

We let our work speak for itself, whether it is assisting courts in establishing guidelines determining the conduct of civil anti-piracy actions or assisting courts to recognise the torts of unfair competition and unjust enrichment as a basis to support the "hot news" doctrine.

We don't rest on our laurels because we want to do even better each time around, though we have a few great stories of our own. Our passion and love for IP drives us to achieve innovative results for our clients each time they trust us with their IP concerns and assets.

We are 12 years old but have attracted among the best lawyers in the country to our ranks. We have grown and retained among the best lawyers in the country ensuring that clients can place reliance on all levels of the firm. We have been doing this only since 2001, which is why we can go on doing this for another 100 years or more.

## IP Dispute Resolution

Enforcement & Investigations

Prosecution

Media & Entertainment

*(Print, Theatre, Film, Music,*

*Talent, TV, Radio, Digital)*

Software

## General & Commercial Litigation

Transactions

Policy Reform & Development

Competition Law

Telecom [Patent Litigation]

Garments/Apparel

Criminal Law

practice group at Brinks Hofer Gilson & Lione in Chicago, uses Aggarwal Associates for all India-related IP work for her clients. “Mr Aggarwal and his associates are more quick to respond to our inquiries and instructions than the other Indian firms,” says Squyres, who adds that he “seems to understand that Americans expect results and expect them quickly”.

Squyres says that Aggarwal “has also won for me every piece of major litigation (which usually required obtaining an injunction) which I have sent him”, and that he has been “honest”, “direct” and “gotten the job done”.

Winning accolades such as this – especially while guiding clients through the labyrinthine world of India’s patent and trademark office – is not easy.

**Expanding offerings**

Maurer at Klarquist Sparkman works closely with Essenes Obhan, the founding partner of **Obhan & Associates** in Delhi, which started as an IP firm but has since diversified into corporate and commercial law. This is not uncommon as several IP firms have moved into other areas of law in an attempt to retain clients.

Obhan represented Tata Chemicals at the Intellectual Property Appellate Board (IPAB) in a case that was one of the first to examine the reach of a section of the Indian Patents Act, 1970, which makes failure to disclose information on foreign prosecution of a patent a ground for revocation.

Obhan & Associates, a nine-lawyer firm, is also involved

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Karen Law  
IP Counsel  
Alibaba Group



in devising and directing strategy for litigation on behalf of the UK’s *Financial Times* in its trademark dispute with *The Times of India*.

**Altacit Global**, a 25-lawyer firm in Chennai that began as an IP firm in 2003, has steadily taken on lawyers who advise the firm’s IP clients on other areas of law. The firm is headed by Sudhir Ravindran, an engineer turned lawyer.

“Altacit Global has this uncanny ability to unobtrusively earn strong client loyalty due to its attention to details,” says Satish V Dulipati, managing director of the Pole-Star Group in Chennai, who has used the firm since 2003.

Pointing out that a legal “solution which is suitable for a

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 Domain Names | IP Enforcement | IP Transactions | IP Litigation

large cash rich organization cannot be applied to a small or medium-size enterprise”, Dulipati commends Altacit Global for its “sensitivity and understanding of client’s profile during interaction on legal issues” and its “excellent internal systems”.

**WS Kane & Co**, a 10-lawyer IP firm in Mumbai headed by Himanshu Kane, has moved into arbitration and dispute resolution in recent years. However, Himanshu Kane – who takes pride in his firm’s “firm and steady” growth – says he has always been wary of expanding rapidly. “I don’t mind if I lose one or two prospective clients, but losing my reputation is more sacrosanct to me.”

Kane’s clients include SABMiller, Hindustan Unilever, and Mangalore Ganesh Beedi Works – the owner of a valuable trademark. Tilaknagar Industries, a leading player in the Indian-made foreign liquor industry, which spent about ₹10 million (US\$185,000) on outside legal services over the past 12 months, was represented by WS Kane & Co when in 2011 it successfully fended off a copyright and trademark infringement suit filed by UTO Nederland.

Amit Dahanukar, chairman and managing director of Tilaknagar Industries, reports that his company started using WS Kane & Co six to seven years ago, after being

“informed about the expertise and excellence of WS Kane in the field of intellectual property law and their reputation in the field”.

### Action in the courts

IP litigation is an area where several smaller IP firms – often set up by lawyers who began their careers at the country’s larger IP firms – have made a name for themselves. For example, Rajeshwari, the head of New Delhi-based **Rajeshwari & Associates**, which was set up in 2010, represented Natco, a generic drugs manufacturer, at the patents office, and more recently at the IPAB, to obtain a compulsory licence for a cancer drug produced by Bayer. Rajeshwari was previously with K&S Partners, an IP firm that is an affiliate of J Sagar Associates, one of India’s top full-service firms.

An international IP lawyer who has worked with Rajeshwari for some years says: “I have found her to be very knowledgeable on patent prosecution in India ... she is passionate about patents and shares the same views as me as to what constitutes good client service.”

Representing Bayer in its fight to block the compulsory licence, at both the patent office and the IPAB, was Sanjay

## The trendsetters

### Despite intense competition from smaller, specialized firms, the larger IP firms and IP practices at full-service firms continue to be sought out

Until the mid to late 1990s IP services in India were provided by a handful of firms: Anand and Anand, De Penning & De Penning, Remfry & Sagar and a few more. Since then dozens of IP boutiques have sprung up, often headed by entrepreneurial lawyers who began their careers at the pioneer firms. This has pushed the larger firms to do better and most have flourished.

**Anand and Anand**, founded in the 1920s, has produced many of today’s best known IP lawyers. Headed by Pravin Anand, arguably India’s most reputed IP lawyer, the 80-lawyer IP firm boasts an IP transactional and commercialization practice and strong research capabilities. The firm has offices in New Delhi, Noida, Chennai and Mumbai.

Pravin Anand emphasizes that his firm “has a policy of acting for the creative industries” and that “you will rarely see the firm acting for a defendant unless there is a larger ‘industry’ issue involved”. The firm’s clients include Tata Sons, the owner of India’s most valuable brand, and Novartis, which has 725 patents and patents pending in India.

Describing Pravin Anand as “a protagonist of intellectual property in India”, Peter Roth, principal patent attorney at Novartis headquarters in Basel, says Anand’s “team has the required expertise in chemical and pharmaceutical science to handle pharma IP and also acquired experience in contentious matters”.

**De Penning & De Penning** traces its roots back

to India’s first IP rights legislation in 1856. According to RR Nair, chief patent lawyer at De Penning & De Penning, the firm has around 40 to 45 lawyers and 52 patent attorneys. The firm’s headquarters is in Chennai and it has offices in Kolkata, Mumbai and Delhi.

**Remfry & Sagar**, based in Gurgaon, has a rich heritage dating back to 1827. The head of the firm, Ashwin Julka, reports that it has an overwhelmingly international clientele with “more than 7,000 clients spread across the globe”.

A client who has used the firm’s services for decades says Remfry & Sagar has “a laser like focus when it comes to trademark and copyright issues”. Its 40-lawyer trademarks team, which includes 12 litigation specialists, is described as “a good team to have on your side if you have a litigation heavy portfolio in India”.

The firm’s patents team has 34 patent attorneys and agents. Remfry & Sagar’s clients include Eli Lilly, Samsung, Johnson & Johnson, Exxon Mobil and Sony.

Also in Gurgaon is **K&S Partners** – the IP affiliate of J Sagar Associates, one of India’s largest full-service firms. Rajendra Kumar heads K&S Partners’ trademark and copyright practice, and D Calab Gabriel heads the patent practice. The firm has offices in Bangalore and Mumbai.

While most of the larger full-size firms boast some IP capability, J Sagar Associates is probably the only firm that has an IP subsidiary.

Kumar of **Perfexio Legal**, an eight-lawyer firm in Delhi. Kumar, who takes pride in representing only “innovation-based companies”, set up Perfexio Legal in September 2011. He was previously briefly at Lakshmikumaran & Sridharan and before that at Remfry & Sagar.

**Fidus Law Chambers**, headed by Shwetasree Majumder – formerly a partner at Anand and Anand – successfully represented Xerox in a recent trademark rectification challenge before the IPAB. Noida-based Fidus Law Chambers, which has eight lawyers, also represented an Indian party in a trademark dispute with Samsung Electronics before Delhi High Court, which ruled that Indian trademark law follows the international exhaustion doctrine.

Describing Majumder as a “trusted adviser”, a legal counsel at a Silicon Valley-based S&P 500 company, says Majumder “understands business and the needs of her in-house clients and provides relevant, timely and incredibly responsive advice”.

**Singh & Singh**, a 22-lawyer Delhi firm headed by Prathiba Singh, is at the forefront of many of the patent and trademark disputes raging across India. Singh recently represented Cipla in the Supreme Court, where it was one of several parties opposing Novartis in its high-

profile challenge to the IPAB’s decision denying a patent for its anti-cancer drug Glivec.

**Saikrishna & Associates**, a 42-lawyer Noida firm headed by Saikrishna Rajgopal, is similarly at the centre of several key IP disputes being argued in courts across India. The firm represented UTV Software Communications and four others involved in the production of the recent film *Barfi*, at a district court in Goa where the firm successfully opposed an interim injunction in a suit filed by the owners of the iconic trademark Murphy Radios for infringement of copyright, trademark and defamation.

In addition, Saikrishna & Associates, which has a team of lawyers who focus on the increasingly contentious area of copyright law, is one of few IP firms that advises clients on policy issues with regard to IP matters and also has a transactional practice. Rajgopal recently represented PVR, a leading multiplex cinema company, before India’s antitrust watchdog, the Competition Commission of India, in a dispute between film producers and multiplex owners.

**Inttl Advocare**, a 15-lawyer Delhi-firm headed by Hemant Singh, represented the Himalaya Drug Company in a trademark infringement suit it filed at

## Doing it all

**Amarchand Mangaldas**, India’s largest law firm with more than 500 lawyers, reports that its IP practice has about 30 professionals. Dev Robinson, a Delhi-based partner in the IP practice, says that the depth of advice provided on the IP-commercial law interface, including on issues surrounding confidential information and trade secrets, licensing and M&A, “has proved hugely beneficial to our clients”.

**AZB & Partners** has a 10-lawyer IP practice, which is headed by Nandan Pendsey in Mumbai and Akhilesh Kumar Rai in Noida. The 240-lawyer firm has six offices across India.

While the firm has expertise in the core areas of IP practice – IP prosecution and enforcement – it also advises on transactions and licensing, due diligence and audits.

**Luthra & Luthra**, another full-service firm that has significant IP capabilities, “concentrates on high end matters”, as partner Gayatri Roy puts it. The firm’s 17-lawyer IP team has been involved in both multi-jurisdictional IP litigations and multimillion-dollar transactions.

The firm’s IP lawyers sit in on negotiations for M&A transactions and negotiate agreements pertaining to research and development or IP rights. A senior executive from a Tata company who recently interacted with Luthra’s IP lawyers says the “Luthra & Luthra team is very versed with the global practices ... the firm’s strength lies in dealing with every aspect of a JV transaction and ability to focus on the client and the business requirement”.

The four offices of **Khaitan & Co** – in Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Bangalore – all have IP capabilities. The firm has 25 IP professionals, who provide prosecution and litigation support and assist with transactions in which IP rights are a major factor. As a result, Jose Madan, who heads the IP practice, says clients “do not need to go hunting for different law firms to handle their different IP work”.

Lucy Trueman, a patent attorney and partner at Barker Brettell in the UK, who has used the services of Khaitan & Co for four years, works with Fiona Desouza, whom she describes as “very reliable and responsive”.

“Khaitan also have the technical expertise that I require and I have found them to be reasonably priced,” says Trueman.

**Trilegal**, a 140-lawyer law firm better known for its M&A, banking and finance, and other expertise, provides strategic advice on IP matters such as licensing and franchising. Rahul Matthan, who leads the firm’s technology, media and telecom practice, heads this practice area.

**Lakshmikumaran & Sridharan** has a team of about 16 lawyers in its IP practice, which is headed by R Parthasarathy. The firm’s clients include several seed companies for which it recently obtained interim orders restraining the authorities from asking them to amend their applications for protection of the parental lines of seed.

**Mulla & Mulla & Craigie Blunt & Caroe**, a reputed full-size firm in Mumbai, acts on both contentious and non-contentious IP matters. The IP practice has expertise in licensing, franchising, and protection and registration of IP rights. Shardul Thacker, a partner at the firm and head of its IP practice, reports that its clients include Lata Mangeshkar, one of India’s most reputed singers, LexisNexis, Radio Mirchi and Reed Elsevier Properties.

**Krishnamurthy & Co** is a full-service firm with headquarters in Mumbai. Its 12-lawyer IP practice is headed by Nikhil Krishnamurthy, a Bangalore-based partner, who was formerly at Anand and Anand.

**Singh & Associates** led by Manoj Singh, is a full-service law firm, with significant IP capabilities. The 70-lawyer firm, which has offices in Mumbai, Bangalore and Hyderabad, has a team of 12 IP specialist lawyers.

**Nanavati & Associates**, a full-service firm in Ahmedabad, has an eight-year-old IP practice, headed by Pranit Nanavati. Its clients include Nirma, Ranbaxy and Amul.

**CATEGORIES OF WORK**

Patents	Tax advice on IP matters
Designs	Packaging law
Litigation and dispute resolution	Advertising law
Trademarks	Custom recordal and enforcement
Copyright	Domain name disputes
Antitrust/competition	Investigations
Compliance/regulatory	Sports law
Agreements and commercial exploitation of IP licensing and franchising law	Media and entertainment law

Anand and Anand, established in 1979, is a full service IP law firm, providing end-to-end legal solutions covering all the cross-sections of IP domain. The firm is professionally managed by a partnership board comprising of 13 partners assisted by a CEO, CFO, chartered accountants, business consultants and IT experts. The firm's current strength is 250, which includes 65 qualified attorneys and engineers, and over 150 members in support services including a management team, paralegals and researchers. Their lawyers are fluent in English and Hindi and are based in New Delhi, Noida, Chennai and Mumbai.

Their clients consists of several large multinational and Indian companies representing a broad spectrum of industries including Health Care, Electronics, Consumer Goods, Industrial Goods, Automobiles, Wind Energy, Technology, Financial Institutions, Hospitality, and Entertainment. The firm has an extensive intellectual infrastructure in all the aspects related to Trademark registrations, Copyright registrations, and IP monetization as well as in Licensing and franchising. The firm also has an in-house 'Anti-Counterfeiting' & 'Anti-Piracy' team, dedicated to provide the clients pro-active and robust legal protection for safeguarding the brand identity in the commercial space.

Anand and Anand has an industry wide acclaimed prominence and leadership in the IP space. Their expertise is widely acknowledged in addressing complex IP challenges of all hues. They have been servicing a diverse profile of clients in conventional areas of trademarks, patents, designs, trade secrets and confidential information as well as expanded areas of intellectual property such as EMRs, domain names, media & entertainment law, IT & e-commerce, Technology transfer and issues on the internet and privacy laws. Anand and Anand specialises in Copyright - Media, Entertainment Law and represents authors, musicians, software programmers, artists, designers and many others from the fraternity of copyright owners as well as collecting societies such as IPRS (Indian Performing Rights Society).

The firm has a substantial techno-legal expertise and valuable insight into strategic and procedural issues and a wealth of experience in patent prosecution and litigation to advise, assist and equip international and domestic clients with comprehensive and innovative intellectual property solutions in this domain. The firm's capabilities include drafting, filing and the prosecution of patents in diverse disciplines.

To the firm's credit the firm has received many prominent accolades for the year 2012, such as Managing Intellectual Property-IP Contentious Firm of the Year and the ILO Client Choice Award.



[Aggarwal Associates is] more quick to respond to our inquiries and instructions than the other Indian firms

Mary Squyres  
Chair, International Trademark Practice Group  
Brinks Hofer Gilson & Lione



Delhi High Court. The company had failed to obtain preliminary injunction in 1996, but succeeded on appeal recently. The firm also represents Bennett Coleman in its long-running trademark dispute with the UK's *Financial Times*.

**Lall Lahiri & Salhotra**, a long-standing firm of repute, currently has 42 lawyers. Anuradha Salhotra, the firm's managing partner, recently represented Maersk in a trademark infringement suit at Delhi High Court.

**Tackling competition**

As competition among IP law firms hots up, firms are increasingly investing in software systems and processes. Delhi-based **SS Rana & Co** is one such firm. It reports that it has developed web-enabled software for managing client's IP portfolios.

A client who has used SS Rana & Co's services for over 20 years describes the firm as "one of the best in the industry" and says: "We felt they understood our need from a practical and business perspective also, rather than only a legal perspective."

**Solomon & Roy**, a Mumbai-based firm that is associated with Solomon & Co, a 103-year-old full-service law firm, also reports that it has designed and developed web-based IP management software for its clients. Solomon & Roy, which has three offices in Mumbai, has 40 lawyers and takes pride in filing trademark registrations that are readily accepted by the trademark registry.

Mahua Roy Chowdhury, a founding partner of Solomon & Roy, says the firm manages a portfolio of more than 2,500 marks, but has received calls for hearings in only three instances. "This not only reduces the costs of our clients, but also expedites the registration process."

Increasing competition has also prompted firms to ramp up the scale of their operations.

**RK Dewan & Co**, a mid-size Mumbai firm of long standing, now has branches in Chennai,

Delhi and Kolkata and recently moved into a new office in Pune, where it has had an office since 1952. The firm – led by Mohan Dewan, a veteran IP practitioner – takes pride in its "ability to develop and implement uniquely appropriate and often innovative winning strategies, in even desperate situations". The owner of one of India's biggest biscuit brands, Parle-G, is among the firm's clients.

Robert Plotkin, a computer patent lawyer in Burlington, Massachusetts, reports that he has used the services of RK Dewan & Co for the past three years on account of its expertise in the field of patent protection for computer technology.

"RK Dewan has provided my firm with consistently excellent service at reasonable prices," says Plotkin, who adds that he began using the firm solely for filings in India under the national stage of the Patent Cooperation Treaty, but then moved on to using them for patent searches as well. "The searches that they perform are of the highest quality that I have found anywhere, at reasonable prices."

Chennai-based **Selvam and Selvam**, headed by Raja Selvam, a fifth-generation lawyer, opened an office in New Delhi in August 2012. The firm's clients include World Triathlon Corporation, which it has served since 2008. World Triathlon Corporation is the founder of Ironman, a leading sports brand that has 180 events in over 20 countries. The six-lawyer firm is set to take on four associates.

Retaining good lawyers is a constant challenge for small and mid-size firms. **ZeusIP**, a New Delhi-based firm headed by Gunjan Paharia, addresses this challenge by having a formal plan for progression of lawyers within the firm. The 19-lawyer firm, which recently advised Red Bull on a pan-India enforcement strategy, is in the process of opening an office in Bangladesh.

Kaisu Korpua, head of IPR for Roschier Brands Team in Helsinki, who has "a very good and long-standing relationship" with ZeusIP says: "The responsiveness and clarity of advice provided by ZeusIP is, in our experience, very good, in particular when compared to some other, older and bigger Indian law firms."



**TECH SAVVY:** As competition among IP law firms hots up, firms are increasingly investing in software systems and processes.

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**Slugging it out in Delhi**

With Delhi High Court being the preferred venue for high-profile IP litigation, the city is a mecca for IP law firms.

**Amarjit & Associates** is an 11-lawyer firm, headed by veteran IP lawyer Amarjit Singh. Hewlett-Packard, Pierre Cardin and Tata Tea are among its clients.

**Lall & Sethi** is an 18-lawyer firm headed by Chander Lall. The firm boasts several prestigious clients including Coca-Cola, Kraft, Diageo, Johnson & Johnson and Pfizer.

**Lex Orbis**, a 15-lawyer firm headed by Manoj Pillai, reports that international clients make up about 75% of the firm’s clientele. Lex Orbis recently represented Ericsson at the IPAB when the company successfully challenged a decision by the patent office denying it a patent.

**IP Gurus**, headed by Sujata Chaudhuri, a former partner at Cowan Liebowitz & Latman in New York, specializes in IP issues pertaining to the digital world. A UK-based IP lawyer who has used the services of the five-lawyer firm and is all praise for Chaudhuri says: “We know that we can depend on her advice. She understands not only the American/European work ethic but practises to the very high standards to which she was trained by her former firm.”

IP Gurus works with a Singapore-based of counsel, Bharat Dube. Pier Luigi Roncaglia, managing partner of Studio Legale SIB in Florence, says his firm decided to

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Satish V Dulipati  
Managing Director  
Pole-Star Group



work with IP Gurus “mainly because of our trust in Mr Bharat Dube”. After working with IP Gurus for four years Roncaglia says he has come to “appreciate the expertise of all the individuals Mr Dube works with, the attention to the client’s needs and the great responsiveness”.

**Vutts & Associates** is a seven-lawyer firm in New Delhi, headed by Vaibhav Vutts, who was formerly at Anand and Anand. A client who has used the firm’s services since it



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## Key achievements of the firm, and its managing partner, Mrs Prathiba M Singh:

- A winner of *India Business Law Journal's* prestigious **Indian Law Firm Awards, 2012**, in the category of Intellectual Property.
- Awarded "Best in Litigation" by Legal Media Group at the Asia Women in Business Law Awards, 2012, held in Hong Kong.
- Awarded "IP Lawyer of the Year" by *Legal Era* at the *Legal Era Awards, 2013*, held in Mumbai.
- Speaker at INTA's 2008 annual meeting in Berlin on the subject of "Universal Efforts Combat Counterfeiting".
- Speaker at the mid-INTA annual meeting, 2008, held in Paris, on the subject of "International Forum on Anti-Counterfeiting: Practical Solutions to Vexing Problems".
- Successfully represented Cipla and Ranbaxy in the recent patent case of *Novartis v Union of India* before the Honourable Supreme Court of India.
- Successfully represented Cipla in India's first post-trial patent litigation in the case of *F Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd v Cipla Ltd*, before the Honourable Delhi High Court.
- Counsel in the first case deciding the issue of "Existence of Patent Linkage" in India.
- Prathiba M Singh has more than 200 reported precedents to her credit.
- Appointment as Amicus Curiae by the Honourable Delhi High Court to assist the court in a suo-moto action to streamline the proper administration & functioning of the Copyright Board.
- Written a chapter on the Indian Information Technology Act in the journal *Electronic Business Laws*, published by Butterworths.
- Actively involved in the Asian Patents Attorneys Association and is the secretary of the Indian Chapter. Also a member of INTA's Anti-Counterfeiting Committee.
- Is currently handling a large volume of trademark prosecutions, oppositions and infringement, passing off, unfair competition, copyright law-related and patent law infringement cases.

was founded in 2008 commends “their reasonable costs, their dedication to the work, subject knowledge and ethics”.

Noida-based **Khurana & Khurana**, headed by Vinod Khurana, has offices in Bangalore and Pune. The 27-lawyer firm represents clients such as Hyundai, Mastercard and Cipla.

CK Sehgal who heads IP at Arch Pharmalabs, a pharmaceutical chemical intermediate manufacturer that is part-owned by Mitsui & Co, says his company has used the services of Khurana & Khurana for two years. Commending Khurana & Khurana for the “best possible advice in a transparent manner for each activity”, Sehgal reports that Arch Pharmalabs uses no other IP firm.

**Seth Associates**, a 10-lawyer firm headed by Karnika Seth, counts cyberlaw as one of its areas of specialization. The firm deals with domain name dispute resolution cases and was recently empanelled as an expert to advise the National Internet Exchange of India on new domain names to be issued by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers.

**SKS Law Associates**, a five-lawyer firm in New Delhi headed by Sunita Sreedharan, provides a full range of IP services including protection of plant varieties. Sreedharan reports that the firm has “worked on drafting the legal framework for the regulation of access to traditional knowledge relating to genetic resources and benefit sharing for the Ministry of Environment”.

Jyoti Ravi Sachdeva, associate director legal and



**CROP CAMPAIGN:** SKS Law Associates provides a spectrum of IP services including protection of plant varieties.

company secretary at Rediff.com in India, commends Sreedharan’s expertise and says Rediff.com has worked with SKS Law Associates since 2008.

**Groser & Groser**, an eight-lawyer firm in Gurgaon, takes pride in its “almost obsessive attention to accuracy in all its work”. The firm’s head, Francis Groser, a former Remfry & Sagar lawyer, reports that it was recently engaged to handle the trademark portfolio of a multinational US company and that the firm’s clients include Japanese patent and trademark attorneys.



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**IPR International Services** is a small New Delhi-based firm headed by Neha Chugh, which provides services to tackle all IP matters.

**Kan & Krishme** is a 15-lawyer firm in Delhi headed by Sharad Vadehra. Representing Accenture Global Services at the IPAB, Vadehra recently successfully challenged a decision by the patent office. In its order the IPAB commented on the office’s “slipshod approach”, which it said was “not correct and unjustified”.

**Niche practices**

While Bangalore has established itself as India’s technology city, the city also boasts an increasing number of well reputed small and mid-size law firms several of which specialize in IP rights.

**Law Offices of Nandan Kamath**, a sports, media, technology and IP practice headed by Nandan Kamath, prides itself on its “unparalleled legal experience and specialization in the Indian sports industry”.

The six-lawyer firm’s clients include the International Cricket Council (ICC), Indian Premier League (IPL) and Coca-Cola.

The ICC has used the firm for four years on account of its “specific expertise in the niche area of monitoring and protection of online sports rights”, the “excellent availability, skills and work ethic of principal, Nandan Kamath” and “other similar clients in the same sector”, reports Iain Higgins, head of legal for the ICC.

RK Dewan has provided my firm with consistently excellent service at reasonable prices

Robert Plotkin

Lawyer

Law Office of Robert Plotkin



The IPL “needed specialist cutting edge legal services in the field of media and IP” and “have engaged the Law offices of Nandan Kamath for close to four years for the reason that it delivers on those fronts,” says Sundar Raman, COO of the IPL.

Coca-Cola India began using the firm four years ago for sports marketing projects, and now also uses it for media, entertainment and other marketing projects. “Their high quality work, attention to detail and quick turnaround

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times bring us both breadth and depth in supporting our various teams and projects internally,” says Ish Bali, general manager legal at Coca-Cola India.

**Brain League**, a 20-lawyer Bangalore-based firm with offices in Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai and Cupertino, California, is headed by Nishant Kewalramani. The firm has an interesting array of clients including electric car maker Mahindra Reva, Yash Raj Films and Essilor India, a leader in the ophthalmic lens market, which has been a client for five years.

Dattatri HM, head of legal and company secretary at Essilor India, says his company uses Brain League on account of its “expertise and systematic service”.

Rohit Sobti, general manager of licensing and merchandising at Yash Raj Films, reports that Brain League carried out an IP audit of his company, and as a result they “understood the expertise and in depth knowledge” of the firm. While Brain League handles Yash Raj Films’ IP portfolio, Anand and Anand handles litigation matters.

**Kris Law Chambers** specializes in IP and media and entertainment law. It expects to open an office in Singapore by June as Binu Radhakrishnan, who heads the six-lawyer firm, has seen a “quantum jump” in the number of media and entertainment companies that have set up shop in that city. Kris Law Chambers currently has a tie-up with a Singapore-based IP and media and entertainment law boutique.

Ravi Shankar, CEO of Havas Worldwide Digital Matrix in Bangalore, who has used the services of Kris Law Chambers for six years, commends the firm’s professionalism which “has always been second to none”. He adds that the firm has “always been more than mere legal advisers” and that he has “nothing but praise and recommendation for first class, prompt and personable service”.

## A rich landscape

**Krishna & Saurastri** is a 33-lawyer Mumbai-based firm that has been practising IP law for more than 30 years. Headed by Manish Saurastri, the firm has offices in New

The responsiveness and clarity of advice provided by ZeusIP is, in our experience, very good, in particular when compared to some other, older and bigger Indian law firms

Kaisu Korpua

Head of IPR

Roschier Brands Team



[The Indian Premier League] needed specialist cutting edge legal services in the field of media and IP [and] have engaged the Law Offices of Nandan Kamath for close to four years

Sundar Raman

COO

Indian Premier League



Delhi, Bangalore, Pune and Ahmedabad. The firm boasts lawyers who are well versed in US and European IP laws as well as Indian law.

Saurastri represented Whirlpool India in a recent injunction action against Videocon Industries, in a dispute relating to design infringement and passing off.

**Legasis Partners**, founded by Suhas Tuljapurkar, is backed by Legasis Services, a legal support services company. The firm has about 30 lawyers in Mumbai, Pune and New Delhi.

**Valsangkar & Associates**, a six-lawyer firm in Pune headed by Anirudha Valsangkar and Anjali Valsangkar, represented Pravin Masalewale, a leading manufacturer of ground spices, in an action to protect its trademark which went all the way to the Supreme Court. Both lawyers have degrees from the US. An IP lawyer at a US firm who uses the firm’s services comments: “I like their backgrounds in both Indian law and also having studied US law.”

**HK Acharya & Company**, an Ahmedabad-based firm headed by Rajeshkumar Acharya, provides a full range of IP services. The firm, which was set up in 1977, has around 30 lawyers and offices in Rajkot, Morbi and Mumbai. It reports that 60% of its work is for international clients.

**YJ Trivedi & Co**, an 18-lawyer firm headed by Jatin Trivedi, takes pride in running “a smart, agile, cost-contained operation ready to take on today’s most complex cases”. The firm is based in Ahmedabad where, together with the Ahmedabad Management Association, it runs the YJ Trivedi Academy of Intellectual Property Rights, which works to create awareness about IP rights in Gujarat.

**Joachim & Janson** is a 10-year-old boutique IP firm based in Kochi in Kerala. Headed by Anup Joachim, it reports that it serves over 2,000 clients, including small and medium-size enterprises, research institutes and universities in India and abroad.

M Shiva Kumar, legal manager of SFO Technologies, who has been a client for more than two years, says the company chose the firm on account of its “proficiency and excellence weaved economically”. SFO Technologies also uses the services of Brain League in Bangalore. ■