



RATIONALISING THE FIRM – COMPETING WITH NON-LAWYER COMPANIES



Transitioning an IP Firm: From People to Software



Stephen Carter



Partner
Mewburn Ellis

stephen.carter@mewburn.com



The changing business environment ...

- IT is ever present, increasingly capable and cost effective
- Clients are familiar with benefits IT brings to the various functions they work across
- Clients expect their IP service providers to leverage modern IT systems – deliver efficient and tailored services
- Newly emerging, non-lawyer companies are ahead of the game



Non-lawyer companies

- Renewals
 - e.g. CPA, CPI
- Filing
 - e.g. Inovia, Park IP, Valipat
- EP Validation
 - e.g. Valipat, Park IP, Inovia
- Translation
 - RWS, Park IP, Morningside



From the law firm's perspective

- Increased competition from non-lawyer companies
- Previously loyal clients being lured away
- “Bad for our business and bad for our clients!” ... or is it?



From the client's perspective

- Clients value good working relationships
- But they cannot pay “over the odds” for the IP services that are being provided
- Quite reasonably they ought to consider the marketplace for IP services to get the best deal



From the competing non-lawyer company's perspective

- Have seen and grasped an opportunity
- Using IT to efficiently deliver low margin, commoditisable IP services
- Economies of scale



Where is the value?

- Commoditisable IP services
 - low margin
 - require very efficient delivery to be profitable
- “Legal” IP services
 - Require technical and legal skills
 - Good attorneys can genuinely add value



The future?

- Commoditisable IP services
 - to be delivered through IT services
 - develop our own or outsource
- Focus people resource on “legal” IP services to generate profit

- or develop new revenue streams based around services that require technical & legal skills



THANK YOU