

LegitLaw - the new self-service platform for basic business contracts

 By [Shan Raddiffe](#)

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In the era of digitalisation, automation and self-help services, the legal sector has been one industry that has been slow to transform and acquiring the most basic legal business documentation can be a costly process - something new and small businesses can't often afford. Two Cape Town-based attorneys are, however, looking to change that with the launch of their new venture - LegitLaw - a legal tech-meets-online shopping platform geared to revolutionise legal services for SA entrepreneurs, SMEs and even private citizens.



Tamasen Bluett and Elaine Bergenthuin, co-founders of LegitLaw

LegitLaw was co-founded by Elaine Bergenthuin, owner of De Beer Attorneys Inc, and Tamasen Bluett, owner of Bluett Maasdorp Attorneys.

Bluett is an admitted attorney of the High Court of South Africa, as well as a conveyancer and notary public. She has over 16 years of hands-on legal experience, with a focus on family law, commercial law and property law (conveyancing).

Bergenthuin is also an admitted attorney of the High Court of South Africa, as well as an electronic engineer and a patent attorney. She also has over 16 years of hands-on legal experience, with her focus being on intellectual property law and commercial law.

Both Bluett and Bergenthuin have dealt with clients in various divisions of the legal industry extensively over the past few

years and understand their client's requirements in depth. As such, they are well-suited to provide clients exactly what they are after – a cost-effective online legal solution that is easy to use, without losing that specialist industry knowledge and tailor-made service offering that a conventional engagement would provide.

Bergenthuin believes:

“ The legal process doesn't have to be intimidating or daunting for business, it can be as easy as shopping online for a new pair of shoes. ”

The platform's automated technology system allows users to file their own trademark and patent online, draw up customised partnership and employment agreements, as well as draft day-to-day legal documents like antenuptial contracts and wills, making it the first in SA to offer this range and depth of online customised legal services to the public.



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Bergenthuin maintains that smart contracts and artificial intelligence are the future of law and the industry needs to adapt to stay relevant. “The legal industry is traditionally steeped in conventional practice and has tended to lag in technology adoption but is now facing mounting pressure worldwide to embrace disruptive legal tech. People have come to enjoy the speed and convenience of the online shopping environment, so it makes sense to integrate business services into a similar digital space.”

Bizcommunity.com chatted with founders Bluett and Bergenthuin further about the formation of LegitLaw and its future...

■ Tell us about LegitLaw and the inspiration behind the startup?

We saw first-hand how the Covid pandemic has impacted the legal industry and the wider economy as a whole. Not only has this impact been felt by our clients' businesses but also our own businesses. It was clear that a more cost-effective legal solution needed to be provided, one that ensures clients legal rights are protected and effectively managed without the undue burden of unpredictable and exorbitant costs.

Furthermore, the world is becoming more and more digitalised. The Covid pandemic has just exacerbated the situation and brought the future closer. In a world where people are scared to leave their homes, a business requires an online presence to survive. The time is therefore ripe for the legal industry to follow suit and catch up with the rest of the world by digitising legal solutions.

■ How does the service work?

The LegitLaw platform is really easy and quick for anyone in any industry to use. It's different from the template documents that are already out there, in that the first step guides users on deciding exactly what they need and can afford. Most people aren't really sure of their specific requirements and can spend hours going back and forth with lawyers. After answering a few simple questions, the LegitLaw platform generates a comprehensive tailor-made contract or agreement that is ready for download. The whole process can take only 30 minutes. It's pretty much based on the KISS principle – keep it simple stupid.

■ The legal industry has been a bit slow to embrace the fourth industrial revolution and integrate technology and automation into everyday processes. Why do you think this is?

As attorneys, we are trained to question facts and hunt for any negative outcomes in order to protect our clients. We need

to be sceptical of facts, look for fault and question what could go wrong. This negative, overly-cautious mindset helps us to be good attorneys, but it can prevent us as business owners from moving forward in times of change.

▣ ***What's the reaction to LegitLaw been like so far?***

We have had a lot of interest in the service – both from prospective clients as well as the wider legal fraternity. We are very excited about the future of our new business.

▣ ***Where do you see LegitLaw in the next five years?***

We would like to position ourselves as the “go-to” “one-stop-shop” for legal services, and really disrupt the current status quo. We plan to continue innovating and shaking up the industry. The contracts and legal services offered by LegitLaw will also continue to grow and develop over the next few months and years – with more bespoke offerings being added as we go.

ABOUT SHAN RADCLIFFE

Shan Radcliffe is the editor of Bizcommunity HR, Education and Legal.

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