




Analysis of the Viability of the LexDoBusiness Collaborative Platform

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Abstract: The objective of this work is to validate the viability of the LexDoBusiness collaborative platform project with the main stakeholders. Considering that the LexDoBusiness project should address several issues, including digital transformation, that brings together several services essential to its success, such as legal, accounting, tax and technological services, this work, regarding the research methodology, uses Design Science Research because it is considered the most appropriate for this project, which had the external collection of secondary data present in the platforms of INE, RACIUS and PORDATA, as well as the collection of primary data through a semi-structured survey addressed to clients of a network of lawyers and potential clients. The LexDoBusiness value proposition is the personalization of its services and in the relationship with its customers, as the permanent support, offering in a single platform, the qualification of entrepreneurs, support in different areas such as legal and conflict mediation, marketing, accounting and tax, as well as the IT area with the development and hosting of the company's website. Clients will also be able to check anywhere and at any time the status of the resolution of their case, the procedural costs, fees, documents and invoices. The results of the questionnaire, confirmed the research problem initially formulated that most clients prefer to hire lawyers with physical offices, which led the business plan to take this preference into consideration rather than the provision of legal services exclusively online without neglecting the economic and financial viability of the project.

1 INTRODUCTION


LexDoBusiness is a project based on a collaborative platform that aims to aggregate a set of services, associated with the following areas: legal, accounting and fiscal, marketing, web development, conflict mediation and training (Azeredo, Reis and Pinto, 2020). This work presents some aspects related with the validation and viability of the project.


To achieve the objectives of this work it was necessary to use the primary data research through a questionnaire to validate the research problem. These data together with the external secondary data collected in the platforms of INE, RACIUS and PORDATA allowed to outline the best strategy for LexDoBusiness, having chosen to use the Blue Ocean strategy because it is intended to create a completely new business, where it brings together several


services in a single platform believing that only in this way will better serve the customer and consequently achieve success.

In this document also presents a scheme of how to apply the three cycles of Hevner DSR (2007) in a business plan that has as reference the base structure of IAPMEI (2016a).

This paper is organized in seven sections. The first section is the Introduction. In the second section called Research Problem where the research context is presented. In the third section the strategy is presented. In the fourth section the work plan is discussed. In the fifth section the application of the three Hevner cycles included in the Designer Science Research methodology is presented. In the sixth section the business plan is presented. Finally, in the seventh section the conclusions are presented.

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2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Based on the literature review with a concept matrix, and some relevant aspects associated to a business plan, like digital transformation, digital marketing, customer relationship management, etc. (Azeredo, Reis and Pinto, 2020) and considering the object of the study, which is the evaluation of the degree of acceptability of contracting legal services exclusively through an online platform, the research problem was defined: verifying whether clients prefer to hire lawyers with physical offices.

In order to verify the research problem, the online bibliographical survey (Azeredo, Reis and Pinto, 2020) was used again to validate the variables that will be used in the questionnaire. However, considering the specificity of LexDoBusiness it was not possible to find relevant literature that would scientifically support the questionnaire that was disclosed.

Thus, it will be analysed the several components of LexDoBusiness model, as well as the dimension related to the aspects and services considered more relevant by the potential users of the platform, as well as the degree of acceptance of legal services exclusively online.

This analysis is justified considering that the legal sector is traditionalist in contrast with what LexDoBusiness intends to be. For this reason, the intention is to understand whether clients are willing to contract legal services via the web and to what extent the digital transformation has influenced clients seeking, for example, a lawyer.

3 STRATEGY

Defining a strategy is important because it will work as a guide, a plan to follow, a way of thinking about the future.

LexDoBusiness will adopt the Blue Ocean strategy W. C. Kim e Mauborgne (2016) because it intends to create a completely new business, where it congregates several services in a single platform believing that only in this way it will better serve the customer and consequently achieve success.

3.1 Competitors Analysis

Regarding the competition, there are no direct competitors in Portugal, since there is no known platform that brings together the range of services of LexDoBusiness, in a single online platform, namely the area of information technology, accounting, tax

and legal, committed to training entrepreneurs who want to transform their idea into a successful company, with monitoring throughout the life cycle of the company.

In relation to the indirect competition of LexDoBusiness is dispersed by areas and comes from three distinct origins. First, there is a large number of professionals who work in the above-mentioned areas. There is also strong competition from advisories that are prohibited in Portugal, but allowed in Brazil and, finally, there is the possibility of some services being performed by the interested parties themselves, or to whom they delegate the task.

3.2 Blue Ocean - LexDoBusiness

LexDoBusiness aims to offer something of value above what already exists for a specific target audience that has not yet been well attended. To achieve this goal, the critical success factors of LexDoBusiness are presented:

- Integrated solution with wide range of services (convenience);
- Follow-up in the life cycle of the companies: Creation-Capacity-Insolvency;
- Monitoring system of processes and services;
- Training, online information. Access to e-books and webinar;
- Facilitated and international payment system;
- Customer support (365 days/24h);
- Personalization of service by qualified professional (365 days/24h);
- Competitive price;
- Existing partners: Veritá Tecnologia, a network of 130 lawyers throughout the country, Italy and Brazil;
- Requirement of qualified human resources;
- Office Mobility: rental of space at the hour to serve the client in his area of residence.

To obtain value innovation and to enable the creation of a new value curve, the following factors must be reduced or raised from the industry standard, eliminated as indispensable, and created because the industry never offered:

- It is necessary to reduce costs with office rentals and transportation, encouraging the customer's option for online consultation;
- It is necessary to increase the network of partners, seeking to create links with Chambers of Commerce and trade associations, business incubators, universities, IEFPP, etc.
- It is necessary to create the online platform, CRM, operational marketing plan, digital

marketing plan and create a network of partners accountants and tax advisers.

- Considering the results of the questionnaire, it is necessary to assess the reasons why clients do not prefer to contract legal services online and to alleviate this problem so that the option for online is preferred.

3.3 Value Assessment Matrix

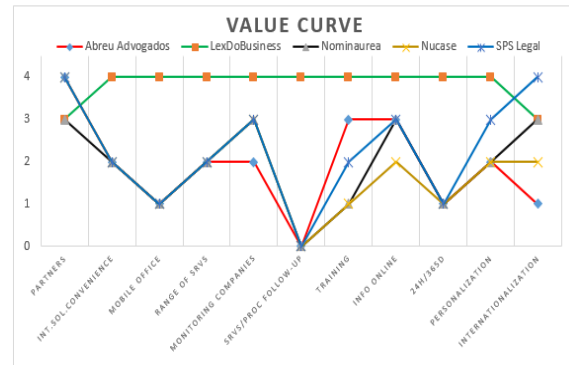
The value assessment matrix is a graphical representation of a company's relative performance across industry factors in the competition. A strong value curve has focus, divergence, as well as a convincing slogan. The value assessment matrix serves to present the current market situation, showing where the industry competes and what factors the competition currently invests in. The horizontal axis in the value assessment matrix shows the range of competitive and investment factors in an industry, while the vertical axis captures the level of supply buyers receive across all of these key competitive factors W. C. Kim e Mauborgne (2016).

The following factors have been scored from 0 to 4 to categorize competing companies:

- **Partners:** number of partners the company relates to;
- **Integrated Solution Convenience:** number of services available on a single site or platform;
- **Mobile Office:** level of the company's ability to meet its clients;
- **Range of Services:** number of services the company provides;
- **Monitoring of Companies:** level of capacity that the company has to support its clients and accompany them throughout the life cycle of the company;
- **Services/processes Follow-up:** online platform where the steps taken by LexDoBusinesss are registered in an online database, with access by the customers, in order to follow the status of the contracted service at anytime and anywhere.
- **Training:** level of capacity to provide training and capacity building to its customers;
- **24 Customer Service:** level of capacity that companies have to provide assistance to their customers 365 days a year, 24 hours a day;
- **Personalization:** level of capacity / freedom that the company offers its clients to choose the most appropriate services to their needs;
- **Internationalization:** level of capacity to internationalize companies.

The main indirect competitors were identified, and a value curve was drawn, in order to understand

to what extent LexDoBusiness differentiates itself from others. When observing Graph 1, it is easy to verify that the line that represents LexDoBusiness, does not coincide with the lines of the analyzed competitors, concluding that, according to the mentioned competition factors, the business model that this project proposes is innovative.



Graph 1: Value Curve – LexDoBusiness.

3.4 Customer-entrepreneur Investment

The investment on the part of the client, in order to transform his idea into business, will depend on the number of services he will hire from LexDoBusiness, and on the degree of complexity in putting it into practice. Thus, LexDoBusiness puts its professionals at the disposal of the customer who needs a personalized service and to his measure.

At the same time, the customers can choose one of the four pre-defined plans, which gives access to a set of consultations and all the platform functionalities.

3.5 Price Strategy

Pricing services can be a complicated task considering their characteristics of intangibility, perishability, heterogeneity, simultaneity and also the client's participation in the process of providing services (Kotler and Keller, 2017).

In the case of LexDoBusiness, determining the price of its services becomes even more difficult if we consider that it is a new platform that brings together several services in one place. These services are already complex and time-consuming to provide, such as legal, accounting and tax services.

However, it was possible to determine a price based on the added value that the product will offer our clients, without neglecting all the costs associated with production, marketing and distribution.

Therefore, LexDoBusiness will use a value-based pricing strategy (Kotler and Keller, 2017) and present

to its clients four service plans. In all of them, the client will have access to all the existing services in the platform, only distinguishing themselves in relation to time and number of consultations with professionals, namely lawyers, conflict mediators, accountants, tax advisers, marketing experts, teachers/trainers and web developers.

4 MODEL AND WORKING PLAN

The main objective of this project is the realization of the idea, presented in the previous point, in a successful company. To this end, this proposal aims to transform the idea into a business model, as well as to elaborate the appropriate business plan that allows the implementation of a company according to the idea and initial expectations.

The business model will have as a starting point Portugal, because the target public of LexDoBusiness are national SME's, however and taking into account that about 50% of the clients of the attorney Cristiane de Souza Reis who will integrate, LexDoBusiness, contact it from abroad, it is essential to ensure the provision of services to these markets.

According to IAPMEI, the internationalization of an online domestic business is almost immediate: "When the domestic business was created on an online platform, its internationalization can be almost immediately guaranteed. At the limit of the development and distribution of computer applications, accessibility to external markets can be guaranteed without major adaptations" (IAPMEI, 2016b, p.82). In this way and in accordance with the above, the communication, access and maintenance of foreign customers are thus ensured.

The research methodology used in the project was DSR, which had the external collection of secondary data present in the INE and PORDATA platforms to measure the total, available and target market. Regarding the primary data, to test the acceptance of fully online legal services provision, an online questionnaire was conducted. The type of sampling to be used in this research was quantitative, using the non-probabilistic sampling technique for convenience. The scope of the sample focused on the geographical area of Portugal and Brazil, in the sector of advocacy activity and was carried out from 21 January 2020 to 09 February 2020. The target population was the universe of clients and contacts of the lawyer, as well as her partners, all over 16 years old.

The various components of the LexDoBusiness model were analyzed, as well as the extent to which users of the platform consider the most relevant

aspects and services, as well as the degree of acceptance of exclusively online legal services. This analysis is justified considering that the law firm is traditionalist in contrast to what LexDoBusiness intends to be. For this reason, the intention is to understand whether clients are willing to contract legal services via the web and to what extent the digital transformation has influenced clients seeking, for example, a lawyer.

5 APPLICATION OF THE THREE HEVNER CYCLES

Once the methodology was defined, it was necessary to decide how to apply Hevner's DSR in LexDoBusiness plan, having as reference the IAPMEI (2016a) business plan base structure, as can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: LexDoBusiness Plan Structure with the application of the three Hevner cycles.

Base Structure Business Plan	Three Hevner DSR cycles
1. Executive summary; 2. The history of the Company and/or the promoters;	Space of basic knowledge - Cycle of Rigor
3. The underlying market	Environment - Relevance Cycle
4. The new idea and its positioning in the market; 5. The Project/ Product/ Idea 6. Commercial Strategy; 7. Management and control of the business; 8. Investment required; 9. Financial Projections / Financial Model.	Design Science Research Space - Design Cycle

Of the three Hevner (2007) cycles it is only relevant to present, in this article, the cycle of relevance because it allows to verify through the search of external and primary secondary data which are the requirements of the contextual environment necessary for the implementation of LexDoBusiness.

5.1 External Secondary Data - Underlying Market

The databases of INE, PORDATA and statistics on the business world in Portugal of the RACIUS online platform Observatory were consulted and used as a source for obtaining secondary external data - underlying market.

5.1.1 Total Market

In the last two years, Portugal has seen an increase in the number of immigrants seeking our country to settle here, as we can see in data from 2018 in PORDATA (2018f) where a positive migration balance of 11 600 immigrants can be verified.

If we consider the foreign population with legal status of resident in our country we can see that it is the Brazilians who most seek our country to settle here, according to data obtained in PORDATA (2018c) which indicate that 104 504 Brazilian citizens obtained a residence permit in 2018. Also, according to data obtained on the same platform, there are 10.283.822 Portuguese residents in Portugal, according to PORDATA (2018e), of which 5 232 000 are considered the active population PORDATA (2018b) and 5 031 000 are considered the inactive population PORDATA (2018d).

Both populations are potential customers, considering that both the working population may want to change jobs and create their own business, and the inactive population, which may have a business idea and decide to turn it into the working population. It is important to understand that immigrants seek an opportunity in our country to build a better life and make their dreams come true, and some of them also seek to undertake.

5.1.2 Available Market

Small, medium sized entrepreneurs and population in informal activity to be regularized, who wish to use the Internet as a means of initiation and expansion of business activity.

Second, still the data available until 2018, in the National Institute of Statistics, there are 1 295 299 SMEs in Portugal (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2020).

In the annual report "Enterprises in Portugal - 2018" published by the National Statistics Institute (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2020), in the year 2018 there were 1,295,299 enterprises in Portugal, of which 67.4 % were individual enterprises and 32.6 % companies. There has been a growth in the number of companies and individual companies set up, staff in service and an increase in turnover compared to 2017.

5.1.3 Target Market

According to (PORDATA, 2018a), since 2013 there has been a growing number of companies in Portugal. In 2018 there were 1,294,037 small and medium-sized companies and 1,262 large companies.

These data indicate that economic stability is being experienced in Portugal, so it will be a favourable moment for LexDoBusiness to promote and present its services.

5.2 Primary Data

In the cycle of relevance, it is also important to present the primary data obtained through a questionnaire that aimed to evaluate the degree of acceptability of contracting legal services, exclusively through an online platform.

Although LexDoBusiness intends to provide other services, namely accounting, tax and technological services, only legal services will be evaluated because we consider that of all, the legal sector is the most traditional, which is why most clients feel the need (tangibility) to resort to physical legal establishments.

Two questionnaires were disclosed, one of them was advertised in social networks directed to people over 16 years of age, regardless of whether they have hired legal services or incorporated companies, while the other was disclosed through an e-mail marketing campaign directed to 114 professional contacts of lawyer Cristiane de Souza Reis.

For statistical purposes, 244 responses were considered valid after the validation of all the questionnaire responses.

5.2.1 Internal Consistency Analysis of the Scales Used

The analysis of internal consistency allows the study of the properties of measurement scales and the questions that compose them, determining the level of correlation between the different items (variables) that measure the constructs of a questionnaire with the same measurement scale (in this case, a Likert scale from 1 to 5).

Most researchers when dealing with questions of reliability of a measurement use or refer to the Cronbach alpha index, because it measures the fidelity or internal consistency of responses to a set of correlated variables. Cronbach alpha ranges from 0 to 1, and the closer to 1, the greater the consistency of the scale (Cronbach, 1951).

For the construction of the "Acceptability of online legal services" construct, questions 3, 4 and 5 were considered as variables. The Cronbach alpha value obtained for this construct was 0.754, a value considered acceptable because it is close to 1, so the reliability of the questions that make up the construct are appropriate (Davis, 1965).

5.2.2 Results Analysis

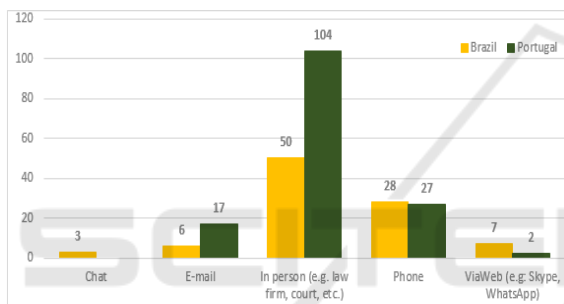
Of the 245 responses obtained, only one response was considered invalid for statistical purposes of gender differentiation.

The majority of respondents are female (64.34%) with 157 responses, while 87 responses are male (35.66%).

There is a good distribution of responses between the two genders at all levels. The majority of respondents are aged 36-45, 47 are female and 23 are male.

Broadening the age brackets, most respondents are aged 26-55. These factors should be considered when designing the LexDoBusiness communication plan to find the best way to communicate services for each age group.

Graph 2 presents the data obtained in question "1. In a first contact with lawyers, which is the preferred channel to be served?" by nationality.



Graph 2: Preference channel legal services (1st contact) by nationality.

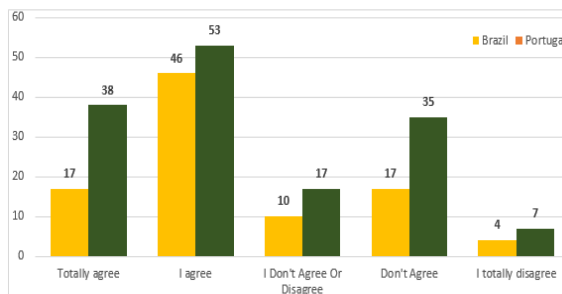
It can be seen that 50 of the 94 Brazilian respondents (53%) prefer face-to-face contact with lawyers in the first approach, in contrast to the 104 Portuguese respondents out of a total of 150 (69%) and it can be concluded that Brazilians are more willing to contract legal services online.

Question 2: "After the first contact with lawyers, what is the preferred channel to be attended to until your problem is solved?" confirms that the respondents prefer to expose their problems to the lawyers in a face-to-face manner, not only at the first contact, but also at the following meetings. Proof of this are the 106 responses obtained that far outnumber the other forms of contact.

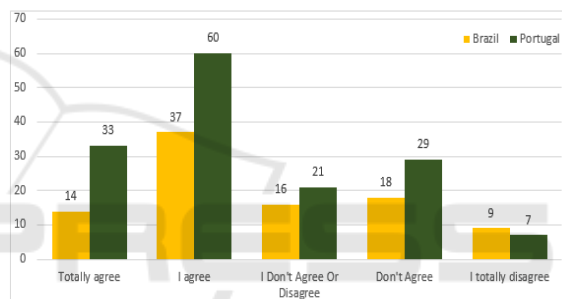
According to the data collected, the 106 respondents also add 49, making up 155 respondents who simultaneously accept other forms of contact, in addition to physical attendance with lawyers.

The answers obtained with the question "3- Do you believe that the provision of legal services must necessarily require the physical meeting between

lawyers and clients?"(Graph 3), it is noted that only 25.82% of the respondents of Portuguese and Brazilian nationality are of the opinion that the type of contact between lawyers and clients should not necessarily be physical, when the provision of legal services occurs.

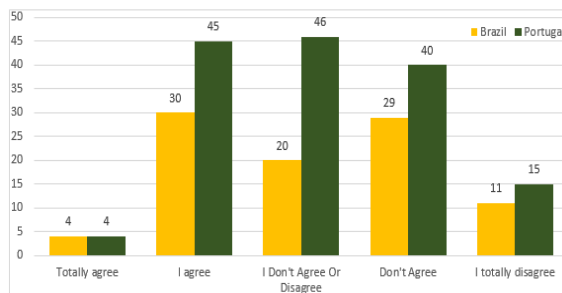


Graph 3: Degree of agreement of the provision of legal services online by nationality.



Graph 4: Degree of agreement of the need for physical office by nationality.

The results obtained from the questionnaire, summarized in Graph 4, in relation to question "4- Do you consider it fundamental for lawyers to have a physical office to serve their clients?", confirm the need for lawyers to have a physical office to provide their services, because according to the opinion of the majority (59.02%) of the 244 respondents, they agree (39.75% respondents) and fully agree (19.26% respondents).



Graph 5: Degree of agreement of web services by lawyers, by nationality.

Graph 5 illustrates the answers to question "5- Do you find it more comfortable to be assisted by a lawyer via the web (e.g. Skype)? In this question, the opinions of the 244 Portuguese and Brazilian respondents are well distributed among the various answer options.

The agreement with the convenience of being assisted by a lawyer via web was 34.02% as opposed to 38.93% of the respondents who do not consider this form of assistance convenient. While 27.05% of respondents chose to answer that they "do not agree or disagree" with the statement.

These results, once again show that the 244 participants in the sample, are not comfortable enough to turn to a lawyer in case of conflict, via the web.

The answers of the 244 respondents to questions 1 to 5 indicated results that declined to provide legal services exclusively online, so the research problem formulated was confirmed.

Therefore, it is concluded that LexDoBusiness will necessarily have to have a physical space (office) to provide legal services to its clients.

6 BUSINESS PLAN

According to IAPMEI (2016a) the entire business plan should have an executive summary that serves to present the idea to potential investors. In this section of the work the executive summary of the business plan is presented.

Nowadays, people have their own business, which, if successful, provides more results than having a subordinate career in a company and the Internet is a fertile area of great opportunities, since the knowledge about e-commerce is still a wide field to be explored.

Initially, it should be noted that online business does not require showcases, a large sales team, stored goods and investment in print media. The cost to maintain a "dot com" business is low and offers the opportunity to sell products and services anywhere. And this fact justifies the present project.

LexDoBusiness is an electronic platform, Business-to-Business, in the consulting area, focused on the development of entrepreneurship.

We work for all those who have the interest to create a business in national territory, regardless of their education, culture, religion and nationality.

Our vision is to allow anyone a real opportunity to pursue their entrepreneurial dream. Our mission is to transform ideas into successful businesses, taking advantage of everyone's entrepreneurial potential.

Our services range from training entrepreneurs, through online and in-person training, structuring ideas into projects and monitoring the company throughout its life cycle.

Our multidisciplinary team will provide the necessary support in the legal, conflict mediation, accounting, tax and IT areas through the development of the company website and its hosting. Our network of partners will assist in any part of the national territory and, also in Italy and Brazil.

Considering that in the year 2018 there were 1,294,037 companies we foresee in the first year to conquer 0.007% of the market share contracting with 91 SMEs and to obtain revenues of 452 800.00 euros (four hundred and fifty-two thousand and eight hundred euros).

In a second phase, partners who wish to create an account on our platform in order to have access to our client portfolio will have to subscribe to a paid plan, with higher earnings expected.

In order to achieve these results there is a need for 35 500 euros of investment, which will be directed towards marketing campaigns, development of the online platform, extension of the process management system to all business areas, creation of content for training and hiring staff, as well as office and car rental.

7 CONCLUSIONS

This paper presents the strategy to be followed for LexDoBusiness to obtain a competitive advantage over its competitors.

The paper also presents the project methodology that will be used, and the guidelines that will guide the development of the LexDoBusiness collaborative platform project.

A secondary and primary data survey was conducted, enabling the development of a business plan that allows LexDoBusiness to achieve its goals in terms of notoriety and interaction with its customers in several channels.

From the analysis to the questionnaire responses, it was concluded that most of the 244 respondents declined to provide legal services exclusively online, confirming the research problem formulated. Consequently, LexDoBusiness must necessarily have a physical space to provide legal services to its clients, which results in increased fixed costs when renting an office.

However, it is known from the literature review previously carried out (Azeredo, Reis and Pinto, 2020) that a strong digital presence gives organizations a competitive advantage because it

provides them with greater communication power, and, therefore, they can be found more easily by clients, having greater opportunity to choose their products and/or services. If a well-developed digital presence is able to attract customers, one can conclude that it is possible to expand business from this. If a digital presence is important in the present for organizations, it is essential for their future.

Another factor to consider is that the primary data survey was conducted between January 21, 2020 and February 9, 2020. If it had been carried out during the COVID-19 epidemic it would have reached Portugal and Brazil, that is, if the questionnaire had been released after the declaration of the state of emergency in Portugal⁴ and in some municipalities and states of Brazil⁵, places where the questionnaire was submitted, at a time when the population was advised to stay at home and, in some cases, mandatory confinement was decreed, possibly more respondents would have opted for exclusively online legal services, calling into question the problem of investigation, to the extent that a physical office would no longer be necessary to serve the clients of lawyers, however it would be necessary to inquire after the end of the epidemic, in order to know whether the positioning would be different given the period in which people stayed at home, so many professionals in teleworking, including lawyers.

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⁴ On March 18, 2020, a state of emergency was decreed in Portugal, through the Decree of the President of the Republic No. 14-A/2020 of March 18.

⁵ On March 17, 2020, the Mayor of the County of São Paulo decreed an emergency in the County of São Paulo, through the Official Gazette No. 51 and Decree No. 59,283 of March 16, 2020.