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A detailed analysis of H-1B visa lawyers

Every year hundreds of thousands of hard working individuals file an application with USCIS for an opportunity to work in the U.S. They file extensive paperwork trying to make a strong case about their skills hoping for approval. There are thousands of lawyers preparing applications for these employees. Until now, there was no insight into success rate of these lawyers who prepare and file applications on behalf of the employees.

Our company uses extensive data analytics and machine learning to make decisions on loans for F-1, OPT, H-1B, O-1, L-1, and TN visa holders. It seems fitting that we help people applying for visa to make better decisions using data. That's why we spent hours doing the hard work to bring you the data to help you make better decisions on your H-1B lawyer.

This is the first part of multi-part H-1B visa analysis we will share over the next few weeks.

The lawyers are not talked about much, but are the most important people when filing for H-1B. If your lawyer messes up your application and you don't get the visa, you may have to leave the country for good.

There are many aspects to a case, some lawyers are good at presenting your case really well to increase your chances of H-1B approval, other don't. We've found that some lawyers have a 100% approval rate, while some have below 80%. A good lawyer makes a huge difference in your application.

Asking the right questions can save you from a bad H-1B lawyer. Be smart about who you choose for your H-1B application.

OVERALL STATS — H-1B (2015)

Total Cases Filed: 618,804 (including new applications, renewals, transfers)
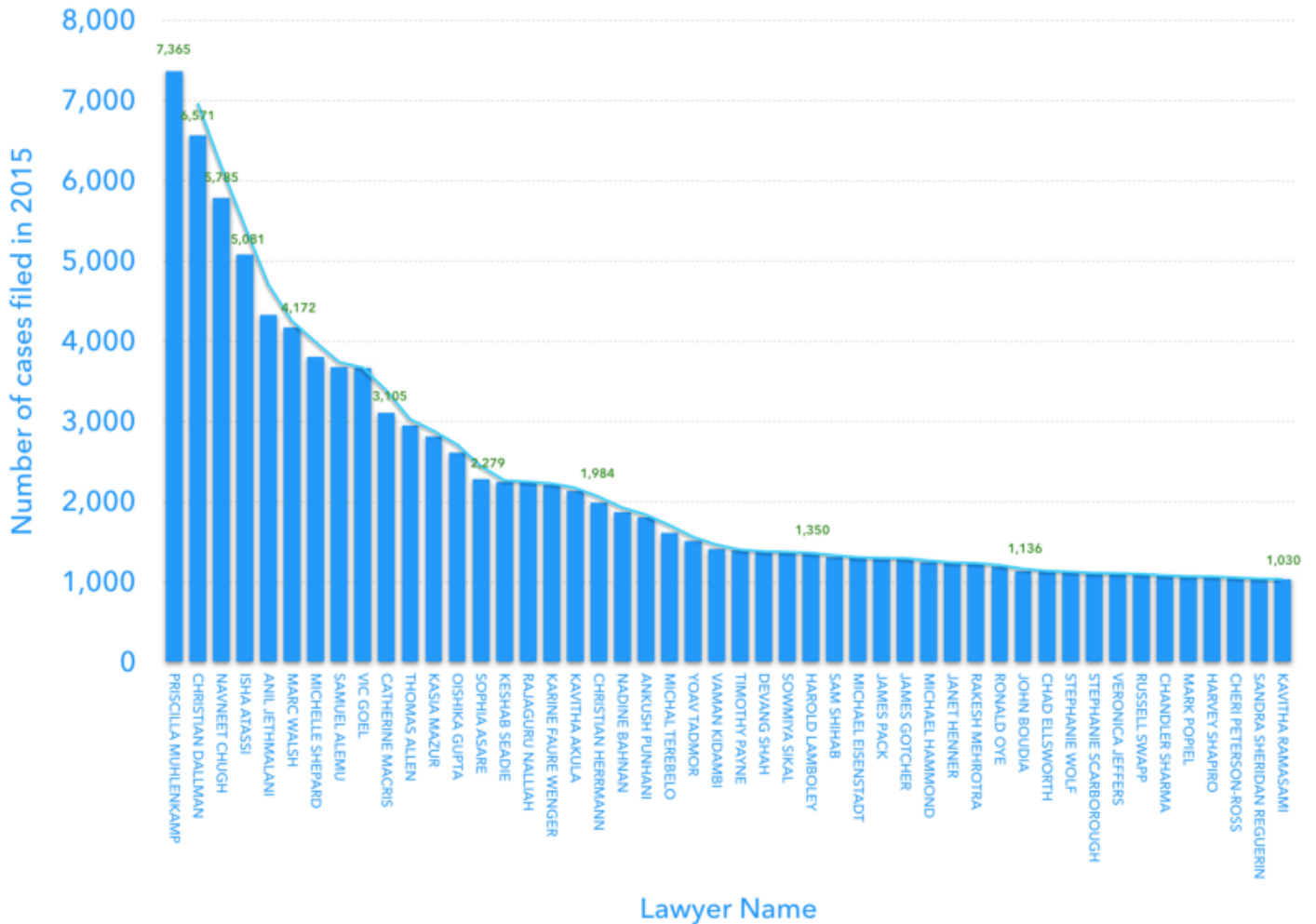
Cases File by Lawyers: 391,678 (where attorney name is available)

- Cases Certified: 348,869
- Cases Withdrawn: 13,278
- Cases Denied: 6,009
- Cases Certified-Withdrawn: 23,522

TOP LAWYERS

Below is a graph showing top 50 lawyers by number of cases filed.

Top Lawyers by Cases Filed

We see that there is a clear drop in total cases filed, which indicates that some lawyers are clearly more popular than others. The drop becomes much slower around 1,000 filed cases per year.

Top 3 lawyers by number of cases filed:

Priscilla Muhlenkamp — 7,365

Christian Dallman — 6,571

Navneet Chugh — 5,785

Below are the top 10 states by number of cases filed with USCIS in 2015. The top three states are far ahead of the others in number of total applications. The 4th state on the list has less than 50% of the applications filed in state at the 3rd position.

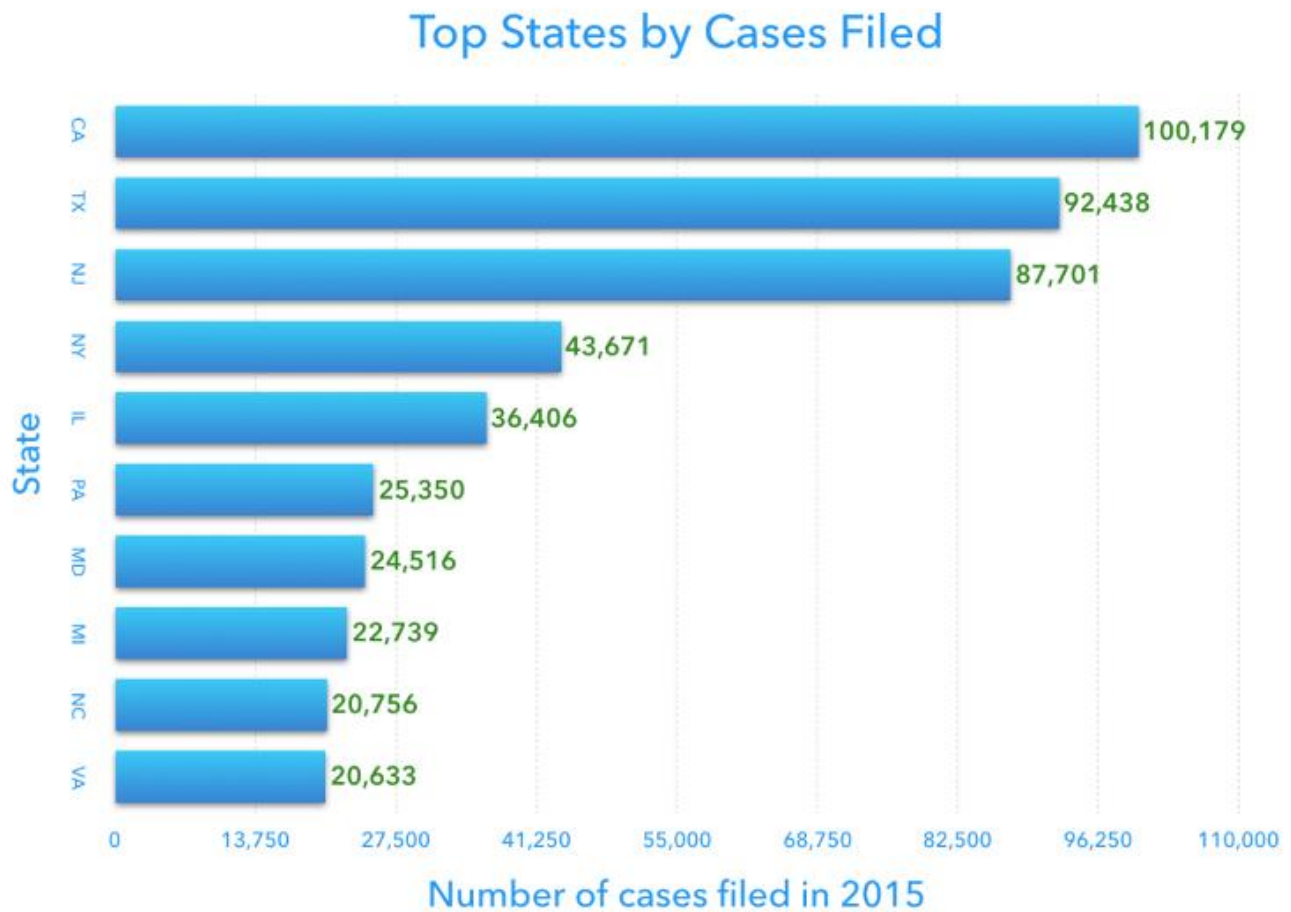*Top 3 states by number of H-1B cases filed in 2015*

California — 100,179

Texas — 92,348

New Jersey — 87,701

If the top 3 states are filing so many cases, it is interesting to see if a lot of lawyers are filing these applications or only a few lawyers are very active.

Let's explore this below for California, Texas, and New Jersey.

Top States by Cases Filed

CALIFORNIA

There are no clear top lawyers that are taking most of the cases and the market is fragmented. A total of 2,738 lawyers filed H-1B cases in 2015. The top 5 lawyers filed for about 12.08% of the total cases.

The top 5 lawyers by percent of cases filed:

Navneet Chugh — 3.49%

Karine Faure Wenger — 2.62%

Christian Herrman — 2.33%

Nadine Bahnan — 2.28%

Stephanie Wolf — 1.37%

Top Lawyers for California

3.49% - Navneet Chugh

2.62% - Karine Faure Wenger

2.33% - Christian Herrman

2.28% - Nadine Bahnan

1.37% - Stephanie Wolf

Others - 87.91%

- NAVNEET CHUGH
- KARINE FAURE WENGER
- CHRISTIAN HERRMANN
- NADINE BAHNAN
- STEPHANIE WOLF
- OTHERS

TEXAS

The top lawyers in Texas have a higher proportion of total cases filed. They top lawyer has a share of 5.20%. It could be because a smaller number of total lawyers filed for visas. Only 1,605 lawyers filed H-1B cases in 2015. The top 5 lawyers filed for about 17.60% of the total cases.

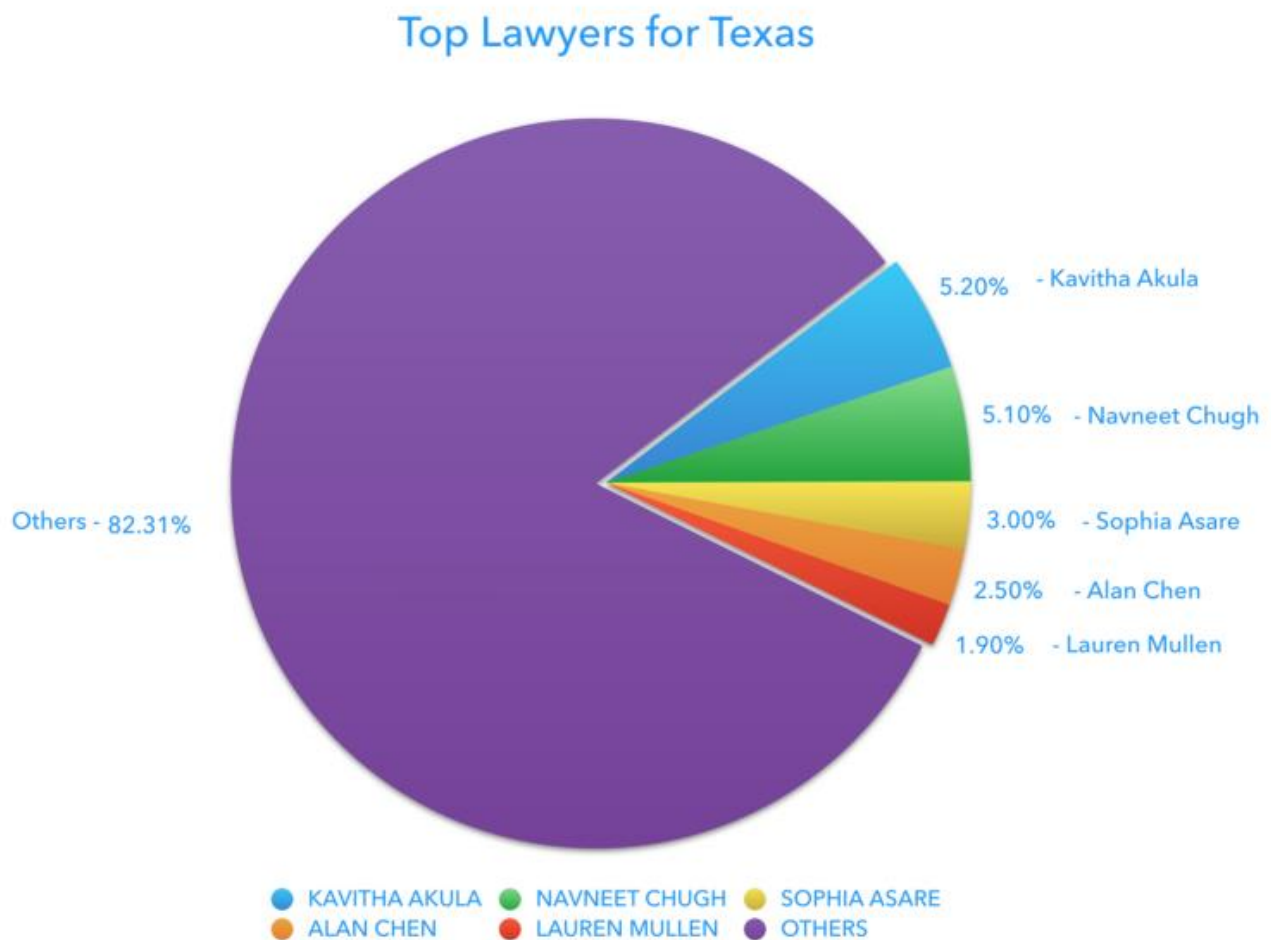*The top 5 lawyers by percent of cases filed:*

Kavitha Akula — 5.20%

Navneet Chugh — 5.10%

Sophia Asare — 3.00%

Alan Chen — 2.50%

Lauren Mullen — 1.90%

Top Lawyers for Texas

5.20% - Kavitha Akula

5.10% - Navneet Chugh

3.00% - Sophia Asare

2.50% - Alan Chen

1.90% - Lauren Mullen

Others - 82.31%

- KAVITHA AKULA
- NAVNEET CHUGH
- SOPHIA ASARE
- ALAN CHEN
- LAUREN MULLEN
- OTHERS

NEW JERSEY

As the total cases filed have decreased, the proportion of top lawyers share has increased significantly. They top lawyer has a share of 9.31% (~2x of

Texas and ~3x of California). A total of 1,226 lawyers filed H-1B cases in 2015. The top 5 lawyers filed for about 29.46% of the total cases.

The top 5 lawyers by percent of cases filed:

Marc Walsh — 9.31%
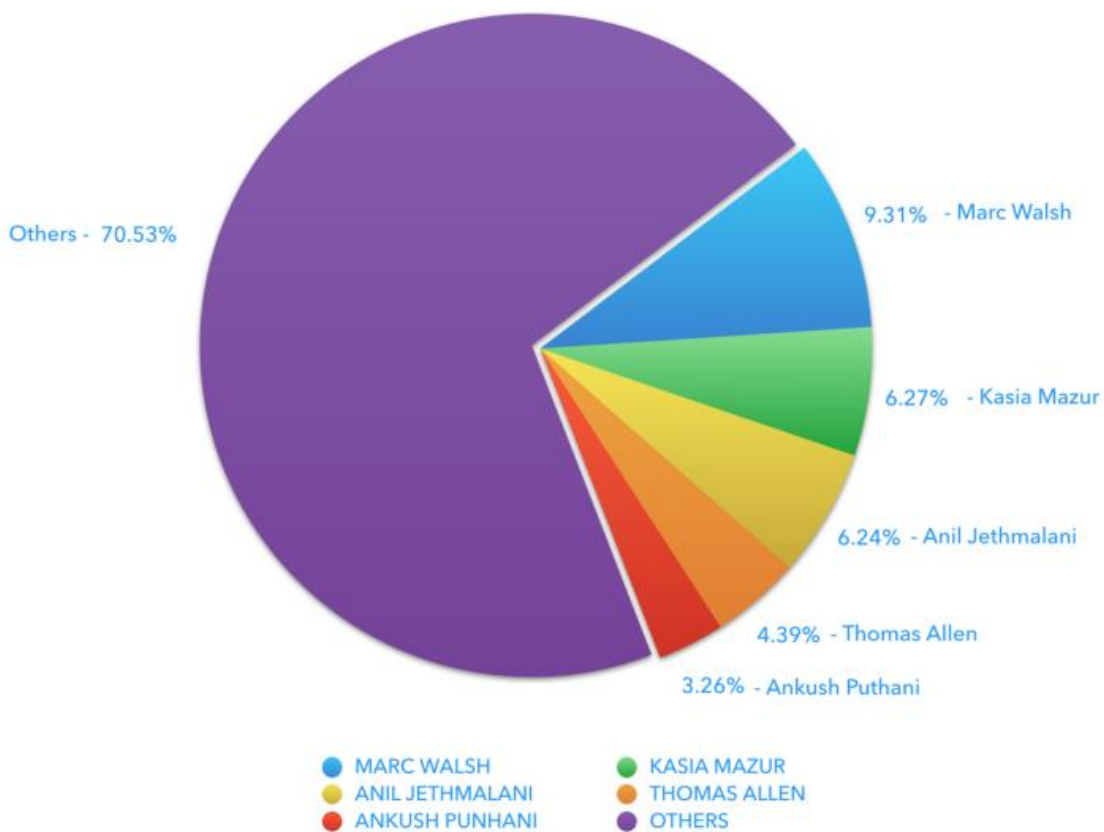
Kaisa Mazur — 6.27%

Anil Jethmalani — 6.24%

Thomas Allen — 4.39%

Ankush Puthani — 3.26%

This helps us get a sense of what lawyers are the most active in the top states for H-1B visas.

Top Lawyers for New Jersey

Others - 70.53%

9.31% - Marc Walsh

6.27% - Kasia Mazur

6.24% - Anil Jethmalani

4.39% - Thomas Allen

3.26% - Ankush Puthani

- ● MARC WALSH
- ● ANIL JETHMALANI
- ● ANKUSH PUNHANI
- ● KASIA MAZUR
- ● THOMAS ALLEN
- ● OTHERS

SUCCESS RATES

A good lawyer is not only determined by number of cases filed, but also by success rate. If you hire a lawyer to file for your H-1B, you would expect to get the visa and not have to face a denied letter.
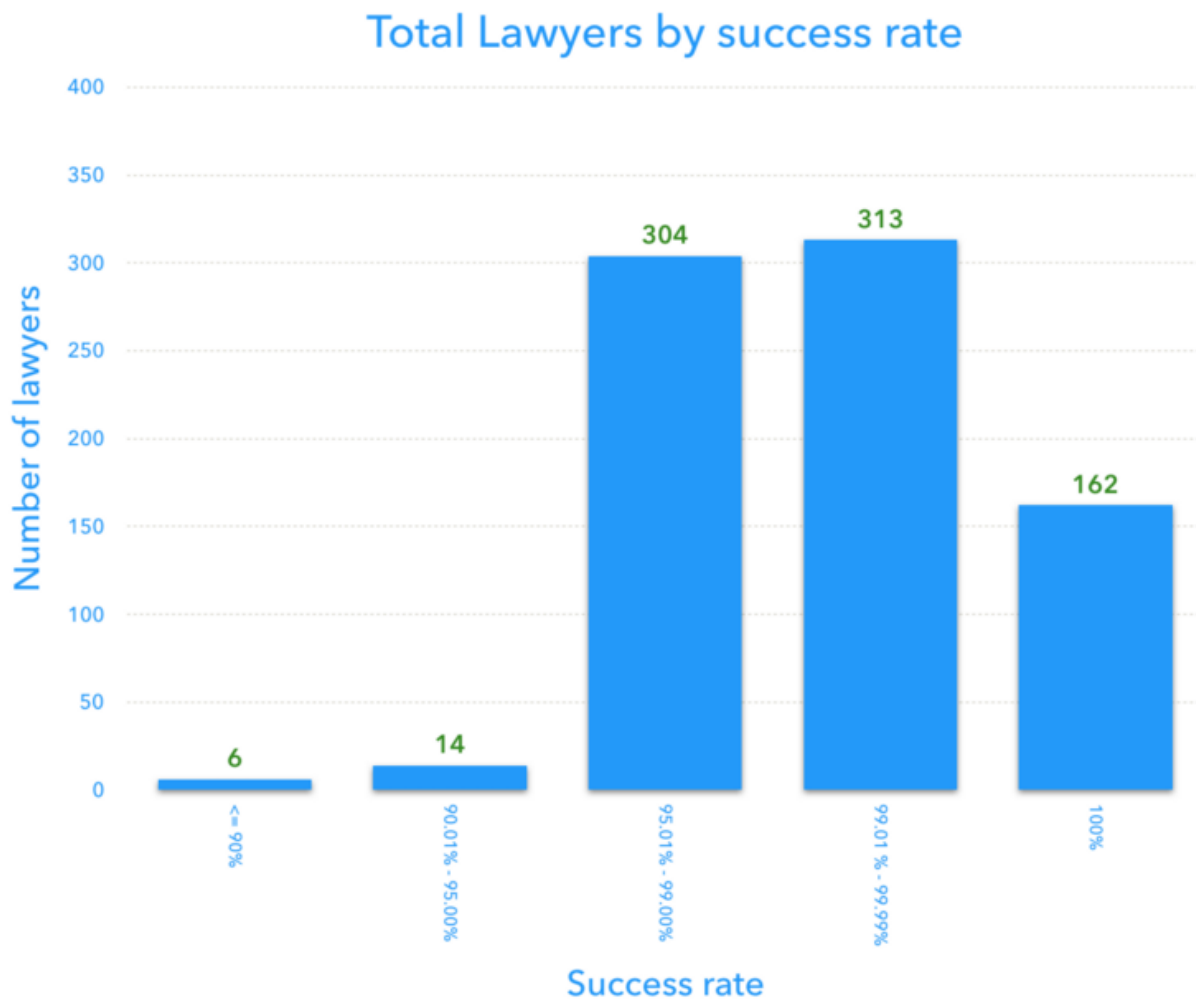
About 7,413 lawyers filed for visas in 2015 across all 50 states in the U.S. As we'd expect, about 55% of them are in high filing visas for employers in top 3 states — California, Texas, and New Jersey.

Only 799 lawyers filed 100 or more visas in 2015.

For this part of the analysis, we will only consider these 799 lawyers and calculate their success rates.

Only 162 of these 799 lawyers have a 100% success rate. Everyone they filed for in 2015, got their visa. These lawyers can be considered as the best ones.

The graph below total lawyers by their success rate (for lawyers with 100 or more cases filed in 2015):

Total Lawyers by success rate

Number of lawyers

Success rate	Number of lawyers
<= 90%	6
90.01% - 95.00%	14
95.01% - 99.00%	304
99.01% - 99.99%	313
100%	162

Success rate

These 5 lawyers had the lowest success rate for H-1B cases filed in 2015:

The bottom 5 lawyers by percent of cases denied:

Asha Madan — 28.19%

Kaisa Mazur — 6.27%

Anil Jethmalani — 6.24%

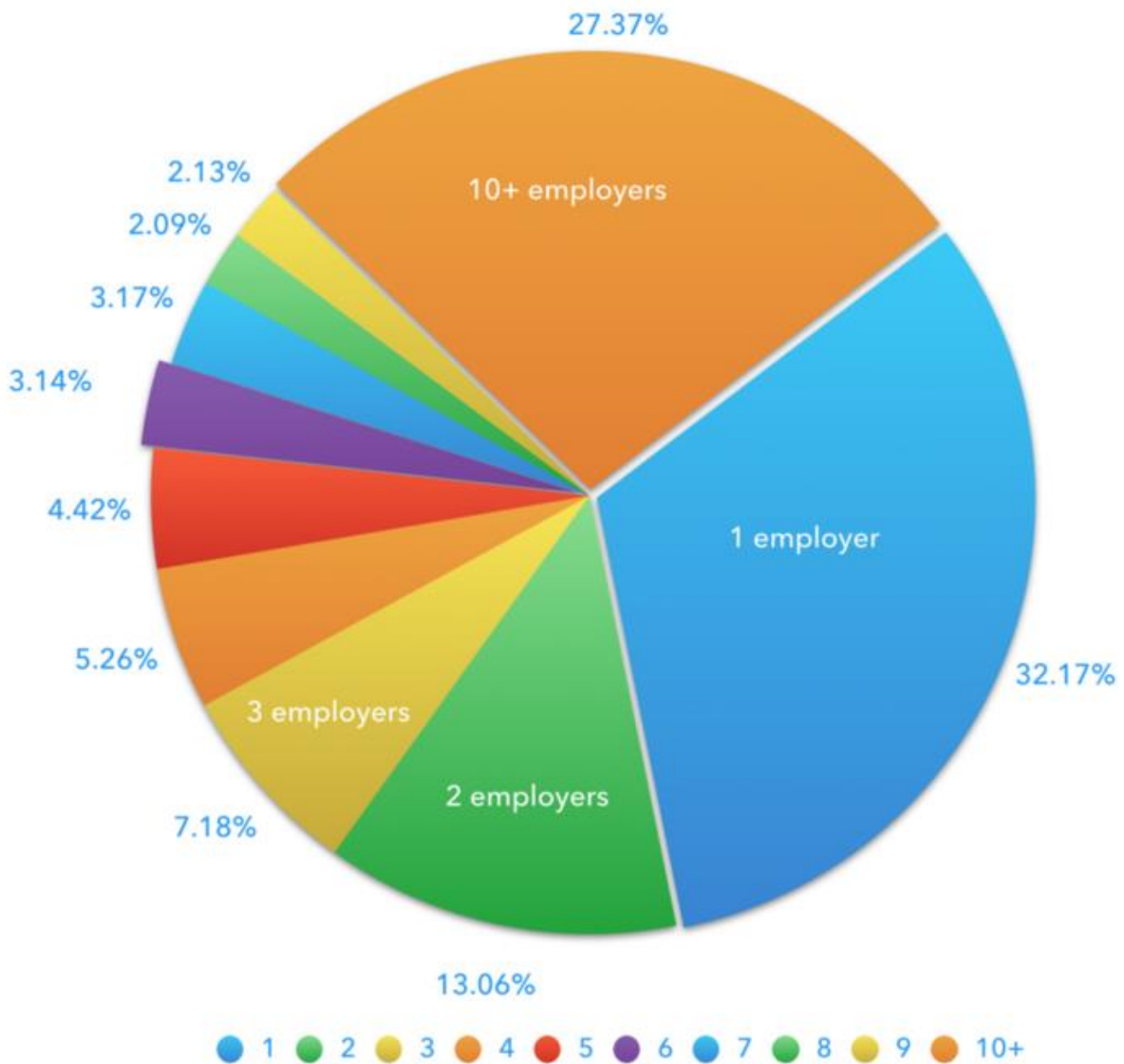Thomas Allen — 4.39%

Ankush Puthani — 3.26%

LAWYERS AND EMPLOYERS

All employers have their preferred or in-house lawyers to file visa applications. Some lawyers stay independent and work with multiple employers.

The graph below shows that a huge percentage of lawyers work with a small number of employers. They are probably on long term contracts and employers don't want to change lawyers as it is both expensive and time consuming.

More than 50% of the lawyers work with 3 or less employers.

Lawyers and Employers

- 27.37% — 10+ employers
- 2.13%
- 2.09%
- 3.17%
- 3.14%
- 4.42%
- 5.26% — 3 employers
- 7.18%
- 13.06% — 2 employers
- 32.17% — 1 employer

Legend: 1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5 · 6 · 7 · 8 · 9 · 10+

The top 5 lawyers who work with most number of employers:

Dakshini Senanyake — 302 employers

Ryan Bay — 275 employers

Marc Taylor — 255 employers

Navneet Chugh — 254 employers

Sophia Asare — 234 employers

This was a quick overview about lawyers who file for visas. In our next post, we will take a deeper look at the companies that are filing for these visas. If you work for one of these companies or are going to work for them, the next post will give you useful data on what to expect when filing for H-1B.

About Stilt:

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