

The Future of Lawyering in Nigeria: Technology, Trust and Opportunities.

A Keynote Address at the unveiling of “www.Pil.Legal”
at Prixiair Hotel, Abuja on 17th August 2026.

Onyekachi Umah, FCI Arb(UK)
CEO, SabiLaw





Pioneer LawHub Ltd (NG)

cordially invite

To the

Public Presentation and Unveiling of

www.pil.legal

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

**The Future of Lawyering in Nigeria: Technology,
Trust and Opportunity**

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Onyekachi Umah, FCI Arb(UK)
CEO, Sabilaw

Date:

17th, August 2026

Time

2:30 p.m

Venue

Prixair Hotel, adjacent Pioneer Law Hub,
Cotonou Crescent Zone 6 Wuse Abuja

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THE FUTURE OF LAWYERING
IN NIGERIA: TECHNOLOGY,
TRUST AND OPPORTUNITY

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Onyekachi Umah,
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Delivering the **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

At the unveiling of **PIL.LEGAL**



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LET'S START WITH A QUESTION

If you needed a lawyer now, what would you actually do?

- 1 Ask a relative or a friend of a friend
- 2 Search online and hope for the best
- 3 Walk into the first chambers you pass
- 4 Leave the legal headache to God

*For most Nigerians —
and even for many
businesses — that is
still the process.*

No verification. No fee
benchmark. No proof of
engagement. No recourse
if it goes wrong.

A large, growing profession — **without matching infrastructure**

A profession this size, spread across this many jurisdictions, cannot run on referrals and reputation alone.

140,000+

Lawyers on the NBA roll
nationwide

125+

NBA branches across 36 states
& the FCT

36 + FCT

Distinct state jurisdictions to
navigate

over 230M

Nigerians the profession
ultimately serves

7,000,000+

Registered businesses

1,300,000+

International Migrant

8,000,000,000+

World Population

1 Lawyer: 1,670 Nigerians

1 Lawyer: 50 registered businesses

1 Lawyer: 9 Migrants

1 Lawyer: 1,700 clients

THE NUMBERS TELL THE STORY



 ≈ **1 LAWYER : 1,670** NIGERIANS



PIL.Legal exists to bridge this gap—making legal help **EASIER TO FIND, TRUST and ACCESS.**

THE REAL PROBLEM

Where trust breaks down today



Verification

Anyone can claim to be “a lawyer.” Call-to-bar year, standing, and specialty are rarely checked before money changes hands. CLIENTS and LAWYERS are losing!



Fees

Pricing is opaque and negotiated case-by-case, often with no reference to the Legal Practitioners Remuneration Order. CLIENTS and LAWYERS are losing!



Payment

Cash or bank transfer up front, with no protection for either side if the engagement collapses. CLIENTS and LAWYERS are losing!



Proof

Engagements are rarely documented in a way that would hold up if a dispute ever reached a tribunal or court. CLIENTS and LAWYERS are losing!



Posts

onyekachi_umah



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Onyekachi Umah J



Posted by Onyekachi Umah J

29 October 2018 · 🌐

MY PREDICTION

F. There will be no court rooms, soon.

It is my prediction that clients will continue meeting with lawyers and law robots via internet, phones and other more reliable means. Disputes will be settled online and via other more reliable technological advanced platforms and the judges will be robots and machines designed to be very impartial and accurate. So, there will be no court rooms and physical law offices. Everything will end online and technology will rule. Most of the eyes seeing this message will confirm this sooner.



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I am are not surprised

THE THESIS

Three forces are reshaping what it means to **practice** law and to **engage** a Lawyer

01

Technology

AI-assisted research, e-filing, digital signatures and case-management tools are compressing the time between a legal question and a legal answer.
Technology can also remove the stress of finding and retaining a verified lawyer.

02

Trust

Verification, transparent fees and secure escrow are becoming structural: built into the platform, not dependent on any one person's reputation.

03

Opportunity

A vastly underserved market for clients seeking counsel and for lawyers seeking a fairer, more ethical, and visible way to build a practice.

FORCE ONE

Technology is compressing the legal workflow

- 1 Research**
AI-assisted legal research and case-law tools cut hours of manual search to minutes. Also, reducing the search time for clients in need of lawyers.
- 2 Filing**
Electronic filing and case tracking are reducing physical court visits and lost paperwork.
- 3 Signing**
Cryptographically hashed e-signatures create tamper-evident, timestamped records.
- 4 Practice tools**
Invoicing, client intake and matter management are moving off paper and WhatsApp threads.

Technology doesn't replace legal expertise (judgment).

It removes the friction around it: the searching, the filing, the paperwork, so lawyers spend more time on the judgment itself, which remains irreducibly human.

FORCE TWO

Trust has to be built, not assumed!



Verify

Confirm NBA branch, call-to-bar year and standing before a client ever engages a lawyer.



Benchmark

Anchor fees to rank, practice area, service type and state; checked against the Remuneration Order.



Protect

Hold funds in escrow and release them upon completion, so neither side bears the risk alone.

A Lawyer's greatest asset is
TRUST! It is a 2 way traffic.

“

**You don't
pray, pay, or give
to ensure trust.**

**Only strong
systems can
guarantee trust.**

— Onyekachi Umah
CEO, SabiLaw



| 16 August 2026

SabiLaw

— ... live lawfully. —

”

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FORCE THREE

The size of the gap is the size of the opportunity

over 240M

Nigerians, foreigners and businesses who may need legal help at some point, most without a trusted route to a lawyer

140,000+

Lawyers nationwide, many outside Lagos & Abuja, with limited visibility to new clients

24/7

Demand for legal information and access doesn't stop at office hours or state lines. Law firms are not designed for it.

What do you see?

What do you see?





— **SabiLaw** ... live lawfully. —

CASE IN POINT

Which brings us to today

www.pil.legal is built around exactly this thesis — legal infrastructure for Nigeria, not just another directory.

Verified lawyers

Checked against NBA branch, call-to-bar year and credentials before listing

Remuneration Order fees

Minimum fees derived from rank, practice area, service & state

Secure escrow

Funds held for a defined period, released automatically on completion

Digital signing

Documents with independent signature verification

QR profiles

A scannable, verifiable public profile for every listed lawyer

Physical hub

Bookable workspace and meeting rooms for when work must happen in person

Three steps, start to finish

01



02



03

Describe your matter

Submit the case; it is structured and categorised automatically — no legal drafting required up front.

Match with a lawyer

Verified practitioners surface by practice area, rank and location, with fees benchmarked to the Remuneration Order.

Pay through escrow

Funds are held securely and released on completion, so neither side carries the risk alone.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR LAWYERS

Run your practice, not just your caseload

- ✓ Visibility beyond your existing network — including outside Lagos and Abuja
- ✓ Invoicing with automatic fee validation against the Remuneration Order
- ✓ Built-in wallet and settlement, so payment is no longer a manual chase
- ✓ Client and case management in one place, instead of scattered notebooks and chats

*“The biggest constraint
on a capable lawyer
is rarely skill.
It’s visibility.”*

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WHAT THIS MEANS FOR CLIENTS

Access, without the guesswork

- ✓ Verified credentials on every profile, checked before you engage
- ✓ Transparent fee quotes, benchmarked to a real regulatory standard
- ✓ Escrow-protected payment, so you are never paying blind
- ✓ A digital record of the engagement that holds up if something goes wrong

*Trust is no longer
something the client
has to take entirely
on faith.*

THE BIGGER PICTURE

Nigeria is part of a continent-wide shift

Across Africa, legal-tech platforms are tackling the same three gaps we've discussed: discovery, verification and payment protection, each shaped by local rules and realities.

Discovery

Directories and matching platforms are replacing pure word-of-mouth referral across major African legal markets.

Regulation

Bar associations and regulators are increasingly engaging with e-filing, digital signatures and online practice.

Payments

Escrow and structured settlement are emerging as the default answer to trust gaps in professional services broadly, not just law.

GETTING IT RIGHT

Progress here still has to be earned



Regulatory alignment

Any platform must work with the NBA and existing rules of professional conduct, not around them.



Data protection

Legal matters are sensitive by definition; client data has to be handled to a genuinely high standard.



Human judgment

Technology should compress friction, never quietly substitute for a lawyer's actual professional judgment.



Inclusion

Tools must work for lawyers and clients with limited data access, not only for the most connected users.

LOOKING AHEAD

Nigerian lawyering, five to ten years from now

1 **Discovery is instant**

Finding a verified lawyer for a specific matter takes minutes, in any state, not weeks of asking around.

2 **Fees are transparent by default**

Remuneration Order benchmarking is simply how invoices are generated — not a manual check anyone has to remember.

3 **Payment protection is standard**

Escrow-style protection becomes the expected way legal fees are handled, the way it already is in e-commerce.

4 **Location stops determining opportunity**

A lawyer's LGA no longer caps their client base, and a client's state no longer caps their access to counsel.

SO — WHAT NOW

This shift needs all of us



Lawyers

Get verified. Let your credentials and track record speak for themselves, wherever you practise.



Clients & businesses

Use the tools available to you. Ask for transparent fees and protected payment as a baseline expectation.



Regulators & institutions

Keep engaging with these platforms directly, so standards are shaped with the profession, not around it.

The future of lawyering in Nigeria isn't a distant prediction.

*It's being built, verified, and signed into record
starting today.*

The future belongs to those who take steps today.

Pil.Legal is your STEP!

I recommend www.Pil.Legal

Onyekachi Umah



THANK YOU!



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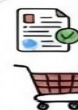
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