

CHARLES CHRISTIAN'S

# LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

THE SOURCE FOR INDEPENDENT LEGAL TECHNOLOGY NEWS, COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

## LAW SOCIETY IN NEW SOFTWARE INITIATIVE

Over the next few days, every partner in every law firm in England and Wales with 10 partners or less - 21,000 solicitors in total - will be receiving a copy of 1998/99 edition of the *Annual Software Solutions Guide* as part of a new initiative by the English Law Society to make legal technology more accessible to smaller firms.

The background to this project is that recognising the important role practice management systems can play in modern law firms, the Law Society felt it was essential to provide some positive guidance to those smaller practices, including sole practitioners and small High Street firms, that lacked their own inhouse IT resources and were daunted by the conflicting claims being made by the suppliers of the 40 plus PMS products currently available on the commercial market.

After considering all the options, including developing their own software system, Chancery Lane opted to go the "recognised supplier" route, effectively creating a quality standard for PMS suppliers that took into account not just the features and functionality of the software but also the suppliers' track records within the legal market.

In terms of technology this meant Y2K-compliant, fully networkable 32-bit Windows software offering, as a minimum, integrated accounts, client/matter database, time recording, legal aid and diary management functions. Independent market research was used to assess such factors as the customer satisfaction of existing users.

At the close of the evaluation process, which has taken the best part of a year to complete, the Law Society had whittled down the market to five "solutions" - SOS Practice Manager from Solicitors Own Software, Quillennium from Quill Systems, Mountain Software's Practice Management System, Gavel & Gown's Amicus Attorney running in conjunction with Solace's Millennium Suite and the Osprey System from Peapod Solutions and Practice Ltd.

Together these offerings make a potentially very useful IT short list for smaller firms but the Law Society is keen to ensure the guide's current "famous five" do not become an exclusive club but merely the first of a growing number of recognised suppliers that will be expanded annually.

- The Guide, which includes an overview by Legal Technology Insider editor Charles Christian on choosing a practice management system plus a commentary on each of the five solutions, is available free of charge to any firm wishing to receive a copy. For details call the Practice Advisory Service on 0171 320 5675 and 0171 316 5516.

## ELITE HAVING RECORD YEAR

Elite Information Systems reports it is enjoying one of its best ever trading years with new orders currently running 40 percent ahead of budget. Recent major UK signings include Penningtons, Russell Jones & Walker, Garretts and Hobson Audley Hopkins & Wood.

Since Liz Rey joined Elite's sales team, the company has also begun a push into mid-sized firms market in competition with Axxia, Norwel and Pilgrim. New orders in this sector include Lee Crowder, Lamport Bassitt, TG Baynes, Bolt Burdon and Cains on the Isle of Man.

## STOP PRESS

- **JGR ORDERS IMANAGE**  
Bond Street solicitors Jeffrey Green Russell (JGR) has become the first law firm in the UK to place an order for the iManage document management system that is currently taking the US legal market by storm. Although JGR is implementing a new CMS Open practice management system that comes from the same stable as DOCS Open, the firm has ruled out DOCS as the basis of its own document management infrastructure.

**Dirty work but someone must do it Page 3**

## INFO SYSTEMS FOR LAWYERS EVENT

Centaur has published the programme for its 1999 *Information Systems for Lawyers* conference, which takes place in February. Key themes include US versus UK approaches to legal IT and how law firms can make money from their investments in IT. Centaur has also revised the event's format to combine formal seminar sessions with interactive discussion forums. The forum moderator will be Insider editor Charles Christian.

## ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST

There may be no sign of a slowdown in the legal IT jobs market but the same cannot be said for legal IT recruitment agencies. Earlier this summer managing consultant Melanie Gilbert left legal headhunters Greythorn, a move which has effectively ended their involvement in the legal IT market, despite them having spent a rumoured £10,000 sponsoring the *Information Systems for Lawyers Conference* in February.

More recently ZMB has wound down its technology division ZGT with the result head consultant Rod McKenzie is himself now looking for a job. The demise of ZGT means there are now only two players left in the market: QD Technology and Longbridge.

## ALBY SMITH LEAVES RESOLUTION

Alby Smith, recently described by one IT director as "the man who thinks he's it", has left Resolution Systems. For the past year Smith had headed Resolution's legal sales division. Previously Smith ran his own company Mercury Computing but that crashed last year amid substantial debts. Resolution subsequently acquired the rights to Mercury's InControl Legal case management software.

## REBRANDING TIME

The legal IT market appears to be in the throes of a flurry of rebranding activity. Inevitably TLAs (three letter acronyms) are proving popular. Debt collection specialist the Beaver Corporation Ltd is switching to BCL. From the New Year headhunters Longbridge will badge some of their services under the LFI (Law & Finance International) name. And Laserform International Ltd is branding its products with the name LFM. (No, we are not sure about that one either.)

Credit for the most amusing name change goes to Irwin Associates, which has just rechristened its Kestrel for DOS software Virgo Accounts, because at £99 per licence it is so cheap as to be verging on the ridiculous. Boom, boom.

## AXXIA GETS AN EDGE WITH ADVANTAGE ?

Last year Solicitec had users' eyes popping out on stalks when it launched a web-enabled version of its case management software that enabled a firm's clients to monitor the progress of a matter via the internet. This year Axxia Systems believes it has stolen the lead with its new Advantage interactive reporting module.

Based on the IQ SmartServer system, which has already been tried and tested in the USA, the new module allows users to schedule the production and delivery of reports based on information stored on the Axxia database.

In addition, the user can also specify how the report is delivered: as a conventional print out, as an email message or posted to a web site and viewed via a browser. Axxia envisage the browser option being run by law firms on inhouse intranets and offered to their clients as a way of providing them with direct access to certain types of information via an extranet or secure internet site.

Where Advantage may have the edge over other systems is that it is not restricted to providing merely prescheduled historical snapshots frozen in HTML coding. Instead, SmartServer offers a truly interactive link by running its own web report viewer program which in turn allows users to see and drill down into live data to generate their own reports on demand.

<http://www.axxia.com>

## AIM SAY Y2K CRITICS UNFAIR

Legal systems supplier AIM has rejected criticism that it was "heavy handed" in its approach to upgrading users to a Y2K compliant version of its Debtco2 debt collection software. According to John Wood, who heads AIM's Leeds office and has responsibility for Debtco, AIM first alerted users to potential Y2K problems as long ago as 1996 and unveiled the upgrade strategy at a user group conference in October 1997. Wood says upgrade charges were based on a sliding scale, depending upon the age of the installation, with less than 10 percent of users having to pay the full £2000 and "the greater proportion being offered an upgrade for less than £1000". Wood also points out a number of users switched to AIM's new Debtco for Windows system.

### ● COMMENT

AIM's experiences fall into the "you just can't win" category and explain why a growing number of suppliers are opting to provide both Y2K site audits and Y2K upgrade patches free of charge. Many echo Alan Richardson of Norwel's view that while there may be a potential to make money out of a Y2K upgrades business, it is a "short-sighted" approach that risks jeopardising longer term relationships with users. In fact at least two legal IT suppliers have already had to settle out of court and provide free upgrades when users, faced with invoices for Y2K services, have threatened to sue for breach of contract.

## OLD NAMES BACK WITH NEW OFFERINGS

Two well-known names within the legal software market - Mark Wood, previously with Eleetix and former Ulrex head Gregory Watson - have launched a new company called Isokon Systems (0171 482 6555) that will target the trusts and probate market.

The company has three 32-bit Windows systems in its portfolio: Isokon Trusts and Isokon Probate, which are both derived from the old Eleetix Excalibur product, and a new linking database product called Konnekkt (sic). Isokon is also working on a Windows 3.1.1 implementation for an insurance company.

Current Isokon users include the Official Solicitor in London and Addleshaw Booth & Co. The company also hopes to sign a distribution agreement with Axxia Systems, once it has resolved some problems with its current Scottish dealer Charlie Duthie.

According to Watson, the system is aimed at the "top end" of the probate market (Isokon Trusts will shortly have a Finstat online financial information feed) and regards the Laserform Probate CaseControl system, running in conjunction with the Troika investment, trusts and estate accounts product, as its only serious competition.

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## CHARITY BEGINS AT PEAPOD

As part of a special promotion to mark the sale of over 900 user licences for the Windows NT based Osprey legal accounts system, Peapod Solutions is offering the solicitors practice that orders the one thousandth licence £1000 to go to the charity of their choice.

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## DIRTY WORK BUT SOMEONE HAS GOT TO DO IT

If success is measured by the fact competitors stop fighting each other and begin attacking you, then document management market newcomer NetRight, who developed the iManage system, must be doing something right.

Within the last month they have had to withdraw a press announcement in the USA after PC Docs threatened legal action. Apparently PC Docs took exception to comments made by Palo Alto-based high tech lawyers Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati when they described the reasons why they had thrown out DOCS Open and replaced it with an iManage system.

Then the company discovered World Software was claiming Jones Walker in New Orleans had swapped out iManage in favour of its own rival Worldox system. The truth, say NetRight, is Jones Walker were on the point of placing an order for iManage but then the IT director fell ill and his replacement has decided to reconsider and review all the options, including iManage and Worldox.

## DEALS AND TENDERS

- The CONQUEST legal network is endorsing case management software from AIM, PRACCTICE and LASERFORM for its 230 member firms. AIM is recommended for large firms, Pracctice for mid-sized and Laserform for small firms.

- NORWEL reports that since the launch of its new "P4" Y2K compatible practice management system for the NT and Unix platforms, the company is now regularly being put on consultants' ITTs. Norwel is concentrating on 10+ partner sized firms and says the suppliers it most frequently encounters on shortlists are AXXIA, PILGRIM, ELITE and CMS.

- Scotland's third largest firm MACLAY MURRAY & SPENS has ordered the LawSoft PMS system from PILGRIM. The firm previously ran a bespoke system. At the same time the firm is also migrating from SoftSolutions to Docs, from Group Wise to Outlook, and from WordPerfect to Word. Pilgrim is also involved in contract negotiations with DICKINSON DEES in Newcastle.

- BROWNE JACOBSON in Nottingham has gone live with RESOLUTION SYSTEMS' FirmControl software. City firm LAWRENCE GRAHAM is reported to be on target to go live with FirmControl within the next couple of weeks.

- COZENS-HARDY & JEWSON in Norwich and East London's WISEMAN LEE have installed OYEZ electronic forms.

- Insurance specialist DAVIES LAVERY has installed an ALCATEL integrated voice and data system to link its London, Maidstone and Birmingham offices.

- AVENUE LEGAL says it is still confident WARD HADAWAY in Newcastle will migrate to its new NT-based Wisdom PMS system rather than switch to an alternative supplier, such as CMS.

- Senior management at BLAKE DAWSON WALDRON in Australia are to visit the UK to talk to D J FREEMAN and MASONS about their experiences with the KEYSTONE PMS system.

## LEGAL PUBLISHING NEWS IN BRIEF

- **SWEET & MAXWELL TO LAUNCH PATENT SERVICE**  
Sweet & Maxwell has awarded Catalyst the contract to handle the SGML conversion and "infobase" (a single file repository using the Folio system) production of a new CD-Rom based version of its *European Patent Law Service*. The service, which is currently only available as a six volume loose-leaf publication, is scheduled for release before the end of the year.
- Sweet & Maxwell has now published the 4th edition of *Drafting Trusts & Will Trusts* by James Kessler. The book comes with a series of precedents on 3.5" disk.
- **TOLLEY'S COMPANY SEC CD**  
Tolley Publishing has launched its *Company Secretary's Service* on CD-Rom. The CD uses the now familiar Tolley/ Butterworths BOS (Books on Screen) user interface and brings together a cross-referenced and hypertext linked database of information called *Company Secretary Link*. The CD is available on a 28 day trial offer. Call Katy Beesley on 0181 686 9141 for details.
- **CENTAUR BUYS CEA**  
Centaur Communications, owner of *The Lawyer* and Lawtel, is stepping up its involvement in online information services with the purchase of Consultancy Europe Associates (CEA), the publishers of the *Spicers* database on EU legislation.
- **AM-LAW HEADING FOR UK**  
The *American Lawyer* media group has confirmed it is interested in expanding its publishing operations into the UK and the rest of Europe and is currently investigating the options available.
- **SON-OF-LAWYER LATEST**  
Latest reports indicate former Centaur publisher Mark Wyatt and his team, who left *The Lawyer* last month, hope to launch a new legal magazine by the beginning of December. The magazine will be published weekly and is designed to compete directly with *Legal Business*.

## IRISH LEGAL IT MARKET STIRRING

After being little more than a sleepy IT backwater for many years, the Irish legal market is starting to wake up. With Axxia continuing to make major inroads among the larger Dublin firms (12 of the Republic's 20 largest practices now run Axxia's Arista system) Jim Cahill, the new managing director of Ireland's largest independent legal systems distributor Star, has begun moving towards a twin track approach that will offer the Avenue Wisdom system to smaller firms and the Pilgrim LawSoft to larger practices.

- One of Axxia's more recent signings, Matheson Ormsby Prentice in Dublin (the firm also has offices in London and Palo Alto) has specified a multicurrency Euro function that will allow it to simultaneously display transactions in Euros and the Irish Punt on the same ledger. Axxia Arista users in the UK will receive a free Euro upgrade during the first quarter of 1999.

- **NEW IRISH CONSULTANCY**

Former KPMG accountant Mercy Gaffney has opened a management consultancy in Kilkenny. Called MGT Consulting, the firm offers advice on Euro and IT projects plus forensic accounting and financial management services for lawyers - Mercy is a past winner of the Solicitors Financial Services Achievement Award. MGT can be reached on (IR) 056-62529 or email [mgtconsulting@tinet.ie](mailto:mgtconsulting@tinet.ie)

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## CD MEDIA LAW LIBRARY

Butterworths is launching its *Butterworths Media Law Library* on CD-Rom later this month. Written by media law practitioner Michael Henry, the title costs £350 and includes over 200 precedents.

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## DIBB'S SOAP OPERA

Dibb Lupton Alsop has apparently just spent 18 months developing a case management and risk assessment system designed to keep clients regularly updated on the progress of litigation, including how much it has already cost, what the total cost is likely to be and whether they should proceed or settle. The system, called the Style Of Approach Initiative (SOAP), is intended to ensure litigation does not lose sight of the client's original business objectives for commencing the action, while at the same time permitting the firm's litigators to predict costs more accurately.

Although the SOAP concept does sound very interesting, LTI's repeated requests for further and better particulars of the technical side of the project, such as whether the daily client reports were available electronically and was the system based on Microsoft Excel, sank without a trace within the firm's seemingly impenetrable voice mail network. Perhaps Dibbs should spend the next 18 months developing a decent internal communications system?

# WINFRAME DOES MAKE LIFE SIMPLER

After just over 18 months' experience of running a Citrix Winframe installation, Crill Canavan in Jersey say not only does Winframe work but network management is far less time consuming than if the firm had been running a conventional PC network of comparable size.

Since the spring of 1997, IT manager Gina Schiessl has been responsible for migrating the firm from Wang to Word, DOCS Open, Microsoft Exchange and Axxia Arista, the latter going live in February this year. Apart from a couple of PCs used for scanning and non-standard applications, the whole of the firm's staff (35 users including lawyers) access these applications via Winframe terminals.

Mrs Schiessl says when a new person joins the firm, she can have them up and running on the network in about 30 minutes - the most time consuming element being setting up user accounts for each software package!

"In our size of practice we need to keep support staff overheads down. I am the only IT person and work part-time. Coming from a larger practice, I was well aware of the time and management overheads associated with PC networks therefore when I looked at Citrix I was really quite impressed with what it could do," says Schiessl.

"Because Citrix can work over standard phone lines, if staff need to work from home, we only need to supply them with a terminal plus modem. I can support them at home by Winframe's shadowing function. I know they cannot do anything with the terminal other than the functions they have on the Winframe server - so no games or CDs to worry about. And having my own Winframe link at home means I can also administer the network and reboot servers outside office hours without having to go into the office."

## LITIGATION SUPPORT - PDF AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO GIF ?

DocuLex Inc has introduced a new utility called PDF-IT that allows scanned images to be saved as PDF files rather than the more usual single page TIFF format.

Because PDF-IT can combine OCR text with a document image, a user also has the option of being able to search an archive of PDF files for a reference using the integral search facility within the PDF viewer software (Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free of charge) rather than have to buy a dedicated litigation support system. DocuLex say this could be useful for expert witnesses and other parties involved in litigation, as they can carry out research armed only with a CD containing PDF files and a copy of Acrobat Reader.

● DocuLex has appointed G3 Consulting (0171 357 9441) as its second UK reseller. Managing Terry Dickinson says the addition of DocuLex means G3 can now offer a complete scanning-to-discovery portfolio of products.

## LEGAL TECHNOLOGY DIARY DATES

### ● AVENUE SEMINARS

A series of free seminars running until April to promote Avenue Legal Systems' practice and case management software. Call Clare Wynn at Avenue's Manchester office on: 0161 776 4387 for details.

### ● KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

The Bi-Annual Conference on Practical Aspects of Knowledge Management takes place at the Fairfield Halls, Croydon on 25th November. Speakers include Chris Baldwin of Legal Technologies and Johannes Scholtes of Zylab. The event, which is being organised by Ted Clark's new company E-gnosis, starts at 9.00 and closes at 17.00. Tickets £185 + VAT, with discounts for additional delegates. For details call: 0181 240 4463.

### ● COMMODITISATION & ONLINE PROVISION OF LEGAL SERVICES

One day seminar on 1st December looking at the potential for interactive legal services. The event has been jointly organised by Osney Media and the Law Society's Law Management section. Speakers include Clive Whitfield-Jones of Jeffrey Green Russell, Doug McLachlan of Axxia, Mark Slade of Fidler & Pepper, consultant Neil Cameron and Paul Nelson of Linklaters. Starts at 9.00 and closes at 16.30. Tickets £375 + VAT. For details call Osney Media: 0171 880 0000.

### ● CONFIDENTIALITY AND ELECTRONIC INFO EXCHANGE

Breakfast briefing and seminar at the St Paul's Cathedral Conference Centre in London on the subject of the security of electronic information exchange systems, including how to deal with internet junk mail and email viruses. The event, which is organised by Resolution Systems, starts at 8.30 and will run until 11.00. Call Anthony Hipperson for details on 0181 665 5050.

● The event will also provide a preview of the new PanaSEEA legal document management system. Developed by FileNet as part of its imaging-to-workflow software range, PanaSEEA has now been integrated with Resolution's own systems.

## WEB NEWS IN BRIEF

- **BAR CODE ON DISK**

The Bar Council has published the latest version of its *Code of Conduct* (6th Edition) and circulated it to all barristers on 3.5" disk. The code will also be posted on the Bar web site in due course.

<http://www.barcouncil.org.uk>

- **AXXIA USERS GET WEB SITE**

The Axxia User Group now has its own site. Along with news and information, it also contains a password-protected secure section offering a range of online support services.

<http://www.axxia-user-group.org.uk>

- **LAWTECH SITE ENDORSED**

According to *Webspace* magazine, the Cambridge-based new media company Parker Barry is now one of the UK's fastest growing web site designers. Web site clients include the Switch electronic payments service, Thomas Cook Holidays and legal systems integrators Lawtech.

<http://www.lawtech.co.uk>

<http://www.parker-barry.co.uk>

- **ENTER THE PROFESSIONALS**

An interactive web-based "community" being developed for small-to-mid sized businesses by the Knowsley Telematics centre in Liverpool and the John Moores University, is now running a pilot project to evaluate a service for lawyers called the Legal Information Exchange. Lindon Wood Consultants in Liverpool are acting as project advisers. When the subscription-based service eventually goes live, users can expect to pay £15 a month plus usual ISP web charges.

<http://www.theprofessionals.co.uk>

- **SWEETS IN ACCESS TALKS**

Legal publishers Sweet & Maxwell are currently in talks with at least two online information services (one is believed to be Lawlink UK) about the possibility of offering their users access to some of the legal material Sweets now holds in electronic format on a pay-as-you-view basis. This is in contrast to the approach adopted by arch-rivals Butterworths who favour pay up front annual subscription based services.

<http://www.smlawpub.co.uk>

## LIX READ LAST RITES

Applied Computer Expertise (ACE) director Mark Peters has confirmed that the company has now buried its LIX Legal Information eXchange service.

Launched amid great hype in the early 1990s as a secure point-to-point electronic document exchange, the DOS-based system initially received some funding from the English Law Society and the Bar Council. As a concept the service was probably ahead of its time and so failed to attract the critical mass of users needed to make it a commercial success or fund further product development.

In the spring of 1996 the system was bought by ACE, who promptly sacked most of the staff (some of them are now with Lawlink UK) and subsequently closed the popular CL-LIX court listings service. Despite bringing out a Windows version and offering cut price deals, LIX stagnated under the ACE regime and has been moribund for months. However, because it is a point-to-point system that does not require the intermediary services of a managed network, there are a number of sets of barristers chambers still using LIX to exchange documents.

- Under a separate commercial arrangement with the Court Service, ACE still operates the FELIX service for High Court judges, who continue to use it both as a moderated discussion forum and as an internet gateway. ACE is currently rolling out a 32-bit version of FELIX.

## LAWYERS ONLINE EXTENSIONS

The lawyers-only internet service provider Lawyers Online is now offering support for Microsoft FrontPage Extensions at no extra cost. The service has also launched a discussion forums facility. Currently the forums focus on fairly "heavy" legal topics and the plan is to restrict access to subscribers, so as to avoid irrelevant postings.

<http://www.lawersonline.co.uk>

## NEWS IN BRIEF

- **ERICSSON WINS CPS DEAL**

Ericsson has just been awarded a seven year contract by the Crown Prosecution Service to manage all aspects of voice communications across its 15 regional and 90 branch offices. The new phone network will include 6500 extensions plus cell phones, pagers, voice mail and fax.

- **SAY GOODBYE TO SPAM**

User Interface Technologies (01223 302041) has launched a new version of its Post.Office internet email server software that makes it easier for network managers to block incoming junk email (spam) messages. The latest version of Post.Office, which is available for Windows NT and major Unix platform, also features a mailing list manager that supports web and email based operations.

<http://www.uit.co.uk>

## KLA GETS DOCS OK

Kramer Lee & Associates, the document management software consultancy set up by former Quintec front man Tom Lee in January, has been appointed an authorised business partner by PC Docs. The move allows KLA to sell the full DOCS Open range of software in conjunction with its own KNOWLEDGEBase precedent management system.

- Anne Holbrook, previously in legal sales at PC Docs Europe, has joined KLA (01628 584666). She now has responsibility for overseas sales operations, including the USA where Levit & James, developers of the Crosstown SoftSolutions-to-DOCS migration tool, report there is a lot of interest in DOCS Open add-on products, such as KLA's EZSearch system. EZSearch offers a simplified search mechanism as an alternative to the often complex syntax and less-than-user-friendly logical "operands" of DOCS Open's own Boolean search engine. UK law firm users of EZSearch include Watson Farley Williams, who installed it after migrating from SoftSolutions.

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

- **RIGHTFAX 6.0 ROLLED OUT**

Today sees the UK launch of RightFAX Version 6. New features in this NT-based network fax product include: support for paging and short message (SMS) services, so recipients can be notified of the arrival of a fax; server side application (SSA) document conversion, which will make it easier to maintain the complex formatting found in Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoint files; and more advanced integration with Microsoft Exchange and Outlook systems. RightFAX is available from Kommunicate (01962 835004).

- **ANITE ENTERS KNOW-HOW MARKET**

The Anite Group (01753 822221) is entering the UK legal systems market with the launch of a new know-how system called Knowledge@Law. The system provides a web browser-based fee earner desktop that can be integrated with online information services, billing software and document management systems. Anite consultant John Tunnicliffe says one of the attractions of the system is that the Knowledge@Law toolbox allows lawyers to "knowledge enable" their existing IT infrastructures.

<http://www.anitesystems.com>

- **VIRTUAL PARALEGAL TRAINING**

Leeds Metropolitan University (0113 283 2600) and the Institute of Legal Executives' ILEX Paralegal Training arm have teamed up to provide an internet-based training course for people studying for paralegal qualifications. The venture is supported by European funding and paralegal programme manager/principal lecturer Bridget Walker hopes some of the 90,000 support staff currently working in English law firms will be among the people wanting to take advantage of web-based training.

## READER SERVICES

- **LTi-NET**

LTi-Net is the digital version of Legal Technology Insider. It is available in an HTML file format that can be delivered as an email attachment or accessed via a secure subscriber only web-site. LTi-NET comes complete with all hypertext links and is designed for firms wanting to publish the newsletter across intranets and Lotus Notes databases or individual subscribers who just want to read and print it from the desktop. Subscription rates start at £135 (£115 + VAT). For details phone: 01379 687518.

- **INSIDER INFO LINE**

If you are looking for a phone number, product name, contact point or any other elusive item of legal IT information, call the Insider Info Line: 01379 687518.

- **INSIDER WEB SITE**

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<http://www.cloudnine.co.uk>

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# LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

For all editorial and subscription matters contact: Cloudnine Technology, Ferndale House, North Lopham, Diss, Norfolk IP22 2NQ, United Kingdom

Editor: Charles Christian

Tel: 01379 687518 - Fax: 01379 687704  
Videoconference line: 01379 687690 x 2  
Email: info@cloudnine.co.uk

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# IKON OPENS IN THE UK

Ikon, the giant US legal stationery-to-electronic document management group, has opened a London office and is now pitching for business in the UK.

Ikon, which built up its position in North America through the acquisition of locally-based specialist service suppliers, has already bought a scanning bureau in Tunbridge Wells and been talking to a number of UK litigation support companies about possible joint ventures. Ikon's closest UK equivalent is the Oyez Straker Group, which recently bought litigation support company Legal Technologies. This move has in turn prompted speculation that more mergers and consolidation are on the way.

Ikon's London office, at 30 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6DQ, is headed by James Caton (0171 253 4545).  
<http://www.ikon-dls.com/homepages>

## NEWS IN BRIEF

- **SQL SERVER 7.0 FINALLY HERE**  
On Monday Microsoft president Steve Ballmer formally launched SQL Server 7.0 at the COMDEX Fall show in Las Vegas. Because it includes some major enhancements, such as more sophisticated file locking, Version 7.0 is reckoned by a number of legal IT suppliers, including Axxia, to be the version of SQL Server that will finally make it a viable competitor to other longer-established relational database products, such as Informix and Oracle.
- **PEAPOD UPGRADES ITS FORMS**  
Peapod Solutions has released an upgrade, Version 7.5, to its PRINTAform series of electronic legal forms. New features include the ability to automatically calculate time when completing the new Legal Aid Board CIS forms. Peapod forms already have an auto-calculate facility for adding financial entries.
- **BOWHAWK SYSTEM TO GO IN THE DOME**  
Datamark's digital watermarking system, which is now used by Bowhawk Consulting in its new Discovery Mark litigation support service, has been awarded "Millennium Product" status by the Design Council and will be on show next year at the Millennium Dome in Greenwich.
- **SELECT MOVES HOME**  
Select Legal Systems has moved to new offices at: Orchard House, The Square, Hessle HU13 0AE. The company's phone number (01482 644334) remains unchanged.
- **EQUITRAC UPGRADES**  
The Equitrac Corporation has released System 4 v.3.0 of its Windows NT-based cost recovery system. New features include a new user interface making greater use of Windows-style "wizards", a new report designer and TCP/IP for multi-site communications.