

CHARLES CHRISTIAN'S

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

THE SOURCE FOR INDEPENDENT LEGAL TECHNOLOGY NEWS, COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

DOES WEST CLIP GIVE SWEETS AN EDGE ?

It has been a long time coming but Sweet & Maxwell has finally rolled out its Westlaw UK online legal information service. But, was it worth the effort?

In a market that already has established offerings from a range of specialist information providers, as well as the two mega-services from Butterworths Direct/Lexis and Lawtel, the commercial challenge was clearly not just to provide a me-too service with competitive content - and both the quality and quantity of materials on Westlaw UK cannot be faulted - but also to give it a sufficient edge to differentiate it from the rest of the field.

Based on the reactions of the 150 law firms that have been beta testing the service over the past six months, Sweets are optimistic they have achieved this through the introduction of a number of novel value-added functions.

These include: ChargeBack, which provides a detailed listing of online usage for charging back to a client or cost centre, the LocDoc document locator providing everything you need to know on a case or piece of legislation, including its full history, and the WestClip facility that lets users set up search routines on a list of predefined topics. These run overnight - so you could be performing billable work while you are sleeping - and then deliver a full report by e-mail by 9.00am the following morning.

Continued on page 4

PI CLAIMS GO ONLINE

In another new legal e-business initiative, Online Legal Marketing (01454 853278) has launched a personal injury claims handling service - AccidentDirect.com - that puts prospective clients in touch with a panel of law firms offering "no win, no fee" services. AccidentDirect.com does not charge the lay client or take a share of any damages award but it does charge law firms belonging to its panel an annual fee of £2500 plus a monthly charge of £100.

www.accidentdirect.com

For more legal e-business stories, see page 6

SOLICITORS SHOW AT NEC

This week sees the National Legal Office Exhibition taking place at the Birmingham NEC. The Insider will carry a full review in the next issue, including reports on a new version of SOS Practice Manager from Solicitors Own Software and the launch of the Lawyers Online LawFree.net service.

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STOP PRESS

- **L&H TO BUY DICTAPHONE**
The stagnant voice recognition market could be about to receive its biggest shake-up in nearly a decade following last week's announcement that Belgian software company Lernout & Hauspie Speech Products (Microsoft has a 6.5 percent shareholding in the company) had agreed to buy the US Dictaphone Corporation, one of the biggest names in the analogue/tape and digital dictation systems market for US\$511 million. L&H say the two companies' activities are "completely complementary."

See page 4 for more voice recognition news

LEGALTECHNOLOGY.CO.UK

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US NEWS IN BRIEF

■ PROLAW SOFTWARE, developers of the US market leading case management system, has released ProLaw Version 9. This includes a web-enabled portal offering high levels of security, so users only have access to information firms want them to see. For example clients can view draft documents and past bills but may be denied access to other data, such as unfinished work in progress.

Although compatible with Elite, DOCS Open, CMS and iManage, to-date the product has made little impact on the UK market - its only site is BARLOW LYDE & GILBERT - however ProLaw Software president Bill Bice believes this will change with the launch of the portal product and now describes the UK as "a primary market".

www.prolaw.com

■ A group of small American law firms have filed a suit in a New York court accusing the two giants of the US legal publishing - LEXIS and WESTLAW - of alleged illegal price fixing and copyright violations so as to force lawyers to pay too much for legal research material. Both publishers deny the claims and say they will vigorously defend the matter, not least because if they did lose they could be forced to disgorge over US\$6 billion in "excess profits" and antitrust penalties.

■ VIRGINIA CORPORATE COMMISSION, which regulates company activity in the state, has ordered LawPack case and DOCS document management systems from Hummingbird ComInfo.

www.compinfoinc.com

BUZZWORD CORNER

■ PRINTER MILES (*noun*)

The distance you travel around the office to the coffee machine or a meeting before realising the lengthy document you are waiting for has not even begun to appear because you forget to click the second "print" or "enter" dialogue box most wordprocessing applications contain. Used in the context of "I think I have covered enough printer miles this month to qualify for the London Marathon."

MICROSOFT MOVING INTO PORTALS FIELD

One of the arguments regularly trotted out in the legal IT world is that if Microsoft beefed-up its Windows front office products and back office operating systems, there would be no need for firms to invest in document and know-how management systems because the standard infrastructure would handle these tasks automatically.

But, while there were plenty of rumours about what Microsoft might do next, document management facilities were singularly lacking in Windows 2000. However, could this situation be about to change?

One development now attracting a lot of interest is Microsoft's new Digital Dashboard, which although not yet commercially available, is in circulation on CD-Rom "for informational purposes only" in the form of a "starter kit".

The product is effectively an Office 2000 add-on that allows law firms to develop a "legal desktop" - in effect a Microsoft Outlook-based front-end to every document, web page and e-mail message on a server. Microsoft describe it as an "out of the box know-how intranet".

■ The recommended configuration to begin building a digital dashboard is Microsoft Office 2000 - Premium edition, Exchange Server 5.5 and SQL Server 7.0 with OLAP services.

www.microsoft.com/digitalnervoussystem/km/DigitalDashboard.htm

MACRO SOURCES FOR WORD

According to two recent legal IT surveys (see **previous issue**) Microsoft Word is here but fortunately there is now an industry growing up of companies that can supply macros, custom toolbars and related Word add-ons. Legal MacPac, Coan & Co's WordSite and SoftWise's MacroSuite are all US products while CDEV Computing is based in the UK.

www.legalmacpac.com

www.cdev.demon.co.uk

www.softwise.net

www.wordsite.com

NEW LOOK FOR INTERACTION

Interface Software, developers of the popular InterAction client relationship management system, will next month begin shipping InterAction for Outlook Contacts, a major add-in that integrates InterAction with the Microsoft Outlook desktop.

The new system has been designed for users who like working in Outlook and want to access InterAction data without changing their work habits or having to face a learning curve. InterAction for Outlook, which has already been extensively tested by US law firm Sidley & Austin, provides bi-directional synchronisation and data mining capabilities between users' individual Outlook Contacts databases and InterAction's centralised database.

BIG MONEY BEING MADE IN LEGAL MANAGEMENT

With it now almost accepted wisdom that the development of major legal e-business projects should not be left to lawyers alone but instead be the product of joint initiatives involving lawyers, IT specialists and marketeers, with excellent timing the QD Legal recruitment group has just published its Legal Benchmark 2000 report which provides an interesting insight into the pay rates of legal sector management staff, including marketing and IT directors.

The survey found that in 1999 the highest figure being paid to the marketing director of a major (60 partner +) City of London firm was £200,000 pa - although the average for London firms was nearer to £70,000 for marketing directors, falling to £22,000 for marketing assistants. Out of London - and there were big regional differences - the average for a director was nearer £45,000 pa, while marketing assistants could earn as little as £8000 pa.

On the IT front, the highest salary recorded for an IT director in a major City firm was £115,000, with an average for 60 partner + firms of around £87,300. The lowest salary recorded for a London IT director was just £35,000 - which is actually less than some support desk and support analysts were earning in larger firms.

Outside of London, pay levels plummeted with £40,000 apparently the average going rate for an IT director. Among the regions Scotland consistently paid the highest rates although the Midlands was the exception that proved the rule, with both the highest out-of-London salary - £103,000 - and the lowest - a truly abysmal why-bother-getting-out-of-bed £18,000 pa. Less senior staff fared equally poorly, with help desk staff on as little as £7000 pa.

■ In terms of other IT department staff, the average for development managers in London was £35,000-to-£55,000 (regions £23,000-to-£35,000). Support managers £29,000-to-£43,000 (regions £19,000-to-£35,000). Programmers £25,000-to-£33,500 (regions £16,000-to-£25,000). Help desk staff £22,000-to-£24,000 (regions £14,000-to-£20,000).

■ Copies of QD Legal Benchmark 2000 are available from QD group marketing (020 7405 6062) price £345 (+VAT).

AXXIA WINS FIRST ORDER FOR NEW CASE BRIEF SYSTEM

Manchester lawyers Krivinskas & Co has become the first firm in the UK to order Axxia's recently launched CaseBrief case management system.

■ CaseBrief was specifically designed for smaller firms and legal departments to provide all the benefits of an advanced case management system but in a stand-alone, shrink-wrapped format that is both relatively cheap to buy and quick to deploy. The entry level price is £8250 for a five user system but this includes three days of software implementation and customisation plus two days training.

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ SOLUTION 6 HOLDINGS has released more details of the recent order for the CMS Open practice management system placed by UK accountants PANELL KERR FOSTER. The initial order is for a 1500 user system that will be rolled out to the firm's 25 offices around the UK.

■ As part of its expansion plans, following the company's recent takeover by the RAMESYS group, legal systems supplier THE DATA BASE is looking for two new business sales staff to cover London and the South East. The company will shortly be opening a new southern office in Wokingham and will also consider people working from home. Applicants should have experience of IT sales to Legal 500 firms and can e-mail their CVs to Ed Hodgson.

edh@database.co.uk

■ The KUWAIT Department of Legal Advice & Legislation has used FILENET's Panagon system to provide web content management for the Middle East's first Internet-based legal research resource. Called the DLAL Legal Encyclopaedia, the Arabic-only service is already being used by 22 government organisations.

www.fatwa.gov.kw

■ LINDON WOOD (0151 236 1724) has created a new "client brokerage" division to channel prospective clients to law firms wanting to handle personal injury, housing disrepair and commercial work on behalf of insurance companies. The division is backed-up by a web-based case reporting system that allows the insurers supplying case instructions to receive daily risk assessment reports.

www.londonwood.co.uk

SCOTTISH NEWS

■ JORDANS will shortly be launching SearchForm+, a new 32-bit application containing Land Register Forms, as well as a CPB2 form to support any Sasine registration and the full set of Oswalds search request forms. For a pre-launch demonstration call Colin Mackintosh on 0131 200 7147.

VOICE RECOGNITION NEWS IN BRIEF

■ DICTAPHONE (0207 878 5000) has launched EX50, a new version of its digital dictation and transcription system for smaller workgroups, such as small law firms with 3-to-50 users. The system is compatible with Dictaphone's new TransNet software, which allows people working from home to send and receive dictation voice files via the Internet.

■ Dictaphone spin-off VOICEPATH (01926 821900) this month launched what it describes as a "surrogate transcription service" for lawyers. The system provides remote transcription of digital dictation via a secure Internet connection service. Where it varies from similar offerings is the transcription service can be customised to follow predetermined layouts and corporate house styles.

■ FISHER JONES GREENWOOD in Colchester reports improvements in efficiency, savings in time and simplified working procedures since moving from conventional analogue/tape to digital dictation based on Philips' SpeechMike Executive system. The system at FJG runs across a PC network and, because it uses a number of common elements within the Philips range of speech processing products, it provides the firm with the option of upgrading at a later date to the full Philips SpeechPro voice recognition system.

www.speech.philips.com

NEAT GADGET

Don't you just hate those conference presentations where the speaker is chained, metaphorically speaking, to the podium by the need to operate the PowerPoint presentation on his or her laptop. Interlink Electronics (01258 840939) may have the solution in a new handheld zapper that uses wireless technology to control a PC remotely. The device, which employs RF radio frequency rather than more limited infrared, has a range of 100 feet and also incorporates a laser pointer. The price is around £160.

WOOLF TECH - AUDIO CONFERENCE NOW

To-date, the only technology-related aspect of the new "Woolf" Civil Procedure Rules to see the light of day are the Part 3 case management provisions giving courts the power to hold pre-trial hearings in the format of phone-based audio conferences.

Given the abysmal experiences lawyers - and their clients - have had in the past with feedback-ridden speaker phones and squawk boxes, modern audio conference technology has come a long way in terms of quality and ease of use. There is also an alternative to buying audio conference systems.

For example, the Leeds Combined Court has been using BT's Conference Call service an average of three times a week since the new rules came into effect in April 1999. Judge Greenwood, one of ten district judges based at Leeds, says from his experiences the benefits of audio conferencing include being able to hold ad hoc conferences at less than 24 hours notice and not facing the frustration of local agents unable to answer questions at conferences because they were unaware of the full background to a case.

■ Although a dedicated desktop conference phone costs around £425 (+VAT), the BT Conference Call service will run across an ordinary tone dial or mobile phone. Call charges are calculated on the following rates: 0.46 pence per participant per minute if BT contact the participants and coordinates the conference, 0.40 pence per participant per minute if the participants dial in to a Freefone 0800 number, and 0.22 pence per participant per minute if the participants dial in to the conference. The service can be booked by calling 0800 77 88 77.

On the private practice side, Taylor Vinters in Cambridge has recently started using audio conferencing as an alternative to having both clients and fee earners travelling the country for meetings or conferences with counsel.

www.conferencing.bt.com

WESTLAW LAUNCHES IN UK

Continued from front page

Pricewise, Westlaw UK is a relatively expensive subscription service. Although it appears the price is negotiable, larger City of London firms are looking at an annual bill of around £25-to-£35,000, while a five partner firm might pay £5000 a year. This is a lot of money but Sweet & Maxwell is keen to stress the service is aimed at top 100-to-300 firms with commercial law practices. It is also worth noting this is an all-in rate, so not only are all the goodies, such as WestClip, included in the price but users can also expect substantial after sales support and consultancy services.

■ The Insider will carry a full review of the service in a subsequent edition. For more details call the Westlaw UK customer support line (0800 028 2200) or visit the web site.

www.westlaw.co.uk

WEB ENABLED SYSTEMS - MAKING THE LINK

One of the major issues facing both law firms wanting to provide their clients with direct access and legal software vendors developing web-enabled systems is how to create an intranet/extranet portal that is secure yet can still dynamically generate real-time data.

No-one wants clients to have unfettered access to all areas of firm's case and practice management databases. On the other hand, it is equally undesirable in an Internet world - where technology can deliver services on a 24/7 basis - to have the situation existing in some firms where information is manually extracted from a database, converted into HTML and then posted onto a web site.

So what are the options if a firm's current IT supplier does not have a portal product or - and this is a growing complaint - the proprietary portal product is too expensive?

Two products currently attracting a lot of interest in the commercial market are new web-enabled versions of the Cognos reporting system and Seagate's equally familiar Crystal Reports 8 software.

Cognos features an XML-over-sockets architecture and is already being used in a number of business-to-business situations to allow customers to access and analyse information relating to their accounts via a secure extranet.

The new version of Crystal Reports, only launched four weeks ago, takes standard Seagate software and integrates it with a new runtime report creation tool, so reports can be generated dynamically and published onto the web. Beta testers in the USA say the new version is also efficient in terms of response times and reducing network traffic where bandwidth is at a premium.

Crystal's relatively low cost, along with a free runtime licence for distributing Windows reporting applications, plus concurrent user licenses for the new server and web distribution capabilities bundled in at no extra charge, probably give it the commercial edge on Cognos.

■ An alternative strategy for Unix users is to run the SCO Tarantella "application broker" system, which sits on a server between the browser and the end-user applications. Using a java-based environment, the system turns the browser into a thin-client offering full Windows terminal emulation. This approach also means the core application does not have to be rewritten - at a recent industry conference SCO demonstrated how an application could be web-enabled with Tarantella in under 30 minutes.

In the UK, Select Legal Systems is using Tarantella to develop e-business programs for Fidler & Pepper's growing web-enabled conveyancing practice. One application will allow property shops and estate agents to create their own client/matter files and monitor the progress of cases directly on Fidler & Pepper's system via the firm's web site.

www.cognos.com

www.seagatesoftware.com

www.tarantella.sco.com

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY DIARY DATES

■ MARCH 24, LONDON - Business & Legal Models for Successful E-Commerce. New one day cross-industry conference, at Kensington Town Hall. Speakers include Professor Jim Norton, the IOD's head of e-business policy, along with e-commerce specialists from Amazon, Dell, Dixons, Carlton Online, BT, Microsoft and AOL. The delegate rate is £269.00 (+VAT). For details call E-Business Events on 0208 521 9548.

www.ebusiness-events.co.uk

■ MARCH 28, BRISTOL - E-Commerce 2000. The first of Sanderson Systems' roadshows takes place at the Aztec Hotel. Other dates are London - 11 April, Birmingham - 18 April and Wakefield - 27 June. Admission free, for details call Lisa Quinn on 0121 359 4861.

■ APRIL 4 & 5, LONDON - Knowledge Management & Intranet Solutions conference and exhibition at the Novotel West London. Gwenda Sippings, head of information at Clifford Chance, is giving a paper on knowledge management in the legal industry. Exhibition admission free, delegate rates for the conference sessions from £452 a day. For details call Learned Information on 01865 388000.

■ APRIL 11, LONDON - The Future for Mid-Size Firms. One day conference at Lords Cricket Ground organised by Centaur Conferences. The event includes a technology forum with Allan Green from Peter Rickson & Partners and Doug McLachlan of Axxia. The full delegate fee is £437 (+VAT) with discounts available. The event qualifies for 5 CPD hours. For details call Centaur on 0207 970 4770.

■ APRIL 13-15, LONDON - APIL National Conference. The Association of Personal Injury Lawyers celebrates its tenth anniversary with a three day conference and mini-exhibition at the International Hotel in Docklands. The full delegate fee is £475 (+VAT). For details, including exhibitor opportunities, call Marlene Lord of APIL on 0115 958 0585.

www.apil.com

SITES TO BOOKMARK

■ PAISNER & CO has launched a one stop package to help businesses trading online comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 rules which came into force on 1st March. Called ComplyToday, the package comprises five stand-alone modules that can be purchased online for £100 (+VAT) each. The Act, it should be noted, does not affect all businesses with web sites, just those that collect and use personal data relating to the visitors accessing their sites.

www.complytoday.com

■ The INTERNATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION has revamped its web site to provide improved facilities for both IBA members and non-members.

www.ibanet.org

■ Online professional training company 2ENDS (020 7401 8822) has launched a series of free, Internet-based, Law Society CPD accredited, multimedia training seminars. 2Ends director Robin Fry says by delivering courses online, fee earners can in effect have a one-to-one, seminar on demand. Each seminar runs for 30 minutes. Users need Internet Explorer 4.0 or above, plus Windows Media Player and a sound card to view them.

www.2ends.com

■ The ELAW online legal forum and the company information service EBIS have teamed-up to offer lawyers bespoke company investigations and credit report services online.

www.elaw.org.uk

L'OUEB EST ARRIVÉ

Despite the fact only 1.15 percent of web content is in French and that far from adopting a 24/7 culture, the French government has imposed a 35-hour working week, civil servants sitting on the Ministry of Finance's terminology committee have been devising ways of trying to limit the use of English on the Internet. For example, to contact the Ministry by e-mail about a start-up company, you should now send a "courrier électronique" referring to a "jeune pousse".

EPOCH RELAUNCHES DIRECT LAW

Epoch Software, the company behind the Freeserve Legal Desktop service, has relaunched its DirectLaw system, which is intended to provide High Street solicitors practices with an out-of-the-box solution to developing their own legal e-business services.

DirectLaw was originally launched in the spring of 1998 when it encountered a less-than-overwhelming response due to its relatively high price and the fact it was clearly ahead of its time. Epoch subsequently put the project on the back-burner to concentrate on its Legal Desktop service.

In its new guise, DirectLaw provides the framework, including the security, document downloading and online credit card transaction/e-commerce facilities, to support High Street firms wanting to offer their own versions of the Legal Desktop service. Firms can sell downloads of both their own template documents as well as those developed by Epoch's own team of lawyers and legal draftsmen.

To-date 38 firms have already signed up for the service. The Insider understands these include the practice run by Robert Sayer, the current Law Society president.

www.directlaw.co.uk

THREE MORE FOR FIRST LAW

Three more law firms - Osborne Clarke, the e-business unit of Laytons and Thomas Eggar Church Adams - have signed up to become channels for the FirstLAW Internet-only law firm, which launched in February of this year. In addition to Davies Arnold Cooper, the first firm to join the service, the Insider understands a number of other practices are also in negotiation with FirstLAW.

To-date, the projects already taken on by FirstLAW firms include: providing strategic legal advice to an Internet start-up, a rights issue, routine conveyancing work, an acquisition and refurbishment deal on an office block and a complex medical negligence claim.

■ FirstLAW is an intermediary service that channels prospective clients to the firms that can offer the best deals. The client still has to pay the fees of the instructed lawyers but the referral service is free - FirstLAW makes its money from a "success fee" it charges firms who take on the work.

www.firstlaw.co.uk

PLUG PULLED ON INTERNET ACCESS VIA POWERLINES

Nortel Networks, whose Nor.web subsidiary has spent the last couple of years running a pilot in North-West England to test the viability of delivering low-cost Internet access via conventional electricity powerlines, has pulled the plug on the project after concluding that the current structure of the national power grid is unsuitable.

FRESH OUTBREAK OF E-MAIL VIRUSES

The millennium bug may not have struck but this year has been plagued by Internet security scares. Last month it was denial-of-service attacks on major web sites, this month it is the common-or-garden e-mail virus that users have to contend with.

■ Currently the most pernicious virus doing the rounds is the SouthPark Worm - so-called because it appears as an attachment with an icon of the *South Park* cartoon character "Kyle". The virus is a new strain of the Pretty Park worm that was in circulation last spring, it attacks Windows 9X/NT systems and, as ever, Microsoft Outlook users are exposed to the greatest risk. In particular, unlike Melissa, which only spread itself once to the first 50 people in a user's address book, SouthPark sends itself to the entire address book every 30 minutes.

Outlook users should look for the email subject line: "C:/coolprogs/prettypark.exe." and an attached file called "Pretty park.exe" or "Pretty~1.exe". It should also be noted that the virus creator has used what are known as "social engineering techniques" to make the e-mail appear to have come from a user known to the recipient. All the main anti-virus software suppliers now offer downloadable cures.

<http://vil.nai.com/vil/wm98500.asp>

■ Another virus which has hit some people in the legal world is the WScript/Kak.worm, which uses ActiveX and Windows Scripting Host to propagate itself through HTML formatted e-mail using Outlook Express 5. An unusual feature of this virus, believed to be of French origin, is the ability to continuously re-infect your PC if the preview pane is enabled and you browse between folders, specifically the "sent" folder which contains the worm within a message. Microsoft is taking the problem so seriously that it has produced a download patch to deal with the Kak problem.

www.microsoft.com/security/bulletins/ms99-032.asp

SECURITY NEWS IN BRIEF

■ NETWORK ASSOCIATES has updated its family of anti-virus products, including McAfee VirusScan and the CyberCop Scanner online service, to detect the so-called "zombie agents" used by hackers to secretly link networked computer systems in large scale denial-of-service attacks.

www.nai.com

■ GFI FAX & VOICE (020 8546 0640) is now offering a free five-user version of its LANguard Internet access control software. This can be used to monitor internal traffic, help secure a network against unauthorised external access and prevent web searches for specified words and phrases, so users cannot locate "unsuitable" sites. Prices start at US\$250 for a 10-user version.

www.languard.com/languard/landownload.htm

READER SERVICES

■ INSIDER E-ZINES

Legal Technology Insider also publishes two current awareness e-zines (e-mail newsletters). These are: *New Media Lawyer*, covering all aspects of the Internet and new media law industries, and *Watching Brief Online*, carrying comment on recent local government law cases. Subscription is free. To be added to the distribution list send a note of your e-mail address to:

info@legaltechnology.co.uk

Copies of the latest issues, plus a full archive, can also be found on the web:

www.newmedialawyer.co.uk

www.watchingbrief.com

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PAPERLESS COMPANY FORMATIONS ONLINE

Jordans (0117 923 0600) has launched Formations Online, an extranet-based service that provides lawyers and accountants with a paperless way of creating and registering new limited liability companies within 24 hours.

Although the service allows users to custom-build a company, in terms of object clauses, share capital and any special articles of association, the online process still complies with the Company Formation Agents Money Laundering Guidelines.

There is a free demonstration version of the service available to non-subscribers on the Jordans.co.uk web site.

www.jordans.co.uk

www.jordansonline.co.uk

■ As part of a UK government review of company law, it has been recommended that private investors should receive company results via e-mail, so they no longer lag behind City institutions when it comes to receiving price sensitive information.

THANKS FOR THE VASELINE

Linetime chairman John Burrill has successfully completed his charity cycle ride along the banks of the River Nile. After covering 300 miles in six days - and having to contend with the heat, the desert, cobbled tracks, children demonstrating the endearing local custom of poking sugar canes through the spokes of the riders' bike wheels and attacks of King Tut tummy - he managed to raise just over £6500 in sponsorship for the charity Mencap. John would like to thank many people, including his sponsors and, in particular his trainer who recommended he take a large supply of Vaseline and tea tree oil!

LAST WORD ON THE MARRIOTT

By way of a final comment on the proceedings at last month's Information Systems for Lawyers conference at the Marriott in London, during one of the panel sessions it was suggested that law firm IT directors were transforming into chief information officers, as the emphasis shifted from technology to knowledge management.

But, speaking from the floor, the well-known legal IT consultant Neil Cameron said the two functions - IT and know-how - should be kept separate. Combining the two, warned Cameron, was an example of "the same daft logic" that ten years ago advocated IT should be run by finance directors and accountants and had such "disastrous results" for some of the firms adopting that approach.

NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of Legal Technology Insider - No. 98 - will be published on Wednesday 29th March 2000.