



Taylor Walton in £500K deal with Solicitec/SOS

Fast growing Home Counties firm Taylor Walton - the Luton based practice has trebled in both size and turnover over the past 5 years - is to spend half-a-million pounds on new accounts, case and practice management systems from Solicitec and SOS.

Having previously implemented Solicitec's SolCase case management system in its volume recoveries and personal injury claims departments, the firm's business development partner Richard Atkins said he felt confident that SolCase was a sufficiently flexible solution that could be adapted to suit all nine of the firm's business areas. These include the commercial & residential property department, which employs nearly 100 of the firm's 250 staff, where SolCase and Solicitec's new VisualFiles system will be used to support Taylor Walton's move into e-conveyancing and the delivery of web based client services.

As with other implementations the two companies have worked on together, SOS will supply the accounts and practice management systems to support Solicitec's case management software. Taylor Walton was previously an Avenue site.

The Insider web site

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www.legaltechnology.com

Pilgrim see red over malicious gossip

Pilgrim Systems has reacted angrily to rumours, which they claim are being spread by their competitors, in relation to the company's financial viability. Pilgrim's chairman and founder Jim Cummings claims he has "indisputable evidence" that certain individuals working for legal technology companies in the UK market are making false statements concerning the financial standing of Pilgrim Systems plc in order to damage the interests of the company, its shareholders and its clients.

Late last week Cummings, who personally sold 20% of Pilgrim to a fund managed by Aberdeen Asset Management in 1999 for £1.5 million, told the Insider: "We wish to state publicly that however unpalatable it is to our competitors, Pilgrim Systems is a well-funded, well managed organization which in addition to having the solid financial backing of Aberdeen Asset Management as a significant equity shareholder, has a strong balance sheet and excellent prospects for the future in the shape of recent, as yet unannounced, big wins brought about by major increased investment in product development."

Stuart Overend of Aberdeen Asset Management added: "We are firmly behind Pilgrim and indeed would be happy to invest further in the company, if the opportunity arose, but at the moment the company is cash rich and has no requirement. It's a regrettable and sad reflection of the times that some salesmen are reduced to introducing fear and uncertainty into the already difficult decisions which law firms face in choosing new systems. It is however clear evidence that Pilgrim are increasingly becoming a threat to certain companies"

Cummings went on to make it clear that should any further statements be made by competitors with regard to the financial viability of Pilgrim Systems, the company would take "immediate and forceful legal action" against the individuals and companies concerned. Pilgrim also confirmed that legal notices are already being sent directly to "certain individuals".

SAP says it is here to stay

In an interview with the Insider last week John Boles, SAP UK's account manager for the legal & professional services sector, said SAP's recent deal with Linklaters was not a one-off exercise but the start of a long term commitment to the legal market.

"As part of the selection process, Linklaters naturally made an exhaustive evaluation of our capabilities but we were no less thorough in our own research. We were determined to understand the needs of this market and also to be certain our entry would be a commercially viable proposition for SAP."

Boles went on to point out that while SAP has a reputation as a supplier to FTSE 100-sized companies, in fact 49% of its work comes from businesses with turnovers of around \$200 million (£130m) or less. In the UK this would extend the appeal of SAP beyond the magic circle and well into the top 20 largest firms.

www.sap.com/uk

News in brief

■ LATEST HUMMINGBIRD SHIPPING

The latest version of Hummingbird's enterprise information and document management systems - Enterprise and DM 5.0 - are now available in the UK for immediate purchase or upgrade. Enterprise is being described as a "convergence" system that brings together document, content and workflow management applications within a collaborative web portal environment.

■ NEW .NET PRODUCTS FROM SOL 6

Solution 6 has launched two new products based around Microsoft's .NET architecture. The applications are the CiO Inquiries and CiO Billing modules designed to help users of the CMS Open PMS work in a thin client, web based collaborative environment. Solution 6 has also released an enhanced version of its CiO Time system and plans to launch more .NET based applications during the course of this year.

■ CARPE DIEM 4.1 OUT NOW

Best Software this month released Carpe Diem Electronic Time Sheet version 4.1. One of the main features of the new system is a Site Synchronizer facility that allows network administrators set up workgroups or small branch offices that synchronise their time with the head office without the need for an off-site administrator. Other features include additional reports previously only available in Carpe Diem Windows products and the addition of SmarTimers for CDWeb (Carpe Diem's browser interface) for existing customers. SmarTimers, which will also be sold as a stand alone product for new customers, allows users to electronically track time while they work, rather than inputting all time data at the end of the day. Carpe Diem is distributed exclusively in the UK by the Tikit Group (020 7400 3737).

Keep up with the news

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Hummingbird hit by claim over unpaid royalties

Hummingbird USA, part of the same group responsible for the PC Docs range of document management systems that are widely used within the legal market, has until this week to decide whether to appeal against \$525,000 damages award.

The case stems from a dispute between Hummingbird and TMSSequoia, a US-based developer of document imaging software which was being sold by Hummingbird under a VAR (value added reseller) agreement.

TMSSequoia accused Hummingbird of failing to comply with royalty reporting and payment obligations, as outlined in the VAR deal, and on 31 August 2001 the American Arbitration Association awarded TMSSequoia \$525,000 in actual damages, \$41,702 in transactional costs, and \$525,800 for Hummingbird's alleged "unfair and deceptive acts and practices".

TMSSequoia subsequently filed a Motion to Confirm the Arbitration Award in the federal court system in September and in October Hummingbird filed a Motion to Vacate the Arbitration Award. These motions were disposed of on 22 May this year when Judge DJ Lindsay, of the US District Court for Massachusetts, confirmed in part the arbitrator's award of \$566,702, including the \$525,000 in damages but not the additional \$525,800 element for the alleged unfair acts and deception. Both parties have until this week to file an appeal with the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals.

LEDES XML initiative runs out of steam

Although both the LSSA and PISCES XML initiatives are now starting to enjoy some success, the same cannot be said for the original legal market initiative. This is LEDES - the Legal Electronic Data Exchange Standard - which began life in 1995 as an almost exclusively US based proposal for a global legal EDI platform but subsequently embraced XML technology.

In 2000, the LEDES oversight committee (LOC) published the LEDES 2000 standard which was subsequently adopted by a number of US legal systems vendors - including Elite - as the standard for electronic billing transactions. Sadly, since then the spark has rather gone out of LEDES. Adoption rates within the US legal IT industry were lower than hoped for and in due course PricewaterhouseCoopers - one of the original driving forces behind the whole project - quietly and without explanation pulled the plug on the official LEDES web site.

Fortunately, thanks to Mark Goldin of Elite - one of the members of the now dormant LOC executive committee, you can still access all the information relating to LEDES, including a download of the standard, via a subset of the main Elite web site. It is also worth noting that Elite remains one of the few suppliers still actively promoting the standard - the Web Services API the company launched in March this year supports the creation of LEDES compliant electronic invoices. <http://ledes.elite.com>

New face hoping to break into the legal CRM market

Along with digital dictation systems (*see page 4*) client relationship management (CRM) software continues to be one of this year's hot technologies. Elsewhere we report on the launch of Interface Software's InterAction 5.0 system but first news of another new entrant into the CRM market.

The supplier is Dublin based eWare, who earlier this month launched a legal market specific CRM product that, according to the company's legal sector consultant William Barton: "will bring together the advantages of client relationship technology and case management for the legal profession."

The eWare system uses a workflow engine to automate the planning, assignment, costing and scheduling of cases, while at the same time integrating with billing records to build up what the company describes as a single view of the clients, their history and their transactions. Although this is eWare's first foray into the legal market, the company has developed thin client, wireless and internet based CRM systems for customers in other industries, including Avis, Securicor and Memorex Telex.

www.eware.com

New litigation support service to support electronic discovery

US systems house Ontrack, which specialises in data 'availability' backup and recovery utilities and services, is expanding its electronic data discovery service into the UK.

The aim of the service is to allow lawyers to obtain and review electronic documents quickly and cost effectively, when preparing or reviewing discovery lists, by sifting through and eliminating irrelevant documents, which can comprise as much as 95% of the documents under review.

Drawing on the company's background in data recovery services, Ontrack's staff can also help uncover files and documents that have been hidden, deleted or altered, as well as conduct searches to locate only those documents, emails and attachments that meet predetermined search criteria. All Ontrack data discovery services are structured to comply with procedurals governing the admissibility of evidence.

Commenting on the launch of the new service, Ontrack Europe (01372 741999) general manager Todd Johnson said: "Recent research indicates that 93% of corporate documents are now created electronically, yet only 30% of these are ever migrated to paper. This means there is an increasing need for easy, cost-effective and dedicated data retrieval services, particularly within the legal sector. Our solution enables solicitors to find the relevant information they need quickly, to conduct cases more efficiently."

■ Ontrack has offices in London, Paris, Stuttgart and Tokyo, as well as across the USA, and since October 2001 has extended its services into the Iberian, Polish, Swiss and Italian markets.

www.ontrack.co.uk

News in brief

■ SHERIDANS SIGN UP FOR LAWMAN

Sixty user London law firm Sheridans is to replace its old Avenue Soloman accounts software with a Lawman 2000 practice management system from Timeslice (020 7231 0073). Although this is the first competitive win for Timeslice's new PMS product (most of the company's previous Lawman 2000 deals - including Gordon Dadds and Stevens Drake - have been upgrades by existing Timeslice sites) the company is confident its recently expanded sales team will now help Lawman 2000 increase its market share.

■ CITRIX AS A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE

Select Legal Systems (01482 644334) has joined the Citrix ISV partner programme and will now be able to supply its back office, fee earner desktop and case management systems in a server based format optimised for Citrix MetaFrame thin client technology.

Select's sales & marketing director Steve Ness said that along with making IT administration simpler because all data and applications reside on a central server, thin client offered law firms a way of escaping a future in which the endless upgrade of PC hardware and Microsoft software was going to be the expensive and time consuming order of the day. Ness also sees Citrix as a way of supporting branch and home working at a fraction of the cost of leased lines.

Looking for IT staff ?

Pilgrim Systems (*see page 4*) is the latest legal IT company to have filled a vacancy via a posting on the Insider Jobs Board. If you are a law firm or legal systems vendor looking for IT staff, including positions in sales, development, web services, know-how, library services, support, management and training, you can post your vacancies free of charge to the Jobs Board on the Insider web site. Email to jobs@legaltechnology.com

■ **This week's top job:** Solicitec is looking for a legal products developer, working on SolCase related systems. The position is based out of the company's Southampton office. For more details of this and other vacancies visit the Insider Jobs Board at

www.legaltechnology.com

People & places

Rosemary Kind has been appointed Director of Information Technology at **Shoosmiths**. Kind, previously the finance director for the firm's commercial division, has already been involved in developing new online legal systems including Shoosmiths Interactive.

iManage has appointed **Sharon Forder** as its European Marketing Director. Forder, a member of the Chartered Institute of Marketing, will be based at iManage's EMEA headquarters in Guildford. **Mahshid Rafizadeh**, who only joined iManage as customer services director in February, has since left the company.

In the aftermath of the **Solution 6** acquisition of **Keystone Solutions**, **Neil Cameron** has been appointed Business Development Manager (Europe) for the Solution 6 PSA Division.

Jessica Morgan has rejoined **Pilgrim Systems** as a case & practice management implementation consultant based out of Pilgrim's Reading office. Morgan spent the last 18 months with a web application development company.

David Lock, a junior minister in the Lord Chancellor's Department with responsibility for court modernisation and IT projects until he lost his parliamentary seat in the 2001 general election, has been appointed a non-executive director of the NLIS channel provider **Searchflow**.

Berwin Leighton Paisner has appointed **Lucy Dillon** as its new Director of Knowledge Management. Dillon, an experienced professional support lawyer who recently completed an MBA in Law Firm Management at **Nottingham Law School**, joins BLP from **Linklaters** where she was in charge of that firm's Litigation Information Unit.

Buzzword corner - did you see that webinar ?

Well we always thought the name for a live televisual broadcast across the internet was a webcast. But apparently if it is a conference style presentation, the correct term is a 'webinar' - as in web seminar. Our thanks to iManage, the same company that coined the term 'content management software' as an alternative to document management system, for adding webinar to our lexicon of jargon.

Digital dictation - three more firms sign up

Last week saw another three law firms signed up for new digital dictation systems.

London firm **Rooks Rider** is planning to roll out the **DictaFlow** dictation workflow system from **nFlow Software** (01245 463377) to the whole practice. The roll out decision came after a successful pilot trial with 27 users in the property department, where the system proved itself in less than a month.

The other two orders, from **Memery Crystal** in London and Kent-based **Thomson Snell & Passmore**, were for digital dictation systems supplied by the **Speech Recognition Company** (020 7471 0100) and based on **WinScribe** workflow software. Both firms will initially run small scale pilots before deciding whether to opt for a larger scale roll out.

Speech technology news in brief

■ LEWIS SILKIN ROLLING OUT DIGITAL DICTATION

Lewis Silkin is now rolling out **TotalSpeech** digital dictation workflow software to 170 users within the firm. The project will be completed before the end of June.

BigHand (020 7793 8200) the developers and distributors of the **TotalSpeech** system, say it is significant that a growing number of mid-sized commercial firms, such as **Lewis Silkin**, are discovering that the benefits of digital dictation are not just the preserve of the large multinational practices. Along with the usual benefits associated with digital dictation, including work prioritisation and quicker turnaround of documents, **Lewis Silkin** will also take advantage of **TotalSpeech's** remote working options which give lawyers instant access to dictation facilities while at home, at external meetings or abroad.

■ DIGITAL 'OPEN DAYS' - STANDING ROOM ONLY

A further sign that digital dictation is now the number one IT priority for a growing number of law firms has been the enthusiastic reception supplier 'open days' have been receiving.

Last week **nFlow** to put on a presentation at the offices of its recent signing **Reynolds Porter Chamberlain**. Ten days previously it was the turn of **BigHand**, at a standing room only event at the offices of **Ashurst Morris Crisp**, where over 100 IT directors and partners from 65 different firms gathered for an inside view of the **AMC TotalSpeech** project, which is the UK legal world's largest digital dictation workflow roll out to-date with now over 850 users.

Among the topics discussed at the **AMC** event were the cultural and technical issues association with implementing digital dictation, the factors to consider when building a business case for implementing digital dictation and the role of speech recognition within the modern law firm.

■ A full transcript of the discussions at the **AMC** event is now available from **BigHand**. For a free copy call **Dan Speed** on 0207 793 8264 or email danspeed@big-hand.co.uk

Tikit - progress made but some prospects 'subdued'

Since the Solution 6 takeover and subsequent delisting of Keystone, the Tikit Group is currently the only UK based dedicated legal IT services supplier with a listing on the London Stock Exchange. The Group has now published its first set of results, for the year ended 31 December, since it was introduced to the AIM market in June 2001.

Headline figures show net profits, before tax and goodwill amortisation, up nearly 22% to £1.07 million, compared with £877K in the previous year. This was achieved on revenues of £9.12 million - slightly lower than the £9.31 million recorded in 2000 - indicating an improvement in profit margins from 9.4% to 11.7%. All but 5% of Tikit's turnover was generated in the UK.

In terms of business breakdown, £4.4 million - or 48% of total turnover - came from services and consultancy but sales of £3.39 million from third party software was much lower than the £4.96 million recorded in 2000. Tikit blame this in part on the fact the previous year's figures reflected the boom in Y2K compliance work. By way of consolation, sales of software products that Tikit has developed inhouse, did increase from £530K to £680K and the company has also extended its range of third party software, following recent distribution agreements to sell and support products from iManage, Vrisko and Lawport.

Turning to the future, Tikit chairman Mike McGoun said: "The general economic outlook is uncertain and conditions within the UK legal IT services sector remain difficult. Additionally, we expect the market for sales of third party software to continue to be subdued. However the larger legal firms, our principal market, have shown great resilience in the past in maintaining fee levels and investing in productivity and competitive advantage systems. This is reflected in our current pipeline of sales prospects that is both more visible and of a higher quality than was the case at the comparable point in 2001."

LMS Legal IT Forum next month

On Wednesday 10 July 2002, the Law Management Section of the Law Society will be holding its annual LMS Legal IT Forum at the Radisson SAS Portman Hotel in London. Sponsored by BT Legal Call, Deltaseal Software, Technology for Business and the Legal Technology Insider, the conference will be accompanied by a legal technology exhibition with suppliers displaying a range of IT products and services.

The event includes sessions on: formulating an IT strategy; risk management and disaster recovery; the modernisation of the courts; the legal office of the future and various breakout sessions on email security, remote working and telephone/video conferencing. Registration fees for this event start from as little as £120+VAT and include a 20% discount on a range of practice management materials from Law Society Publishing. The event also carries 5 CPD hours. For further details call Paul Seymour on 020 7316 5572 or email: paul.seymour@lawsociety.org.uk

Legal technology events diary

■ JUNE 24-28, LONDON. Aurra Consulting in conjunction with ICG Research from Canada is showcasing the latest generation of ICG's EMSys Pro Disbursement Recovery System. Hosted by Randy Henderson, VP Business Development at ICG, these personalized presentations will show how to increase profitability by managing disbursements more effectively. For details call Nathan Ott or Tracy Troke on 020 7400 3737 or email: nathan.ott@aurra.co.uk

■ JULY 3, LONDON. Legal IT - make IT a success. One day CLT conference at the New Connaught Rooms. Includes sessions by Janet Day of BLP, Neil Cameron, Derek Sturdy, Andrew Levison and Insider editor Charles Christian. Fee from £315 + VAT. (5.5 CPD hours.) Call CLT on 0121 355 0900.

■ JULY 10, LONDON. Law Society Law Management Section Legal IT Forum at the Radisson SAS Portman Hotel. The event runs from 9:00am to 5:00pm and qualifies for 5 CPD hours. Prices from £120 + VAT. For details call Paul Seymour on 020 7316 5572.

www.lms.lawsociety.org.uk

■ JULY 24 & 25, LONDON. Law Firm Technology: making your firm more profitable - at the Harrington Hall, SW7. Two day conference (+ pre-conference workshop on 23 July) on how to ensure your firm has a clear business vision to strategically direct its IT investment. The event is sponsored by Legal Technology Insider and the speaker panel includes John Hokkanen of Latham & Watkins, Andrew Levison, Kevin Doolan of Eversheds, Simon Kosminsky of SJ Berwin and Insider editor Charles Christian. Prices from £995 + VAT and the event qualifies for up to 16 CPD hours. For details call the Ark Group on +44 (0)20 8785 2700. To register or to download a pdf brochure visit

www.ark-group.com/328lti.html

■ JULY 31 - AUGUST 2, LONDON. CLT's 2nd Annual Management Masterclass at the Cafe Royal. Includes a technology session from Charles Christian on the first day. The event qualifies for up to 18 CPD hours. Fee from £945 + VAT for CLT members. Call Central Law Training on 0121 355 0900.

Political people and places

Confused by the recent British Government mini-ministerial reshuffle? Here are the changes that relate to IT and the justice departments... **Yvette Cooper** has moved from the Department of Health to become a Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the **Lord Chancellor's Department** with responsibility for the Court Service, freedom of information and the Auld Review of the Criminal Courts system.

Cooper replaces **Michael Wills** who has moved to the **Home Office** where he will chair a cross-departmental committee on the use of IT within the criminal justice system. The post involves liaison with the LCD and Law Officers to ensure that IT initiatives by the police, Court Service and Crown Prosecution Service are compatible. Finally, **Stephen Timms** joins the **Department of Trade & Industry** as Minister of State for E-commerce. He replaces **Douglas Alexander** who is now at the Cabinet Office.

Latest web traffic stats

The results of the Insider's latest survey of the UK's busiest legal web sites are now available. This month six new services enter the top 25 including: the European Patents Office, the College of Law, the Legal Shop portal and the CourtServe court listings site. Once again LAWTEL is the busiest site however the top 25 now account for just 65% of all traffic compared with 97% last October. www.legaltechnology.com/hitlistuk.htm

DLA's missing millions

A typo in our last issue meant we omitted a key word from our report on DLA. What we should have said is the firm had announced a 15% increase in its gross fee income to £203 million for the year ending 30 April 2002 but unfortunately somewhere in the production process we lost the word 'million'. A GFI of over £200 million also makes more sense of the firm's comment that it currently spends between 5-to-7% of its annual turnover on IT, whereas a budget of 5-to-7% of £203 would only run to a couple of packs of floppy disks and enough change for a coffee at Starbucks.

Online claims settlement services start to take off

Back in March 2001, the *Solicitors* show at the Birmingham NEC saw two companies - TheClaimRoom (TCR) and WeCanSettle - launch rival online claims settlement systems. Both use 'blind bidding' as an alternative to negotiating monetary settlements in insurance claims and within the past fortnight both companies have made significant announcements about their services.

First off the mark was TheClaimRoom, which has formed a partnership with the ADR Group, the commercial mediation organisation. As part of the deal, ADR is to launch a multilingual "European based online dispute resolution service" that will use TCR's software platform. TCR will also provide distance learning facilities for mediators wanting to use the system. There is a preview of the service at <http://adr.themediationroom.com>

Meanwhile Thompsons Solicitors is extending the scope of a pilot it has been running since last October, in association with a major insurance company, to test the viability of the WeCanSettle system as a way of speeding up the process of obtaining compensation for clients. Thompsons' case management partner Rachel Sarfas said not only was the system easy to use but that the initial pilot had allowed the firm "to settle several cases on the same day we opened them in WeCanSettle - and the fastest was concluded within just four minutes of our first offer."

WeCanSettle has also been adopted by Donns Solicitors, one of the highest profile personal injury practices in the UK. Senior partner Raymond Donn said the firm was always looking at ways of enhancing its service and speeding up claims and saw WeCanSettle as a way of making the settlement aspect of the process quicker and more efficient. Donns already operates an 'e-file-access' system that allows clients and insurance partners to monitor the progress of claims over an extranet link.

www.wecansettle.com
www.theclaimroom.com

IT costs how much! - two new additions to the Insider web site

We regularly report on the amounts of money law firms spend on technology but how do these sums translate into periodic finance payments? Thanks to a new interactive feature on the Insider web site - the Legal Technology Finance Calculator - you can now find out. Just type in the sum you are thinking of spending and the calculator will automatically tell you what this equates to in monthly payments spread over a 3 and 5 year term. The calculator has been developed exclusively for the Insider site by Siemens Financial Services.

The second new feature is a connection to the *IT Links* portal. Developed by the Practical Solutions consultancy, this is probably the most comprehensive yet simplest to navigate directory of legal IT suppliers we have encountered. Both facilities can be found on the Insider web site's portal menu bar. www.legaltechnology.com.

Oyez launches online forms ordering service

Oyez has launched a new online forms ordering service aimed specifically at less frequent users of legal forms, including members of the public, whose annual spend on forms is less than £50. By visiting the new OyezFormsLink web site, they can purchase forms in an Adobe Acrobat format, download and save them onto their PCs. They can then either complete the form onscreen electronically and print it out, or else print it out blank and complete the hard copy manually.

Prices for downloadable forms start at £3.00 per form. Oyez account holders and firms spending more than £50 pa on forms should continue to use their existing purchasing arrangements.
www.oyezformslink.co.uk

E-Conveyancing news in brief

■ E-CONVEYANCING CONSULTATION STARTS

The Government is pushing forward with its e-conveyancing initiatives and has just commenced a consultation exercise on proposals to develop the role of HM Land Registry. Launching the exercise, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine said the government wanted to have a “world class, speedy, easy-to-use electronic conveyancing system” in place by 2006. The Land Registry proposals include digital signatures, to permit an instant and simultaneous exchange of contracts, along with a centralised electronic payments system. Among the issues the consultation exercise hope to resolve is whether the long shelved ‘authorised conveyancing practitioners’ (ACP) scheme should be revived and whether buyers and sellers, as well as conveyancing market professionals, should have access to the scheme. The consultation period runs until 30 August 2002 and to obtain a copy of the consultation material either call 0845 050 1150 or visit www.e-conveyancing.gov.uk

■ NLPG TO PUBLISH ACCURACY DATA

Intelligent Addressing, one of the suppliers behind the National Land Property Gazetteer - another part of the UK Government’s e-conveyancing initiative - has promised to make public a report demonstrating the accuracy of the NLPG database. The move follows allegations in the IT press that as much as 20% of the NLPG’s data is inaccurate. Intelligent Addressing denies the allegations and says the soon-to-be published report will demonstrate that NLPG data is 97% accurate when matched against HM Land Registry records.

■ LMS SIGNS UP FOR NLIS SEARCHFLOW

Legal Marketing Services, the national network of independent solicitors practices, has signed up to use the NLIS Searchflow service. LMS estimate that its members will be able to save up to an hour per conveyance by using Searchflow to process local authority, Land Registry, coal authority, water company and environmental searches online.

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DealBuilder document assembly win at B & M

At its partners conference this Monday (17 June), the international law firm Baker & McKenzie announced that it would be deploying the Business Integrity (020 7814 6886) DealBuilder document assembly and automation system.

Local lawyers using matter information stored and managed by BakerMAKS, the firm's knowledge system, will be able to automatically assemble first drafts of deal specific documents. The DealBuilder technology will also enable Baker & McKenzie to monitor the quality and consistency of its documents while increasing the efficiency of its lawyers, enabling them to concentrate on higher value, client-facing work.

Commenting on the deal, Baker & McKenzie international partner and chief knowledge office Mark Swords said: "With Business Integrity's contract automation technology, Baker & McKenzie is revolutionising the way it does transactions such as mergers and acquisitions. The system enables attorneys to draft the legal documents required to complete a transaction - quickly, efficiently and vitally, with complete precision. This capability will significantly enhance the service we provide to our clients - and in turn, provide competitive advantage for our firm."

DealBuilder will be deployed in Baker & McKenzie offices in the United States, Europe and Asia throughout 2002.

www.business-integrity.com

Brooke on court technology... 'very interesting times lie ahead'

Last month Lord Justice Brooke, one of the UK's leading - and longest standing - advocates of the use of technology within the judicial system, delivered the final lecture in the University of Hertfordshire Faculty of Law's current Law & the Information Society seminar series. Lord Justice Brooke's theme was "the information society, the judiciary and the courts" and he used it not only to outline the background to current initiatives but also to highlight potential problems, including balancing privacy issues with legitimate demands for freedom of information, and ensuring litigants in person do not fall foul of the digital divide.

Lord Justice Brooke ended his talk with the warning that "It is very difficult to see how tomorrow's lawyers can succeed unless they feel comfortable with the use of computers. If they do, they will be able to render a service to their clients in a modernised court environment which will put into the shade the puny efforts of my generation. But they must always remember that the practice of the law is the practice of serving the needs of other people, and serving their needs requires many human qualities over and above versatility in using modern technology. Very interesting times lie ahead."

■ A full transcript of the lecture is available as a Word DOC file. To download a copy from the Insider web site, click the link on our bookmarks page or enter the following address:

www.legaltechnology.com/LJBSpeech.doc

More consolidation on the way ?

Are we set to see further consolidation within the legal IT sector in the wake of the Solution 6 acquisition of Keystone Solutions?

In a recent interview Simon Hill, the managing director of TFB plc, told the Insider that following TFB's acquisition of Avenue Legal Systems in June last year, he was separately contacted by the directors of seven other UK-based legal IT suppliers inquiring whether TFB would be interested in purchasing them as well.

Hill, who declined to identify the companies, said he thought most of them were unlikely to find a buyer because of the unrealistic valuations being placed on their businesses. He also added that he felt the steady stream of other suppliers' sales staff currently approaching TFB for jobs indicated that many of these companies were now in a far from healthy state.

InterAction 5 ready to ship in Q3

Senior members of CRM legal market leaders Interface Software were in London last week to brief key customers - and the Insider - on the aspects of its soon-to-be-released major product upgrade InterAction 5. The new release, described as the most important upgrade in three years, is scheduled to start shipping in the UK in the third quarter of this year however we hope to carry a preview of the system in our next issue.

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