



The Insider relaunches its web site

The Insider this week relaunched its award winning web site with a whole new look designed to improve the management and navigation of the growing volume of information it now contains.

We have radically revised the interface to create a less cluttered feel - but without being bland to the point of characterless - while simplifying usability by replacing the scroll-down side-bar navigation menus with a single drop down menu. And, this has all been achieved in plain HTML without any Flash, multimedia or even frames.

The redesign project was handled by Wirebox Designs. Explaining their approach, Wirebox director Guy Stephens said "It was clear we needed to create a site that had plenty of white space, a modern minimalist look, simple navigation, no unnecessary gimmicks and a strong corporate image. In addition, it had to be easy to update. The project became an exercise in reorganising the information that was already there and making it more readily accessible to users by giving it a more defined structure."

In our own inimitably modest view, this is the best legal technology web site in the world - ever. However we do not wish to be complacent and our next project is to redesign the site's Solution Finder feature.

■ For more information about Wirebox services call Guy Stephens on 07710 786139 or email guy@wireboxdesigns.com

www.legaltechnology.com

CSC upgrade puts standards on agenda

The Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC) has just announced the release of version 2.0 of LitigationAdvisor. This is a web based system that allows insurance companies and corporate legal departments to manage their relationships with law firms by formulating case plans and budgets and monitoring bills.

The most significant enhancement in version 2.0, which is now based on a Microsoft .NET platform, has been the addition of case management functionality. CSC UK's head of legal solutions Gary Markham says this will enable insurance companies to streamline their collaboration with law firms and more easily analyse where lawyers are spending their time at each stage of each claim.

By coincidence, the release of CSC's latest version of LitigationAdvisor comes at a time when major commercial clients are once more talking to each other about standardising the ways their external legal advisors communicate with them on matter management and financial reporting.

Here on the Insider we are hearing reports that a group of investment bankers have set up a working party - called the Bankers Legal Technology Group - to devise a common standard for virtual dealrooms. Simultaneously, at least one major High Street clearing bank is currently looking at ways of standardising its billing and management procedures with its law firm panel members. Insider sources suggest this initiative involves a mixture of third-party e-billing systems, such as DataCert and Serengeti, a revival of the LEDES Legal Electronic Data Exchange Standard and collaboration with members of the increasingly influential LITIG law firm IT directors' group.

COMMENT: Both these initiatives reflect the obvious concern of clients and inhouse legal departments that unless they impose standards on their external legal advisers, they could be facing the prospect of having to log in and out of dozens of different law firm extranets and dealrooms each day - each one requiring familiarity with different operating and security procedures.

The corollary however is that if client groups do succeed in achieving this, the proverbial boot will then be on the other foot and it will be the law firms who are forever having to slice and dice their data so it meets the requirements of different client reporting and billing standards.

One possible solution would seem to be to create one general purpose reporting channel - what Insider editor Charles Christian has described as "the legal equivalent of a Reuters or Bloomberg" - through which all law firms and their clients could exchange billing and management data. Richard Susskind reckons this could be "the really big one" in terms of future legal systems development. It is also a concept both LexisNexis and Thomson/Westlaw are now rumoured to be exploring. And, it adds another dimension to the recent announcement that Thomson is to acquire Elite - *see page 2* - as Elite is one of the few legal IT suppliers actively supporting the LEDES standard.

Risk management now top selling application

Solicitors Own Software (01225-787700) has just reported the best year yet in its 10 year plus relationship with Solicitec, with sales of SolCase case management software up 83% on the previous year. Sales director David Mcnamara told the Insider that while conveyancing, followed by debt collection, remained the front runners in terms of specific workflow applications "the most significant factor has been the recent take up of case management for generic workflow purposes for use throughout an entire firm to help address risk management, best practice and Lexcel standards, as well as to improve overall efficiencies."

■ In our last issue we reported that Cognito had taken over a former SOS site, namely Neves in Luton. Cognito have now informed us that they supplied the wrong data and that the legacy systems in use at Neves were actually AIM Micro Charter and Stukeley Solace. So, a slap on the wrists for Cognito and our sincere apologies to SOS, not least because it has one of the best user retention rates in the market. Despite converting over 300 sites from competitor software to SOS since the launch of its first Windows practice management system in 1995, it has only lost a handful of sites the other way - and some of those were the result of mergers.

News in brief

■ CONVEYANCERS AUTOMATE

Plymouth-based Eatons Property Law have just gone live with Mountain Software's conveyancing case management system, together with online quotations and case progress tracking.

■ CRM AT STEPHENSON HARWOOD

Stephenson Harwood is to install Interface Software's InterAction client relationship management system. The order, which was secured by Kramer Lee & Associates, is particularly interesting as the firm will be the first Solution 6 Keystone site to implement an InterAction CRM system.

The KLA consultancy has also implemented the LegalKEY records management system at Norton Rose.

Elite to be bought by Thomson/West group

The board of Elite has unanimously approved a \$122 million takeover bid from the legal publishing group Thomson, best known in the UK for its Sweet & Maxwell and Westlaw arms. The deal, which is subject to regulatory approval, is expected to close in the second quarter of 2003 and will see Elite join the West group (Thomson's US arm). Elite's management team, led by CEO Chris Poole, will continue to run the business from the company's Los Angeles HQ.

COMMENT: Although a marriage between a legal accounts systems supplier and a law publisher may seem odd from a UK perspective, the West group is well on its way to becoming a major supplier of legal applications software to law firms in the United States. It already sells everything from case and practice management - via its ProLaw subsidiary - through to knowledge management - Lane Powell Spears Lubersky is the latest firm to order its West KM system. But the acquisition of Elite, which adds billing, CRM and document management functionality to the equation, can only complement these offerings.

We have heard a variety of suggestions - ranging from the paranoid to the delusional - as to why Elite accepted an offer in today's economic climate when technology stocks are generally undervalued. However we suspect there is a bigger picture here, namely that by being able to deliver both the legal information resources - via its publishing arms - and the legal software tools lawyers need through one combined channel or portal, West is putting itself in very strong position to dominate and ultimately 'own' the legal desktop. With LexisNexis having similar global domination aspirations, it will be interesting to see who will be the next acquisition.

Consultancy acquired by risk management group

Last month it was Baker Robbins announcing its strategic partnership with long time rivals Hildebrandt. This month it is the turn of another law management consultancy - The Ridley Partnership - to announce a major shake-up, in their case, the company's acquisition by the Alexander Forbes insurance and risk management group. Ridley now becomes part of AFP Consulting and will be advising law firms on a range of risk and quality management issues, including Lexcel compliance.

Commenting on the move, which also sees Ridley founder Jane Ridley appointed managing director of AFP, Alexander Forbes Professions managing director Tony Blyfield said "With regard to professional indemnity insurance, we are finding that underwriters are increasingly demanding that law firms have proper quality management systems in place. Insurers see them as an intrinsic part of any firm's efforts to maintain best practice and also as a way to help manage risk and control claims."

Metastorm claims top spot for its workflow systems

Metastorm (020 8971 1500) is claiming it is now the legal sector market leader for workflow/business process management software, with over 30,000 users worldwide and a growing law firm user base. These include 12 new signings within the last year and a UK user list for its e-Works BPM system that now includes Allen & Overy, Eversheds, Baker & McKenzie, Freshfields and Martineau Johnson.

Metastorm say one of the most sought after BPM applications is currently a lock-up procedure that can help reduce the time lapse from the start of the billing period to when payment is received. For larger firms this currently averages 130 days but firms using e-Works have been able to cut this period by as much as 20%, to the obvious benefit of their cash flow positions.

Other popular legal BPM routines include: new client matter intake, conflicts of interest management and risk assessment. All three are procedures required for obtaining partner approval to take on new work assignments but which via traditional means have been laborious processes with plenty of opportunity for misplaced paperwork. Metastorm's main UK legal sector implementation partners are ResSoft, Elite and Baker Robbins.

Firm acknowledges consultant's role in IT modernisation project

Maidstone-based ASB Law, which 18 months ago began a £1.5 million IT modernisation programme, including a migration to a new Windows 2000/Citrix platform, has just reported that they "achieved all their major objectives on time and under budget."

Commenting on the project, chief executive Christopher Honeyman Brown said he was "delighted with the success we have achieved in linking seven offices and over 350 staff into a fully integrated knowledge sharing, common workflow system. We were supported throughout by Andrew Simmans of Simmans Consulting (01403 265607) who acted as the interface between the various suppliers, in particular Axxia, and our partners and staff. It is unlikely we could have made the progress we did without his support." www.simmans.com

The 50 percent solution

Following on from a piece in the last Insider about practice management system replacement cycles - we suggested most firms only considered major upgrades every seven years or more - one well-known Northern legal IT supplier told us their research indicated that medium-sized firms tended to stick with one supplier for an average of 12 years and that over 50% of the sites they had won in competitive bids had been with their existing supplier for over 15 years.

News in brief

■ **TUBBS MAKES FAST WORK OF IT**
Scarborough-based start-up firm Tubbs & Co has rolled out Axxia's Eion accounts and fee earner desktop software to support its criminal defence service practice. What makes this order interesting is that instead of spending months dithering over its choice of IT system, within four weeks of the firm being created it had selected, installed and started using the Axxia system.

■ **PICTONS MIGRATES TO ELITE**
Pictons, which with seven offices in the South-East is now one of the largest law firms in the Home Counties, has chosen Elite to replace its legacy AIM practice management system. The 250-user firm will also be rolling out Elite's Apex client relationship management system and using the Elite WebView browser interface to provide staff in remote offices with real time access to information.

■ **EVOLUTION AT ROBIN SIMON**
Robin Simon LLP, the partnership formed following the demerger of the commercial insurance team from Hammonds, has chosen AIM's Evolution software to provide the basis for its new practice management system. AIM has devised a fast track implementation schedule to ensure the system is up and running before the firm opens its doors to clients in May.

Looking for IT staff ?

Looking for legal IT staff, including positions in sales, development, web services, know how, support and training? Then post your vacancies free of charge to the Jobs Board on the new look Insider web site by emailing the details to jobs@legaltechnology.com

■ This week sees no let up in the number of new vacancies being posted, with some of the more recent including two openings in knowledge management with **Granite & Comfrey**, a case management/workflow designer for **Berrymans Lace Mawer** in Manchester and consultancy posts at both **Tikit** and **Baker Robbins**. For details of these and other vacancies visit the Insider Jobs Board at www.legaltechnology.com

People & Places

■ VALID QUITS MANDARIN PALACE

After 25 years at its Gants Hill offices, Valid Information Systems - best known for its R/KYV software - has moved down the A13 to new offices at 160 London Road, Barking, Essex IG11 8BB. The new phone number is 020 8215 1414. Valid founder Bill Cannings says that although the move was prompted by the need for larger premises closer to Canary Wharf, he will miss his lunchtimes at the local Pizza Express and the Mandarin Palace Chinese restaurant.

■ GARRETT SELECTED

Select Legal Systems has recruited Matthew Garrett as its new sales & marketing executive. This is a new post and one of Garrett's first responsibilities will include putting together the campaign to launch Select's next generation accounts and PMS software. Garrett was previously with Oyez Legal Software and before that Laserform, Practicce and, for those of you with very long memories, Hay Logic.

■ POSITIVELY CANNON STREET

Data and network storage specialists Posetiv have moved to new offices at 60 Cannon Street, London EC4N 6JP. The main switchboard number is 020 7653 0990.

■ ACTIVE LAWYER MIGRATES

Web management specialists ActiveLawyer, now the legal solutions arm of Transputec Computers, has moved to new offices at Clerkenwell House, 67 Clerkenwell Road, London EC1R 5BL. The new phone number is 020 7841 5180. The company's new business development manager Rick Brar says one of the products the company will be promoting within the legal market over the coming months will be tablet PCs.

Keep up with the news

Keep up with the latest news between issues of the Insider by subscribing to our free ezine the *Legal Technology Insider Newswire*. It is delivered direct to your desktop as a plain text email. To be added to the distribution list, send a note of your email address, including the word 'News' in the header, to news@legaltechnology.com

Dealbuilder in at AMC

Ashurst Morris Crisp has deployed the DealBuilder document assembly and automation system from Business Integrity (020 7814 6886). Commenting on the move, legal development partner Jeremy Thomas said "Clients have increasingly sophisticated expectations of their legal advisors and how they use technology to better serve them. This firm is committed to meeting that challenge by enabling our lawyers to incorporate standard variables into a first draft of a document at the click of a mouse. This will improve turnaround time and free our lawyers to concentrate on the unique aspects of a deal."

www.business-integrity.com

Digital dictation news in brief

■ BIGHAND WINS MAB TOTAL SPEECH DEAL

Watford-based Matthew Arnold & Baldwin has chosen BigHand's TotalSpeech software to provide the platform for a new practice-wide digital dictation system. The system will initially be piloted in the litigation department before being rolled out to the rest of the firm. MAB were previously an SRC customer. BigHand has also secured its first major European order for TotalSpeech from Belgium firm Claeys & Engels.

■ DICTAFLOW CLAIMING TOP RESILIENCE

Digital dictation system developer nFlow Software is claiming its DictaFlow system is the most resilient DDS product on the market. The claim is based on the recent experiences of nFlow users in the wake of power cuts, server OS faults and, in one instance, the sudden failure of the UPS while a number of fee earners were still in the middle of dictating. According to nFlow technical manager Jim Park "despite the gravity of the problems DictaFlow recovered 100% of the dictation that was being worked on when the power was reconnected".

People & Places extra

■ SUSSKIND TO CHAIR NEW COPYRIGHT QUANGO

The Cabinet Office has appointed Professor Richard Susskind as the first chair of its Advisory Panel on Crown Copyright. The Panel is a new non-departmental body with responsibility for advising the Government "on how to open up opportunities for greater re-use of Government information by the private and voluntary sectors of the economy" and advising HMSO on changes and opportunities in the information industry.

■ PROMOTION FOR BALLARD

Solution 6 has promoted Mike Ballard to head a new IT services sales team dedicated to the legal sector. Ballard, who will be attached to Solution 6's network and integration division MICL, will target top 500 firms who currently do not run Solution 6 PMS products such as CMS Open.

First reports - more new faces and new products

■ MEET ME BY THE LIGHT OF A FLICKERING MODEM

So videoconferencing never set the world alight and most online 'webinars' fail to impress however here on the Insider we did like the Meeting Center online meeting system from WebEx. It can be as simple or complex as you like: for firms with broadband you can have live video and audio links between participants. Alternatively, and probably more usefully, you can just interactively share access to desktop applications, such as Word and PowerPoint, via a standard web browser. We also like the fact it is a multi-platform technology so meeting participants can be on Windows, Mac, Linux or even Palm.

Although based in Silicon Valley - its flagship site is 600 lawyer Heller Erhman in San Francisco - the company has now opened a European office and is looking for potential partners. For details email Ewan Cameron at ewanc@webex.com

■ NEW WEB BROKERING SERVICE

Farnham-based Cogenta (01252 725478) has begun marketing a new knowledge management system called Research Director. It is designed to help lawyers with research by providing them with a single log on to all their online subscription databases, intranet documents and the web so they can simultaneously search for the most relevant documents to the specific queries. This is sometimes known as 'web brokering' and would appear to pitch Cogenta into direct competition with Vrisko and Solcara in this niche KM market. The CEO of Cogenta is David Phillips, previously with Smartlogik. www.cogenta.com

News in brief

■ NEW ORDERS MAKE IT A RED LETTER DAY

Three more firms have placed orders for the RedLetter secure email system from Meticulus Solutions (01249 700050). They are Bevan Ashford, who also run Meticulist - the document management system from Meticulus, Silverbeck Rymer, who are integrating email with TFB case management, and Watson Farley Williams. Back in February, Dechert became the first firm to roll out RedLetter. Meticulus has also announced a deal that will see the MessageLabs service integrated with RedLetter so users can scan emails for viruses, spam and offensive materials. www.redletteremail.com

■ STEPHENSONS TO REVAMP WITH JMC IT

Stephensons, one of the largest firms in the North-West, has signed contracts worth £500K with local specialists JMC IT (0161 925 7777) to upgrade and replace its entire five branch IT infrastructure. Although the firm is retaining its Norwel PMS and case management systems, the underlying Novell network platform is being replaced by a Microsoft solution along with Cisco switching and routers plus Citrix 'thin client' technology.

Still thriving after all these years

Spring is in the air and with it comes fresh news from four of the market's smaller, less high profile legal IT suppliers.

■ IKEN BATTING IN MAJOR LEAGUE

The reputation of Bristol-based Iken Business (0117 373 0790) seems to be growing. After its eponymous Iken 'case management, time recording, document and client care system' was installed at Worthing Borough Council, the legal services department said it was instrumental in helping it achieve Lexcel compliance. Spelthorne BC was next to install it and more recently we heard a county council describe Iken as a prime contender for a case management short-list along with AIM and Solicitec.

■ CLIENT LOG GETS JET POWER

Lupus Software (0191 413 3444) has launched a new version of its Clientlog low cost client and matter management software. Originally launched in 1993 as a single user system, the latest version is based around a Microsoft Jet database and can support up to 10 users on a network. It is a simple to install and intuitive to use product for small firms, particularly those with a legal aid practice. A free demo CD is available.

■ ACCESS ALL AREAS

IT Accounting (07071 224586) has launched a new Windows version of its Cashier solicitors accounts package. It is based around Microsoft Access and can also handle bank accounts and profit & loss accounts. Once again this is a system for smaller firms and pricing is based on the number of live matters a firm is running. IT Accounting also offer various data conversion and network installation services.

■ LAW PAK ALL IN ONE OFFERING

Finally, LawPak Financial Systems (0845 450 2444), a company which has actually been operating in and around the legal market since 1974, has launched a new integrated accounts, time recording and case management system. With prices starting at just £495, this is another product that should appeal to smaller firms. Once again a free demo CD available.

Legal technology events diary

- **MAY 7, LONDON.** Practice & Fee Earner Productivity - free seminar at the Chiswell Street Brewery organised by Pilgrim Systems and featuring a keynote by Andrew Levison of Baker Robbins. For details call Hilary Kenny on 0131 555 9700 or email hilaryk@pilgrimsystems.com
- **MAY 8, SALFORD.** Axxia's season of free Lexcel seminars, with morning sessions geared towards local government & the public sector and afternoons focussing on private practice. Speakers include representatives from the Law Society, the Audit Commission and a leading insurer. The Salford event takes place at The Lowry Gallery, and is followed by events in Bristol (9 May) and London (12 May). For details call Heidi Cranfield on 01189 602627 or email cranfieldh@axxia.com
- **MAY 8, BELFAST.** The annual Lawyers getting the most out of the Internet conference, organised by Legal Island. Always a useful event for the Irish market, this year it takes place 2:00pm to 5:00pm at the Wellington Park Hotel. For more details email LP@legal-island.com
- **MAY 12 & 13, EDINBURGH.** Scottish Business IT Show - two day mini-exhibition at the Thistle Suite, Murrayfield Stadium organised by Axiom Business Computers and featuring seminar streams on CRM, legal accounts, practice management and hardware choices. The event moves to the Ibrox Stadium, Glasgow on 14 & 15 May. For details contact Axiom on 0845 230 5290 or email itshow@axiombc.com

Thought for the day

Our thanks to the reader, who for obvious reasons prefers to remain anonymous, for posing the following question: what is the difference between a supermarket trolley and the delegates attending a legal software supplier's user group conference?

Answer: the supermarket trolley still has a mind of its own but the delegates have a greater capacity for food and drink.

Plumtree secures first UK legal site win for its portal

Newly merged Blake Laphorn Linnell has become the first UK law firm to sign up for Plumtree Software's Enterprise Web suite of portal, collaboration and search technology systems.

The firm is initially using Plumtree to help create a new web site reflecting BLL's new corporate brand - this is due to go live on 1st May. Phase 2 - also scheduled for early May - will see the launch of a practice-wide intranet and this will in turn be followed by the development of client facing extranet facilities.

The firm's marketing director Roger Wheaton has already set up departmental teams to draw up their extranet wish-lists but these will be strictly prioritised, with a view to focussing on just those projects that can offer a quick win and where there is a strong champion who can help drive them forward.

Commenting on the decision to go with Plumtree, BLL's IT director Vivien Eaden says she originally evaluated nearly a dozen different products before opting for Plumtree because it offered a more strategic approach, by providing her with one solution that could support intranet, extranet and web sites.

- Plumtree Software is a US company with a global portfolio of clients including Boeing, Ford and Procter & Gamble. Its largest law firm sites are Morrison & Foerster (MoFo) and Nixon Peabody. Plumtree UK (01628 421724) has 36 clients.

Lawyer Group acquires LawZone

The Lawyer Group has acquired the online legal 'community' LawZone from Sift plc for an undisclosed sum. Launched just over four years ago in 1999, LawZone was one of the few UK legal portal/communities to survive the dotcom bust and will now operate as part of TheLawyer.com web site. As part of the deal, The Lawyer Group has awarded Sift the contract to redevelop its web sites.

Portals news in brief

- **KEOGHS TO ASSIMILATE RAMESYS INTRANET**

Insurance litigation specialists Keoghs are to install the Assimilate content management system from Ramesys (0115 971 2016) as part of a project to create a 350 user intranet. The firm will subsequently use Assimilate to manage content within their extranet and public web site.

- **WILSONS GO TO THE SOURCE FOR INTRANET**

Wilson's in Salisbury - described in the *The Legal 500* as having "one of the best private client practices outside London" has selected Newbury-based Source (01635 551777) to supply its new intranet. The firm's finance director Rob Thomas said they chose Source because they could "deliver a wide range of ready made applications that minimised the involvement of our IT staff."

Style still triumphs over substance on legal web

A new report from web design consultancy Intendance suggests that when it comes to law firm web sites, we are still seeing the triumph of style over substance, with firms apparently paying more attention to design issues than the content of their sites.

Intendance looked at the web sites of 100 firms, assessing them on three factors - content, usability and design. Marks were awarded as a percentage with design obtaining the highest average score - 76%, followed by usability - 68% but with content trailing far behind on 53%, with too many firms still not updating their sites regularly enough. According to James Tuke of Intendance "these figures suggest solicitors need to get their web site priorities right."

Collyer-Bristow obtained the highest overall score (92%) - and they also achieved the top score(100%) for usability. Fladgate Fielder scored highest for content (94%). And six firms, including Collyer-Bristow, shared the top spot for design. After Collyer-Bristow, the top scoring firms overall were Alexander Harris (91%), Faegre Benson Hobson Audley (89%), Rooks Rider (88%) and Memery Crystal (87%).

Interestingly Beale & Co, one of the smaller firms in the sample, came in at just behind the overall winners with a score of 83%, whereas some of the larger firms produced some very poor results. Clintons took the wooden spoon scoring just 31% however even this is better than 15 firms in the sample, including some very well known names, whose sites consisted of either single page markers or 'under construction' signs.

As Tuke rightly comments "the findings show that there is no link between size of firm and the quality of the web site. It is not how much money you spend but how well you spend it that determines success on the internet."

■ The report is available free of charge from Intendance on 020 8871 1330 or email james.tuke@intendance.com The Insider's own Web Site of the Month feature will return next month.

All you ever wanted to know about Internet marketing

The English Law Society this month publishes *Internet Marketing: Strategies for Law Firms* (288 pages, paperback, ISBN 1-85328-870-5, price £34.95) edited by Nicola Webb. The book aims to cut through the usual internet hype to consider the ways that new business models are affecting the legal market but with the emphasis upon practical advice and guidance on how to set about creating an effective legal web presence. Co-authors include e-security expert Rupert Kendrick, Christopher Davis, Gina Lovell of Addleshaw Booth & Co and Insider editor Charles Christian, who wrote the chapters on web strategies and CRM. The book is packed with bullet points and do's and don't lists and should be required reading for any lawyer considering selling legal services online.

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NLIS - now is the time to sign up and get online

Speaking at TFB's e-conveyancing conference earlier this month, Pete Sizer - the central government co-ordinator for the National Land Information Service (NLIS) - told delegates that they should "sign up today" with one or more of the NLIS channel providers and get online with e-conveyancing.

According to Sizer, although even 12 months ago it was perfectly understandable why so many solicitors were still adopting a 'wait and see' approach, since then the services had matured and it was now time for firms to get involved. Citing the latest NLIS data, Sizer said that in March, 1600 solicitors practices channelled a total of over 65,000 searches through NLIS. And, while this currently only accounts for about 15-20% of all searches, NLIS is confident it will hit its target of a 45% market share by the end of the year.

Sizer reckons conveyancers using NLIS can shave at least 40 minutes off the time taken to process search requests - a major benefit for any firm working on a fixed fee. Equally importantly, user data suggests the rejection rate for electronic CON29 searches is as low as 1% compared with a 10% average for postal based local authority searches.

Sizer's advice is for firms to get demo CDs from all three NLIS channel providers (NLIS Searchflow, TM Property Service and Transaction Online) to see which service suits them best and not be frightened of trying to negotiate a better price deal.

■ Sizer will be delivering one of the keynote presentations at this year's LegalTech Solicitors event in Birmingham on 28 May.

Conveyancing portal opts ASP

The new Easymove conveyancing portal has selected Solicitec's SolCase system, delivered via an ASP route, as the basis for its interactive case management technology. Easymove aims to speed up conveyancing by providing legal consultants, based in a network of estate agencies, to carry out the initial case creation by entering the buyer/seller details directly into SolCase. This will then be allocated to a panel member law firm who will also have access to SolCase, with the ASP solution providing a two way link between the solicitor and the consultant. Easymove CEO Nolan Braterman said they chose Solicitec as they could supply immediate access to a tried and tested application that required zero infrastructure other than internet access.

Local authority ITT on the web

The latest additions to the Insider web site include an invitation to express an interest in tendering for the implementation of a new case & time management system for the legal services group at Lancashire County Council. The deadline is 30th May.

www.legaltechnology.com/casestudies.htm

Argue and ATL have done arguing

In our 5th March edition we reported that Bruce Argue, one of the founding directors of case management specialists Alternative Team (ATL), had suddenly left the company. Argue has since informed the Insider that "We settled out of court. I am not at liberty to disclose the details however my 25% share holding in the company is up for sale. Know anyone who may be interested?"

Unfortunately this was no April Fool's hoax

Steve Ness of Select Legal Systems wants to know just how many other legal IT suppliers "are totally cheesed off with the way the Legal Services Commission introduces new reporting requirements?" Ness contacted the Insider after learning from a user that the LSC had just introduced five new fields to categorise the 'outcomes' of how matters end. What incenses Ness is the fact the data is required for all new matters starting after 1st April yet the firm was only informed of this requirement on 1st April - and they were tempted to ignore it because they initially thought it was an April Fool's hoax.

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER www.legaltechnology.com

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■ **Coming soon:** The next newswire is scheduled for 7 May. The next issue of the Insider newsletter (No.148) will be published on Wednesday 21 May 2003.