LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

SAP win top 100 site with Intalec

SAP has scored its second win in the UK legal market, this time at Holman Fenwick & Willan in conjunction with its mid-market reseller Intalec. HFW, which has a shipping and insurance practice with offices across Europe, the Middle East and Asia-Pacific, will run SAP to provide an integrated practice management, finance and HR solution.

HFW is replacing several legacy systems (including Axxia accounts) with Intalec's own Intalec for Legal Practices system, which is based on the SAP All-in-One application. Commenting on the order, Julian Page of Intalec said "Traditionally SAP has been seen as a solution for only the largest practices but with firms such as HFW expanding into new geographies and markets, the inherent flexibility and integration of an ERP (enterprise resource planning) solution will allow them to compete on an equal or better basis than even the largest firms."
www.intalec.com

Kirby quits Axxia for consultancy challenge

After 10 years as sales director, Bill Kirby is leaving Axxia at the end of this month to set up his own business: the Professional Choice Consultancy (01270 623389). Not only has the Axxia departure been entirely amicable – he informed the board of his plans back in January – but in his new capacity he will be working on a number of joint projects with Axxia users.

Along with traditional IT assessment and recommendation services, reflecting his broader business experience, Kirby will also be offering strategic consultancy on overall business planning, including profitability and budgeting, as well as specialist recruitment services for IT, marketing and management staff.
www.professionalchoiceconsultancy.com

In this month's Insider

Along with this month's Insider we are also including the first issue of *Legal Technology Journal*, which is edited by Charles Christian and published by Legalease, and the latest edition of *Inside Corporate Legal*, our quarterly supplement for inhouse lawyers. Digital subscribers will receive separate notification on how to access these publications

SearchFlow deal goes ahead

The Canadian company MacDonald Dettwiler & Associates (MDA) last week completed the acquisition of PropertyFlow, the online conveyancing services provider probably best known in the UK for its SearchFlow NLIS channel. The deal, valued at an initial payment of £12 million, brings together the SearchFlow, PSA, MDA Search and MDA Transaction Online brands within one organisation. MDA say the merged entity will be the leader in the electronic searches market in England & Wales and "well positioned to take advantage of planned market changes" including next year's introduction of HIPs and e-conveyancing. The existing PropertyFlow management team – headed by CEO Mark Riddick – will assume full operational control. ***See also pages 7 & 8***

Tikit make 100 with Interwoven

Scottish law firm Shepherd + Wedderburn has become Tikit's 100th Interwoven document management systems customer. Tikit said the order cemented the company's reputation as "the key Interwoven reseller in the UK & European professional services markets". ***See also page 3***

News in brief

Monitoring networks with Mutiny
Bird & Bird has rolled out the Mutiny (01453 840454) Network Services Monitor system to help monitor the 130 servers it now runs. Infrastructure manager Jon Spencer said one of the attractions of Mutiny was its quick set-up as it does not require agents to be installed on each individual server.
www.mutiny.com

BlackBerry integration for Interwoven
At its Gear Up annual user conference in Florida earlier this month, Interwoven launched an integration solution for BlackBerry mobile devices. It will be followed by additional products to support devices running Microsoft Windows mobile software. Commenting on the announcement, David Hamilton of Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer said "The availability of Interwoven on BlackBerry is excellent news. We have some 2000 BlackBerrys in use throughout the firm and the device is certainly our lawyers' favourite means of keeping on top of their work while away from the office."

Civica releases Galaxy Legal 5.0
Civica has released version 5.0 of its Galaxy Legal case and practice management system. New features include optional integration with the Azolve Pathway knowledge management search tool.

Quote, unquote

"There's a firm in London that recently relocated to new premises. They call themselves a paperless office but what this actually means is they have cut back from the equivalent of 25 linear kilometres of shelving holding paper files to just 15 linear kilometres." ...*a consultant speaking at a recent conference.*

Tikit results tick all the right boxes

The Tikit Group's results for the financial year ending 31st December 2005 came ahead of market expectations, with turnover up 69% to £20.16 million (2004: £11.9m) and profit before tax, goodwill and share option charges up 39% to £2.1 million (2004: £1.51m). Tikit, currently still the only UK legal systems supplier with a stock market (AIM) listing, also saw the revenues from its consultancy and services activities increase by 75% to £13.5 million (2004: £7.7m), while revenues from the software business were up 50% to £5.7 million (2004: £3.8m).

Commenting on the results, chairman Mike McGoun said 2005 had been a very successful year for Tikit "we believe the group is now in a position to not only achieve good organic revenue growth but also improve operating margins". Brokers Charles Stanley were rather more effusive, describing the results as "a landmark year for Tikit" and forecasting results of over £24 million in 2006 and over £27 million in 2007.

On the new business front, following a reorganisation of senior management responsibilities in the wake of David Thorpe's departure, managing director David Lumsden has assumed responsibility for the operational management of Tikit's managed services division. Lumsden says he is "mildly optimistic" for the prospects of outsourcing among law firms although he believes the most receptive market will be among firms in the top 101-to-250 bracket rather than Tikit's traditional top 100 niche.

Tikit has also recently formed three new reseller alliances and partnerships with other suppliers. These are: Interse, the developers of the widely used iBox classification and metadata tagging technology for knowledge management projects – iBox is compatible with both the Hummingbird and Interwoven document management systems; records management implementation specialists Oyster IMS; and Lightspeed systems, the developers of the market leading Total Control network security and monitoring product.

We asked Tikit about a complaint we've heard from some suppliers that life is not so rosy if you are not one of Tikit's more favoured partners. McGoun said "all suppliers want you to do more for them" and "the onus is on suppliers to keep their products and services on the Tikit A-list".

Consultancy to take on Cameron and Tikit

Although Kestrel Business Solutions has been around for 10 years, the consultancy has recently grown from 6 to 16 consultants and is now taking on more and more big ticket projects, to the point where founding partner Carol Cuthbert says the firm's only real competitors are Tikit and the Neil Cameron Consultancy. The consultancy has already undertaken projects for Ashurst, Linklaters and Pinsent Masons, on technologies including Aderant, SAP and Elite, and its people are currently working with Clifford Chance and Bond Pearce.

Cuthbert says the firm's consultants "competitive edge lies in the fact they have legal process as well as product skills, while remaining neutral in their positioning as they are not bound to any supplier." Along with PMS implementation projects, Cuthbert believes "truly integrated workflow will be the next big thing," with the consultancy currently working on FloSuite templates that can be integrated with Aderant products to provide additional functionality in the areas of billing, matter inception and conflict checking.
www.kestrel-bs.co.uk

• In a related development FloSuite has just announced version 5 of its business process management software. V5 has a new design utilising the latest Microsoft Visio functionality, a Microsoft Outlook web access-style client built on ASP.NET 2 and XML handling capabilities built on Microsoft SQL Server 2005. V5 will be officially launched next month at events in London (8th May) and Edinburgh (10th May). You can register for places online.
www.flosuite.com/seminar

Sycamore back in the UK

Kaye Sycamore, best known as one of the co-founders of Keystone Systems and more recently as the regional sales director for Thomson Elite in the Asia-Pacific market, is returning to London to head up Elite's operations in the UK and Ireland. Sycamore, who will retain her APAC responsibilities, will focus on enlarging Elite's market share, with a commitment to hiring new staff. In other management changes at Elite, Derk Kropholler has been appointed regional director for Continental European operations and be based in the Netherlands. Both will report to Thomson Elite vice president Jitendra (JV) Valera.

Elite lets Cobra out of the basket

Thomson Elite has announced details of its next generation financial and practice management system. Called Elite 3E (previously known as Project Cobra), this is a full .NET framework, thin client plus XML, 64-bit system that also uses Microsoft BizTalk technology. Full details are in the process of being rolled out (there is a white paper available on the Insider website) however Russ Houlden, the finance director of Lovells, has already described 3E as a system that "makes a step change from a late 20th century billing system to a leading edge integrated 21st century finance system".

Strategically, the announcement firmly slaps down any suggestion that Elite might loose its way once it became part of the Thomson group and provides both existing and prospective Elite users with a clear upgrade path. However while Elite 3E may be being pitched – in the words of vice president international Jitendra Valera – as "the next generation system for the next 10 years and beyond," Thomson Elite is also keen to stress that this is not a replacement for the current Elite Enterprise system, which will continue to be supported "for at least the next 10 years".

Another key feature of 3E is as well as having an architecture that will make it easier to integrate with third party applications, users will also be able to build a lot more of their own business processes from within the Elite 3E environment, thus removing their reliance on third party workflow products.

• Working in conjunction with Business Objects Inc, Elite has also produced a new business intelligence solution that gives law firm managers access to near realtime productivity metrics and analytics from a single source.

People & Places

Worsfold gets Real
Sarah Worsfold has joined Real Decisions with a brief of bringing the InterAction CRM system into the real estate industry. She will also be providing ad hoc CRM consultancy for all makets, including legal. Real Decisions will be holding its first CRM seminar in May.
www.realdecisions.co.uk

New chair for Hummingbird user group
Steve Sumner, the IT director of Taylor Vinters, has been appointed as the new chair of the Hummingbird UK Legal User Group. He takes over from Jan Durant of Lewis Silkin, who has held the post for the past 12 months. Sumner said the group could provide a valuable additional communications channel between users and the DMS supplier. The next meeting will take place in early June.

New sales manager for Bar supplier
Jonathan Hack, previously with WAN specialists Vanco, has joined Formation Software as sales manager with responsibility for the company's InQuisita Law barristers' chambers management software system.

Interwoven gets City office
Next week Interwoven, whose UK head office is currently located somewhere in the wilds of Berkshire, will formally open its new City of London premises at 12-20 Camomile Street, EC3. The offices, which have a roof top balcony (and excellent views) will be used for meetings, training and – we hope – entertainment.

New on Insider website

Latest additions to the Insider website KM resources section include a case study by TutorPro looking at the way Hugh James used a learning management system to improve IT training, compliance and quality assurance skills – and reduce costs for external training services.
www.legaltechnology.com

DDS project resolves bespoke letters issue

Essex law firm Holmes & Hills is the latest organisation to implement nFlow digital dictation software integrated with a Visualfiles case management system. Commenting on the project, the firm's IT manager Trevor Sleeman said "We'd already implemented Visualfiles and observed a situation where fee earners were still dictating bespoke documents when there were standard documents available. The fee earners said the standard documents often did not fit the case scenario as well as they would like. However creating bespoke documents produced an overhead in maintaining the integrity of the case history, resulting in a dislocated process that detracted from the potential benefits offered by Visualfiles."

The firm solved the problem of the 'non-standard standard letter' with the assistance of nFlow who developed an embedded solution so fee earners can dictate amendments to standard or new documents that link directly to the case history. This means that when a secretary opens a dictation file for transcription, the integration automatically opens the appropriate document history. The resulting transcribed document is then saved directly into the Visualfiles case history and a reminder added to the fee earner's to-do list to proof the document.

Mr Sleeman added that "We approached a number of DDS suppliers who all said that they could do it but had not done it yet. Only nFlow came back with a prototype to demonstrate they could do it – the others all wanted us to order the system before they would do anything."

News in brief

Videss integrate with Callcredit CallML service
Videss is offering its users full integration with Callcredit's CallML online money laundering verification service. The CallML identity checking facility can provide a verification report in less than 3 seconds of an inquiry being logged.

Dentons place co-location hosting with Telstra
Denton Wilde Sapte has replaced its inhouse disaster recovery facilities with a co-location hosted facility based in Docklands. The outsourcing is provided by Telstra Europe, in conjunction with channel partner Comunica (020 7613 0608). Dentons, who recently moved from two London office sites to one, say the Telstra deal has improved data security and reduced administration time.
www.telstra.co.uk/product-and-services/hosting/co-location-hosting

Olympus winning battle of the USB mikes ?

Although the last five years have seen Philips dominate the market for USB/tethered microphones for use with digital dictation and, to a lesser extent, speech recognition systems, the indications are this situation could soon be ending. According to the director of one of the UK's 'big three' DDS software suppliers, Philips "shot themselves in the foot" with the new SpeechMike 2. His complaint is not only have hardware prices been increased by around 20% but there are also technical "issues". At the time of going to press, his company has already had to implement 10 firmware upgrades released by Philips to deal with such problems as an overly sensitive mouse.

The system that now looks like becoming the main contender is the DR-1000/2000 USB mike range from Olympus – Olympus is already the market leader for portable digital recorders thanks to its DS-3000/3300/4000 devices. Grundig has also thrown its hat into the ring with its DigtaProMic 840 and 840 Classic USB mikes however while competitively priced and built to a high technical specification (the 840 can be integrated with barcode and RFID readers) they are currently not attracting many takers. One DDS supplier told the Insider the reaction of firms who'd been shown the 840 was that it was too big and "ugly" – which is a little ironic as Grundig's latest portable recorder family, the Digta 410/415, is one of the most ergonomic and aesthetically pleasing devices around.

News in brief

Property firm selects EMIS
Wimbledon property solicitors Ashworths have chosen the Seneca integrated accounts, case management and digital dictaton system from Emis IT (0845 1205206) to help manage the firm's increasing caseload.

ASB Law goes wireless with Treo
Crawley-based ASB Law has selected the Palm Treo smart phone, initially just for its partners and senior managers as the basis for its mobile communications, including the wireless synchronisation of email and applications data. The firm will be running the Treos on the Orange network using the GoodLink and GoodAccess technology platform. **http://uk.good.com**

DDS news in brief

Nelsons outsource with Voicepath
Nottingham-based Nelsons has added the Voicepath (01926 821904) outsourcing service to its existing nFlow digital dictation facility. The firm's chief executive Tim Hastings said Voicepath's UK-based outsourcing service was "an ideal way to strike a middle path between efficiency and cost-cutting, allowing us to keep up our current speed of workflow while re-examining how much internal support we need."

Grundig forges alliances and ups security
In a move intended to ensure its recorder hardware gets into more users' hands, Grundig Business Systems has formed a 'development alliance' with UK DDS market leader BigHand and announced closer co-operation with Winscribe.

On the innovation front, Grundig has just introduced a password protection option – believed to be a world first – on its top of the range Digta 4015 and 415 models. The security facility takes the form of a 4 digit PIN number that needs to be entered on start-up to unlock the device. If not entered the whole device, including any dictation stored internally, remains secure against unauthorised access.

Commenting on the option, Grundig said "Research has shown that for many organisations, portable digital dictation devices represent a significant security challenge. Dictations frequently touch on confidential matters yet recorders are regularly removed from offices, with the risk they could be lost or stolen – and any sensitive information lost along with them. Law firms have done a lot of work in tying down security in relation to laptops and PDAs and now Grundig is helping them close one more loophole." **www.grundig-gbs.com**
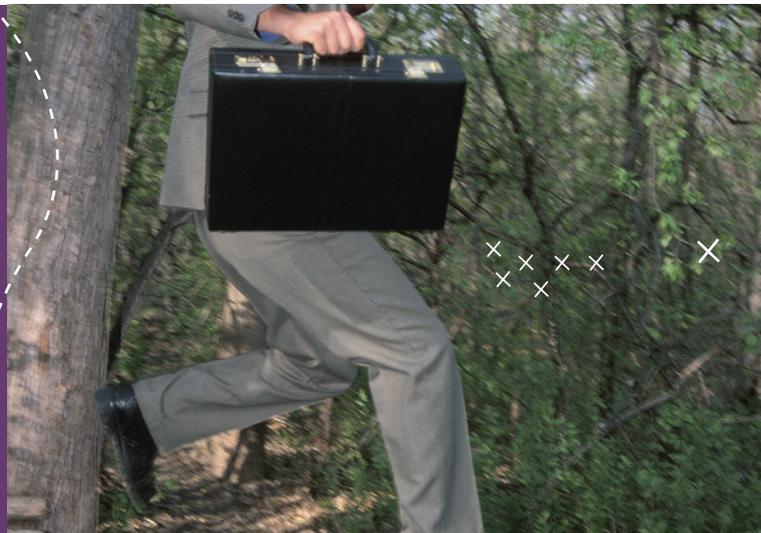
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Peter Uglow of Focus Forensics Telecommunications
14th June 11.30-12.30 - FREE

> **How Will The Introduction Of E-Courts Speed Up The Litigation Process?**
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14th June 10.00-11.00 - FREE

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Latest website news

How to avoid 34 online mistakes
Legal internet specialist Conscious Solutions has published a free guide highlighting 34 common mistakes law firms make with their websites and how to avoid them. Our favourite mistake (covered by points 3 & 4 in the guide) is the firm that, six months after his death, still had a welcome message on the home page, complete with picture, by their late senior partner because nobody knew how to update the site. The guide is available in a hardcopy format or as a download from the Conscious website as a PDF file.
www.conscious.co.uk

CrimeLine sets up legal wiki
The online criminal law resource CrimeLine has set up a wiki facility on its website that allows practitioners to add their own comments about criminal law topics. The site's founder Andrew Keogh says he was inspired to set up the facility after reading Professor Richard Susskind's recent comments calling for the creation of a Wikipedia-like online collaborative encyclopaedia of English law.
www.wikicrime.co.uk

Emplaw rolls out new services
Our favourite UK employment law portal – the Emplaw site – has launched two new services for subscribers: a twice weekly web updater and a series of employment related precedents by Michael Duggan of Littleton Chambers. Along with the subscription services, Emplaw also offers a free A-to-Z directory of 4500+ fact cards with extensive links and comment.
www.emplaw.co.uk

The Insider Jobsboard

Looking for legal IT staff, including posts in management, sales, development, KM, support, marketing, accounts or training? The Insider Jobsboard has the best choice of legal IT jobs available in the UK and you can post your vacancies free of charge by emailing **jobs@legaltechnology.com**

Fresh on the radar

Bedell Group pick Frontier for Citrix solution
The Bedell Group, which includes the Jersey law firm Bedell Cristin, has moved over to a Citrix environment to support its recent rapid growth – it now has 200 staff – and ongoing expansion plans. To support its Citrix strategy, Bedell used the services of Frontier Technology (020 8248 8926 – a supplier we haven't encountered before in the legal market) who recommended Citrix Presentation Server 4.0 running on a Windows 2003 platform.

The end result, says Bedell's head of IT Leo Cavendish, is a solution that allows the group to centrally deploy and manage business applications whilst providing secure on-demand access to users anywhere, on any device and any network. "The system is pivotal to our ability to react quickly to market opportunities and client demands. Citrix has also helped defer the cost of rolling out replacement PCs, to a value of approximately £50,000. We have already seen return on our investment," adds Cavendish.
www.frontiertechnology.co.uk

Blended learning approach to Ashurst XP rollout
So how did Ashurst handle their migration from Office 97 to Microsoft Office XP with 1500 users to train, offices in nine countries and six languages to cope with? The solution was to use a blend of training methods including classroom training, web-based e-learning and the use of an application called Personal Navigator. This is a content development platform, for creating and delivering interactive training simulations, from OnDemand Software and supplied via UK resellers Larmer Brown Consulting.

The firm's head of learning & development Stephanie Mehanna said what impressed her about the system was its flexibility and ease of. "Our past methods would have our trainers spending weeks developing course materials but with OnDemand they were able to cut that time significantly (the firm estimates by about 70%, with a typical project taking 3 rather than 10 days) allowing for a quick deployment of the training programme to out global users." Mehanna said another benefit was the system's 'try it' and 'do it' functions, which provide users with access to immediate assistance without having to enter the e-learning portal. Post rollout, this is now being used by the Ashurst IT help desk, so when they receive 'how do I do this?' questions, they can usually answer the query by sending the user a hyperlink to the appropriate location in Personal Navigator.
www.ondemandgk.com
www.larmerbrown.co.uk

HIPs & conveyancing news

Foster says goodbye to all that
Steven Foster, the founding CEO of NLIS property search provider TM Property Service, is to leave the company later this year. Foster, who set up the company in 2001, said that, having sold his stake in TM last year to a consortium of Countrywide, Connells, Halifax Estate Agency and Rightmove, "the job I set myself is now done, it is time for me to move on". His successor will be John Carolan, currently the MD of Connells Relocation Services division in Newbury. In other TM news, the company has announced the creation of a 'HIPs supermarket' that will allow law firms to select the HIPs elements they need on a 'pick and mix' basis, from individual documentation through to the complete HIPs pack from Rightmove, the Law Society and a number of other HIPs service providers.

Easy Convey deal renegotiated
The Canadian group RemoteLaw Online Systems has now completed the renegotiation of its deal with UK conveyancing case management supplier Easy Convey (*see last issue for first report*). RemoteLaw say that as a result of the "amicable restructuring" of their share purchase deal, Easy Convey's CASA suite of products will now be marketed in the UK through RemoteLaw subsidiary OneMove Ltd, which is headed by estate agent Neil Patel. One of Easy Convey's best known faces Tim Roebuck has joined Visualfiles as a business development manager.
www.onemove.com

SDLT integration due next month
Another conveyancing software specialist – ConveyPro (01434 673426) – report they have completed beta testing their Stamp Duty Land Tax forms completion software at sites where it will run in conjunction with Visualfiles or AlphaLaw systems. ConveyPro aim to roll out a fully integrated version of the SDLT system later this month/early next month.
www.sdlt.co.uk

Taking business off the competitor's doorstep
Intelligent Conveyancing (01793 836730) secured six wins last month, including Paul Browne Solicitors, the largest conveyancing firm in the Oakham area, whose main office is across the road from rival conveyancing case management software supplier Conveyance Link.

Nothing But the Net open to English firms

The Law Society of Scotland's annual Nothing But the Net technology conference will make its seventh outing this autumn (Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, 3rd October). The event retains its popular twin track legal/technical format, and peer-to-peer networking opportunities, while the accompanying IT exhibition will this year house around 20 suppliers.

One interesting innovation for 2007 is opening up the conference to practitioners from the North of England and Northern Ireland, who would otherwise have to spend the best part of a day travelling to and from London to attend a similar quality event. English and Irish solicitors can also claim CPD credits for attending.

The conference programme is currently still being finalised however it already includes a keynote presentation by Insider editor Charles Christian, plus Alistair Stocks on Legal Aid Online, Sheriff Iain Peebles on IT in the civil courts and Ken Macdonald, Assistant Information Commissioner for Scotland, on data protection. There will also be a number of roundtable discussion sessions during the afternoon and live demonstrations of courtroom technology.

Iona Ritchie, head of Update, the Scottish Law Society's events and conference arm said "Nothing But the Net has grown enormously since 1998, with last year being the biggest yet. We want to raise the bar yet again and attract more delegates from further afield by offering presentations and information which really address current needs, whether that's examining the technical nuts and bolts or discussing the latest legal developments – from disaster recovery and pod-casting to Legal Aid Online."
www.lawscot.org.uk/update

HIPs & Conveyancing

Visualfiles put HIPs jigsaw together
Visualfiles has been gearing up for the introduction of HIPs for forging a series of alliances with complementary technology providers. These include the creation of an interface through to xit2, whose systems are used by most of the UK's mortgage lenders to panel out valuation instructions to surveyors. xit2 have the only system where both RICS and SAVA forms can be accessed and the new interface means Visualfiles users will have at-the-touch-of-a-button access to a wider number of home inspectors who can prepare home condition reports. Visualfiles has also announced plans to integrate its conveyancing software with Vebra, the leading case management systems supplier to the estate agency market. The latter move will remove the need for rekeying data when estate agencies and law firms are working on HIP projects.
www.xit2.com
www.vebra.info

Buyers and sellers united
As part of a joint venture Documents Plus, best known in the legal market for its Chameleon document automation system, has become the technology provider for a new service Buyer And Seller United (or BASU – 01732 868393) that aims to provide a 24/7 communications hub for home buyers, sellers, estate agents and conveyancers. The value proposition is for £30 per property (law firms and estate agents can register an unlimited number of properties for £100 a month) all the parties in a transaction have access to alerts and an interactive task/diary management system keeping them in touch with the progress of the conveyance. The alerts can be via SMS, email or the web so everyone involved in a chain knows where they are without the endless telephone calls that are usually involved. Rob Hailstone, the CEO of HIPAG likens BASU to a Maserati whereas the Land Registry Chain Matrix, he says, is more like a "family saloon".
www.buyerandsellerunited.com

A&O to discuss blogs & wikis at conference

At next month's Blogs & Social Media Forum (17th May, London Hilton Metropole, tickets from £350), Ruth Ward, head of knowledge systems & development at Allen & Overy, and Lee Bryant, of blogging systems developers Headshift, will be giving a presentation reporting on a six month project they ran at A&O. The project involved three pilot groups, each using a mixture of group blog, wiki, social tagging, shared bookmarks and newsfeed aggregator systems within a simple groupware interface. Based on the success of these pilots, the project is being extended more widely across the firm, with five more groups going live.
www.headshift.com
www.socialmediaforum.co.uk

Product review: could Sidekick be the new BlackBerry ?

Last month's review of the BlackBerry 8700 prompted the following response from Lewis Silkin head of IT Jan Durant "You know I always agree with everything you say (well almost). But you are so wrong about the new BlackBerry. I've got one (it landed on my desk the same day as the Orange rag) and it's brilliant. Much faster, attachments download quicker, and you don't have to manually delete sent items as you can set them not to show."

As we wade our way through the BlackBerry wannabes, we are beginning to think Jan may be right, the BlackBerry may not be perfect but it's still better than the rest. This month's contender is the T-Mobile Sidekick: it is bulkier and heavier than a BlackBerry although it does have a screen that swivels round to reveal a full QWERTY keypad. It has a BlackBerry-type push email facility, handles some attachments – but not PDFs – better than a BlackBerry and has the best web browser we have ever encountered on a PDA. But that's about it.

There is no touch sensitive screen, so making (although not taking) phone calls is awkward. Outlook integration is possible but there is no Bluetooth, the camera is low resolution by today's standards and there is absolutely no enterprise server/business applications integration available. Are T-Mobile missing an opportunity? Probably not as they seem to be positioning it at the fashion end of the consumer phone market – and with considerable success in the US where its users include Paris Hilton, Beyoncé, who has a rhinestone encrusted model, and Pink, who throws one out of her car in her latest video.
Next month we will be looking at the MDA Vario/O2 XDA.

The Insider poll - just how important is end of lifing?

How important is software end-of-lifing these days? We asked how long had you been running your current desktop operating systems? 24% said you'd been running your current O/S for less than 12 months, 55% said between 2 & 3 years, and 21% said between 4 & 5 years. We also asked when you planned to upgrade it? Here, 12% said they had just done so, 27% expected to do so within the next 12 months, 23% said within the next 2-to-3 years, and 38% of you said you had no immediate plans.

With developments in HIPs and e-conveyancing systems being announced almost weekly, we are asking firms with residential property practices: have you any clue what is going on? And, who do you think should be doing more to educate the market – the Law Society, the Government or the legal software industry? You can find the survey form on the Insider website and all responses are anonymous. **www.legaltechnology.com**

News in brief

Visualfiles M2 win at Outset
Employee relations services provider Outset UK has selected the M2 matter management system from Visualfiles to provide it with a matter centric email and document management platform to support its development plans over the next two years. Outset will be integrating M2 with its existing Sage accounts system.

Wins sans frontieres for TFB
TFB has scored a hat-trick for its Partner for Windows software with wins during the last month in Scotland, Ireland and England. Liddle & Anderson in Bo'ness picked TFB to coincide with a move to new offices. Along with the usual legal services, the firm also has a niche practice in Italian law. Kent Carty in Dublin will be running the system on an entirely wireless network in conjunction with Open Office, the free open source alternative to Microsoft Office. The third win was at education and employment law specialists Match Solicitors in Fleet Street.

DOCSLink now available for Interwoven via Transam
Transam Microsystems is now supporting an Interwoven compatible version of the ImageFast DOCSLink product in the UK. The system allows HP digital senders to scan and profile documents directly into an Interwoven WorkSite repository. The system also allows documents to be OCR-ed into Microsoft Word. Speechly Bircham will be the first UK firm to use the new version of DOCSLink.

Eclipse claim record for quickest ever deal

Case management specialist Eclipse Legal Systems reckons it now holds the record for the fastest ever signing of a new customer. Eclipse took a phone call from Bradford firm Sekhon & Firth at 10:35am on Thursday 6th April and, following a demonstration, negotiations were concluded and the sale agreements signed by 5:33pm that same day. Eclipse are so confidant this is a record that they are offering a bottle of champagne to any case management software supplier who can complete a similar deal in under 6 hours and 58 minutes.

Along with the Bradford firm, the latest orders for Eclipse's Proclaim system include Brown & Co (Basildon), Bonnett Son & Turner (Hounslow), Liss Gulhane Innes (Romford) and SDS Solicitors (Manchester). All ordered 20+ user implementations for conveyancing and/or personal injury work. Eclipse sales director Russell Thomson said the company's recently announced plans to utilise XML and web services technology was likely to provide a further boost for sales as it would widen the range of third party applications being run by law firms and commercial organisations that could be integrated with Proclaim.

Fighting the false positives

Shoosmiths has implemented the BlackSpider MailControl system to protect users from spam and viruses. IS director David Bason said the problem with the firm's old firewall was spam still got through to users' mailboxes while simultaneously as many as 15% of the emails quarantined as junk were legitimate messages (or 'false positives') forcing users to sift through the spam bin to retrieve them.
www.blackspider.com

Vote! Vote for your librarian!

The British & Irish Association of Law Librarians (BIALL) and LexisNexis are calling for nominations for this year's Awards of Excellence. There are two categories – Legal Information Professional of the Year and Best Use of Technology in a Law Library Project – and the closing date for nominations is 12th May. Winners will be announced on 16th June during the BIALL annual conference in Brighton. Nominations can be made via the web.
www.lexisnexis.co.uk/campaigns/biall_awards/biall_awards.html

The Curse of PowerPoint, part 94

Speaking at a recent conference in London, records management specialist Josef Elliott of Oyster IMS said he'd recently visited one law firm where a single 7Mb PowerPoint presentation, that originally arrived as an email file attachment, had been forwarded on and on to a point where, after just 30 days, copies were to be found in 40 different PST files and it was occupying a total of 400Mb of disk storage and backup space.

The 'death by Powerpoint' experience has also prompted one of our readers to suggest that a Powerpoint user is someone who either cannot hold five items in mind or can but presumes their audience can't. And, either cannot order in subparagraphs their arguments, questions and answers or can but presumes their audience can't.

10 years ago today...

April 1996 saw WordPerfect predict it would make its wordprocessing comeback with its Windows 95 compliant Version 7.0. It didn't. And Quintec (the Tikit of its day) launched the CMS Open PMS (now Aderant Back Office) into the UK market.

Legal Technology Insider

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Each issue of the Insider is now read by an average of 6500 legal IT professionals. For editorial, subscription, advertising and any other enquiries contact Legal Technology Insider, Oak Lodge, Darrow Green Road, Denton, Harleston, Norfolk, IP20 0AY, UK

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The next issue of the Insider (No.187) will be published on 25th May 2006.