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Forrester say CRM can deliver an RoI

LexisNexis has released the findings of a study conducted by Forrester Consulting which shows the Interaction CRM system can deliver a significant return on investment. The study used a UK firm (described only as having 550 partners and fee earners across multiple offices) and showed it realised an RoI of 210% and a net present value return of £2.89 million. (Total benefits were valued at £4.27m against a £1.38m cost to implement Interaction.) The study also suggests the firm broke even on its CRM investment after just 30 months.

To enable firms to measure their own RoI and make a business case for investing in CRM, LexisNexis has launched an Excel-based calculator (developed by Forrester) and will shortly launch a Key Success Indicator to help firms 'benchmark CRM successes and challenges'.

AlphaLaw acquired by IRIS

AlphaLaw has become the latest UK legal software vendor to lose its independence and be acquired by the IRIS Group. The terms of the deal have not been disclosed but market sentiment suggests it is likely to have been in the £3-to-£4.5 million bracket. Simon Meehan will remain with the business as general manager and the company's existing staff and office will ensure "business as usual". IRIS has confirmed that it will continue to develop and support AlphaLaw's current product range "at least until 2012 and potentially beyond." This suggests AlphaLaw will enjoy a semi-autonomous existence within the IRIS Group, similar to Opsis and GB Systems – well at least for the next four years.

December's big deals

Thursfields in £250k switch to SOS

In one of the biggest deals of its kind this year, as part of a business revitalisation review, Worcester-based Thursfields has selected SOS Connect from Solicitors Own Software for integrated case, document and practice management in a contract valued at £250k. Managing partner Nick O'Hara said it was a long awaited investment and that "after living without integration, we wanted to ensure every element of the new system was right for us." The firm used external consultants in the selection process, with five vendors replying to an ITT. According to Insider sources, the legacy system being replaced at Thursfields is IRIS/Mountain software.

- Niche lawyers Masseys LLP have also selected SOS, going live just four weeks after ordering an SOS Connect system.

First Step take next step with Liberate

Debt management plan providers First Step has selected a Linetime Liberate system to handle internal accounting and client/creditor payments. Bill Kirby of Professional Choice Consultancy advised on the system selection process.

December's big launch


Pilgrim Systems has developed an interface between its Lawsoft suite and Zylpha's new document bundling system (see *Insider No.213* for first report). Driven from Lawsoft's standard web interface, the integration means users can create paginated, indexed document bundles (these can be court bundles, document bibles, contracts or HIPs) in a PDF format, with the bundle itself becoming a document entry in the Lawsoft DMS.



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News in brief

Business as usual for RightFax users

Avanquest Solutions, the long-time UK distributor of the Capartis RightFax system, say it's business as usual for customers following the completion of the Capartis acquisition by Open Text. The only change they will notice is in the name – after 16 years, out goes RightFax and in comes Open Text Fax Server.

Saturn27 becomes Interaction partner

Saturn27 has become the latest LexisNexis Interaction partner. The consultancy will be working towards formal certification in the New Year to provide implementation, enhancement and integration services to Interaction customers in the UK.

Konetica and Teliris in partnership

Konetica, a new legal IT managed service provider (see *Insider 213* for first report) has announced a partnership with Teliris, a supplier of 'immersive telepresence solutions' – aka videoconferencing technology – which Konetika believes will appeal to firms wanting to cut travel times and costs – and lower carbon footprints.

- Konetika co-founder Malcolm Simms has now left Eversheds, with Paul Caris (previously with Taylor Wimpey) taking over as the firm's new IT director.

Dodds dodge floods with DPS

After seeing the chaos caused by the January 2005 floods, Carlisle law firm Malcolm Dodds has invested in an SaaS deal with DPS, with all the software hosting, maintenance and updating managed remotely, to provide both a business continuity solution and a more flexible, hassle-free approach to running the firm's systems on a day-to-day basis.

Open Text allies with Recommend on legal hold

With the likelihood of widespread litigation following in the wake of the current global financial crisis, Open Text has expanded its e-discovery offerings through an alliance with Recommend. The new solution – called 'Open Text eDiscovery Early Case Assessment powered by Recommend' – effectively combines Open Text's ECM and DMS platforms with Recommend's recently launched Insite Legal Hold application (see *Insider No.213* for first report).

Open Text e-discovery solutions project manager Stephen Ludlow says by weaving e-discovery capabilities into an overall content, records and email management environment, organisations can quickly assess the legal merits of a case and defensibly manage legal holds and collection for discovery and compliance requests without the need for 3rd party processing. Or, as Gartner analyst Debra Logan puts it "By selecting the right technology for e-discovery and tying that to an information lifecycle management strategy, you can save your company a ton of money and your IT department a ton of time."

All change at IRIS and LexisNexis

Last month saw the top management slots within the legal IT divisions at both IRIS and LexisNexis change hands. After 18 months as managing director of the IRIS Legal business unit, Arlene Adams has departed 'to pursue a new challenge elsewhere'. Her replacement is Tony Bromfield, previously with Cable & Wireless. At about the same time, LexisNexis announced it had revised the strategy for its Practice & Productivity Management business so 'the ownership of the product roadmaps' for systems such as Axxia DNA and Visualfiles Streamline (the new name for Manilla) would move from global to 'more local' to reflect the needs of local customers. Because of this change, the roles the former P&PM senior directors Kate Holden and Edouard Tavernier are subject to internal consultation and it is thought they will pursue other options within the Reed Elsevier (the parent of LexisNexis) group. Tim Cheadle, appointed in a previous management reorganisation earlier this year, remains as P&PM UK general manager.

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Chromium cloud seen over British skies

Last week Alan Rich (one of the founders of Elite back in the early 1990s) was in London to talk to law firms about his new business Chrome River Technologies. We caught up with him and also had a demo of the company's new Expense module.

This is an online expenses reporting application, specifically for the professional services sector, designed to address one of their last big paper and rubber stamp heavy, labour intensive administrative processes. Instead of personal expenses claims involving secretaries wading through credit card chits, the system handles the entire claim and payment cycle, including direct feeds from credit card companies, imaging support (for attaching copies of bills), an automated approvals process with email integration, and feeding data directly into a PMS or accounts system for charge-back and reimbursement processing. Why bother? Because according to US research data, it costs on average \$31 to process an expenses claim manually, compared with less the \$9 when handled as part of an automated workflow.

Chrome River plan to introduce other discrete applications over the coming months however arguably the most interesting aspect of the system is that it is delivered as a pure SaaS (software as a service) solution. Firms need to install nothing on either servers or the desktop.

Talking of which, the interface uses the RIA (rich internet application) model, delivering considerably more functionality than standard web browser based applications. It is also interesting that while Alan Rich describes it as SaaS, it is probably moving closer to a 'cloud computing' model (see also article on page 6) with some of Chrome River's server capacity being hosted by Amazon. The Expense system was launched in the US in April. Since then in the region of 8500 licences have been sold to 12 firms – although the only ones Chrome River can go public on at the moment are Jones Day, Paul Hastings and Weil Gotshall.

www.chromeriver.com

New wins

Axxia DNA wins two more sites

Property and financial law firm HL Interactive says it expects to make a "six figure operational efficiency saving over two years" by implementing a LexisNexis Axxia DNA system to automate business processes and cut administration costs.

- The second DNA win (*first reported on the Orange Rag blog*) was at Bindmans LLP, where the firm decided to look for a new, fully integrated PMS plus DMS, case management and business workflow solution, after learning its existing IRIS AIM software was being discontinued.

DLA pick anti-money laundering system

DLA Piper has selected Datanomic's dn director sanctions and PEP (politically exposed persons) screening software as part of its strategy for achieving compliance with the 3rd EU Money Laundering Directive. The firm will use the software throughout its EMEA and Asia operations, which includes more than 40 offices in 27 countries.

www.datanomic.com

New Microsystems London win

Simmons & Simmons has selected Microsystems software for its document production environment.

Thea choose Quaestor

London-based contract law start-up Thea Limited Solicitors has picked Professional Technology UK's Quaestor system for its accounts and time recording.

DTE goes into Stephenson Harwood

Stephenson Harwood has selected DTE's Axiom time recording system via UK distributor Phoenix Business Solutions.

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Roberts joins LexisNexis

Bryan Roberts, who until earlier this year headed EMEA sales at Aderant, has joined the Practice & Productivity Management team at LexisNexis as sales director. He will be leading the sales push for Axxia and Visualfiles products in the UK mid and large law firms' sectors, as well as the corporate/government markets.

Litigation support news

Legal Inc in consulting tie-up

Legal Inc has announced a consultancy tie-up with Allvision's Andrew Haslam. Haslam will focus on enhancing Legal Inc's capabilities in the design and delivery of electronic disclosure services and projects. Haslam will be working with the Legal Inc team on a part-time basis.

- Legal Inc has also appointed Nick Pollard, most recently with Fujitsu and Computacenter, as its first client director, with responsibility for both business development and account management.

Trilantic becomes Nexidia partner

Trilantic has joined Nexidia's partner programme, in a move that will see Trilantic being able to offer law firm and legal department customers audio search and disclosure services, in addition to the normal document oriented review and e-disclosure services. Nexidia say their technology can reduce the time it takes to review audio content by as much as 80%. www.nexidia.com/legal

Brits hosting LegalTech super-session

Legal Inc, in conjunction with Lovells, Ernst & Young and Paul Hastings Janofsky, is hosting a panel session at LegalTech New York on 4 February (11:15 to 12:30).

The big survey results

Over the last few months the Insider has been running a couple of surveys into legal IT trends. The first, in conjunction with Tikit, looked at not only what top 250 sized law firms had been spending on IT last year and this year but also which technologies they had been spending that money on. The second survey looks at how they are now adjusting their IT plans in the light of the recession.

In terms of IT spend, the headline figures are that total IT budgets fell from an average of £1.74m last year (2007) to an average of £1.18m this year (2008) although, curiously, the average cost per desktop rose from £3860 to £4930. There was also a considerable variance in the amount different firms spent on desktops, ranging from £2770 to £5080.

So what did they spend it on? The answer is not much (and for most firms zero) in the case of technologies such as SaaS, Linux, BI reporting, compliance and e-disclosure systems. Even digital dictation fared poorly, with the average spend this year (£8k) being less than half that (£17k) reported the previous year. This reflects the fact DDS is now a mature market – and it's still performing far better than speech recognition, where the total spend in 2007 and 2008 for all firms in the survey was a mere £6k.

Needless to say a huge chunk of all budgets was taken by Microsoft, with the average spend increasing from £146k per firm last year to £199k this year. That said – and we received a lot of cop-outs to these questions – in most firms this is going on Microsoft Office related projects. There again, the majority of firms also reported that were actively reviewing Sharepoint and Dynamics projects.

What else were firms spending money on? This year firms spent on average 26% of their total IT budgets on support and maintenance contracts; plus a colossal 60% on IT staff costs. (Although we did have a couple of firms who said they had zero staff bills – no, we don't know their secret.) As to the small amount remaining, inevitably this depends upon where some firms are in their upgrade cycles. For example, one firm spent £12k on PMS systems last year, compared with £1 million this year. However in terms ➡



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⇒ of big ticket items, spending on data, telecoms and email infrastructure projects is now the single largest item on the IT shopping list, closely followed by accounts and practice management systems. Next come document management system-related projects, with firms on average currently spending about half as much on DMS as they do on PMS. But, once again this is subject to wide variations depending upon where individual firms are in their product upgrade and/or replacement lifecycles. Spending on both cost recovery and CRM systems has stalled, with spending this year unchanged on last year. Can anything be described as a hot technology? The nearest thing to fit the bill are workflow/BPM systems, with spending this year on average 40% higher than last year.

- We will be publishing the full results of the Insider/Tikit survey as a PDF in January.

For our second survey – *Reasons to be Fearful* – we started out by asking whether firms had significantly amended their IT strategies since 1st September 2008. 35.5% of those responding said 'yes' they had – the remainder said 'no,' which means they are either oblivious to the recession or else revised their plans earlier this year. There again 58.1% of those responding said they had postponed, delayed or deferred IT projects since 1st September; 36% said they had cancelled IT projects; and, 60% said they had delayed, postponed, deferred or cancelled decisions on future IT procurement projects.

On an even more sombre note, nearly one third of respondents (32.3%) said they had already made IT staff related redundancies and lay-offs since 1st September and 41.9% were actively considering lay-offs. In other words, we could be seeing IT related job losses in nearly three quarters (74.2%) of law firms.

In total, a mere 35.5% of firms said their current IT procurement plans were continuing unchanged – which suggests 2009 could be a very lean year for the legal IT industry. Asked why, 12.9% cited difficulties in securing credit to fund IT projects; 22.6% said they were reluctant to be seen spending money on IT at a time when they were laying off staff; and, 77.4% their prime motivation for cutting back on IT was continuing uncertainty about the economy and its impact on their firms' business.

New product launches

DocRite right for lawyers

Interactive Dialogues (the company has offices in Belgium and within the Surrey Technology Centre at Guildford) has launched a document assembly/contract generation system. Called DocRite, the system was developed in consultation with Alstom Power Services general council Iain Jacobs and is delivered as a hosted service. Jacobs says along with the usual benefits of having standardised contracts, he believes "DocRite equates to at least one full-time lawyer available 24 hours a day to our global operations." Alstom plan to use DocRite to generate other commercial documents including guarantees, waivers and proposals.

www.interactivedialogues.com

Epona in hosted DMS launch

The Dutch-based systems house Epona has partnered up with Intermax Managed Hosting to provide a hosted document management system for smaller law firms and corporate legal departments in The Netherlands that runs on a Microsoft SharePoint platform. The system also uses Epona's EmailFiler application.

www.epona.eu

Tel it like it is

Following on from its network cost audit service, InTechnology has launched a similar offering for telephony. Called TelCheck, this free service analyses law firm call charges and line rental costs, and then provides comparative costings showing the savings that could be made by switching telco providers. According to Mark Halpin of InTechnology, in trials TelCheck has identified average total savings of around 20% on telco bills.

mark.halpin@intechology.com



DocsCorp hits 100 mark

DocsCorp has secured the 100th win for its pdfDocs software suite in the EMEA region. The latest law firms to sign up for the system are Veale Wasborough and Stephenson Harwood in the UK, plus Lindahl in Sweden and Webber Wentzel Bowens in South Africa (see also separate story on page 9). DocsCorp's EMEA general manager Chris Davis said "the widespread adoption of pdfDocs by so many law firms underscores the quality of the product and the fact there is now a credible alternative to Adobe and Workshare."

Online news in brief

Three new sites from Inksters

Glasgow law firm Inksters has launched three new websites covering property matters in the Scottish and Shetland markets. The sites include video and podcasts on such topical matters as home reports and wind farming on croft land.

www.inksters.com

www.scotsproperty.com

www.shetlandproperty.com

Shake-up in legal services seminar

There is a free CPD attracting seminar taking place at the Law Society in London on 19 January, looking at the potential impact of new entrants into the legal services market and how law firms are starting to respond. Speakers include the Law Society chief executive Des Hudson, Pannone senior partner Joy Kingsley and Professor Stephen Mayson. In addition, Richard and Grahame Cohen of Epoq will be explaining how firms can re-engineer their processes using the web.

<http://epoqblog.co.uk>

Thought Leader: Cloud computing: nebulous or clear-cut ?

by Stephen Parry, business dev'lment director, Virtual Practices

You would be forgiven for thinking that cloud computing has gone mainstream with even the national news media declaring it *the next big IT thing*. Back in October the *News at Ten* painted a picture of a world where your software applications and data would no longer be stored locally, but served up to you on demand courtesy of the cloud (aka the internet).

Many of you will be asking yourselves how is this different from the software as a service (SaaS) model I use today? My own company has, for example, long offered practice and case management software, customised to individual clients, together with desk top applications, as a service. If you are a larger firm, which outsources its IT infrastructure to a remote data centre or takes advantage of utility computing to furnish the raw processing and storage power for your operations, you may well be asking the same question.

The IT industry is famous for inventing new expressions and cloud computing is the latest. Reputedly first coined in early 2007, the cloud is another word for the internet and derives from the cloud symbol that has long been used to denote the wider network.

This year industry heavyweights, including Google, Amazon, IBM, Hewlett Packard, Yahoo, Intel, Sun and Microsoft, have entered the cloud computing arena. The nebulous cloud is gaining definition clarity.

Industry analysts suggest we think of the cloud as IT generally delivered as services, rather than just software as a service. In the future the cloud will be able to obviate the need for any inhouse infrastructure. Everything – storage, processing power, application development, connectivity, configurability and extensibility – will happen in the cloud. Huge server farms are being built where the processors – real and virtualised – connect at very high speed, paving the way for this eventuality. The prospect of tapping into this raw processing power, capable of computing tens of trillions of transactions ➡

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⇒ per second (compared to the mere 3 billion per second processing speed of the average PC) provisioning and paying for capacity on demand, to fit the needs of the business, has great appeal.

Another distinction of the cloud is the idea of location simply disappears. Software developers will be encouraged to plug together components available in the cloud to create applications and *rich user* interfaces where the application is configured entirely, to meet the exact needs of the organisation. Amazon, for example, enables businesses to create their own applications today and run them in the Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud (or EC2). Google, which has teamed up with IBM, is offering Google docs, email and storage from the cloud. New businesses are also emerging, such as G.ho.st Inc (Global Hosted Operating SysTem) which recently launched a virtual computer on a desktop from a browser.

Consumers may be the first to take advantage of the cloud for remote storage of photo albums, instant e-messaging and the like. But is cloud computing ready for legal practices and are they ready for cloud computing? Despite much hype and announcements of plans and strategies, no vendor is offering true cloud computing today. Neither is anyone offering cloud computing solutions specifically for law firms, the closest you can get are SaaS solutions. (*In fact ChromeRiver is already offering cloud solutions...Ed*)

Until drawbacks such as security (though many would argue cloud computing can offer a safer haven than the status quo), connectivity, service levels, performance and off-line working, are resolved, few will embrace it. Yet the lures of cost-savings and platform freedom are very strong. Microsoft's declared plan to enter the arena with Windows Azure, seen by some as a preservation strategy, does indicate how seriously this dominant player believes cloud computing to be – in the future.

Ten years on, ASP (application service provision), the early incarnation of SaaS, has still to become the dominant preference for IT, despite predictions. For all but those ready to grasp the bleeding edge, there's nothing like the tangible feel and capital expense attributes of their own IT infrastructure. But keep watching the skies.

People & Places

Chivers to head Cognito sales

Steve Chivers, most recently running the Laserform PMS business at IRIS, has joined Cognito Software (which earlier this year acquired JCS Computing) as director of sales & marketing for the new combined company.

Williams is chief exec at Pisces

Catherine Williams is the new chief executive of PISCES, replacing Roger de Boehmler who held the post of director general. Williams was previously the organisation's technical director.

Dream team calls it a day

Two years after the company launched in December 2006, the legal IT PR agency PureTech Marketing, has seen the departure of its founders Sally Bellwood and Laura Gulliver. Bellwood is joining the PR agency Axicom (part of the WPP group) while Gulliver is joining LexisNexis Interaction as head of strategic marketing.

Bond Pearce gets new ISO award

Bond Pearce has just been awarded ISO27001 accreditation (this supercedes the older BS 7799 standard) for information security management. The firm believes it is currently the only law firm in the country to achieve full certification across its entire business.

Moving home

This month saw Tikit move from its long-time Holborn home to 12 Gough Square, London EC4A 3DW. And Kestrel Business Solutions (see story elsewhere in this issue) has moved to No.1 Liverpool Street, London EC2M 7QD.



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New in brief

Say goodbye to email downtime

Dickson Minto reports that since installing a Teneros Application Continuity Appliance for Microsoft Exchange two years ago, the firm has eliminated all email downtime – compared with an average of an hour a month during the previous 18 months. The firm's head of IS Julian Rawlinson said an additional problem was the IT department was constrained in its ability to maintain performance without taking the email system completely off-line. By contrast, it took just 30 seconds to install Teneros and the first data synchronisation was complete in four-to-five hours.

www.teneros.com

Kestrel reports a busy year

The legal IT consultancy Kestrel Business Solution has just completed a busy year with projects including assisting Ashurst, Bond Pearce and Mishcon de Reya with upgrades to Aderant 7.5, while Herbert Smith is using Kestrel resources in their upgrade and preparation work for Aderant *Golden Gate*. Other projects include work with Reynolds Porter Chamberlain, Taylor Wessing, Boodle Hatfield and Farrers. Kestrel also has also provided management consulting services to Clifford Chance and continues to support the firms Keystone/Oracle platform.

www.kestrel-bs.com

Aderant partners with Proactis

Aderant has signed a global distributor agreement with Proactis, a supplier of spend control and e-procurement software applications. Existing Proactis users include Clifford Chance and Herbert Smith. Under the deal Aderant will resell the Proactis P2P (purchase-to-pay) system, which provides increased visibility to non payroll and other indirect expenditure.

www.proactis.com

RoI back on the agenda for digital dictation users

Back in the early days of digital dictation, return on investment arguments were frequently used to justify the reasons for moving from analogue tape to digital. Now, in these recessionary times, they are once more back in favour, although now the more pressing issue is often justifying any new investment in IT. Bighand has released details of an RoI case study it did with LG (Lawrence Graham). The particular project involved rolling out Bighand's mobile product to Blackberry users and led the firm's IT director Jason Petrucci to comment that for the price of one professional dictation device (recorder) he could buy five or six Bighand Mobile annual user licences to run on the Blackberrys fee earners were already using.

Similarly, Coffin Mew LLP, which has been using Bighand DDS since 2006, recently brought in Bighand consultants to review its working practices because it felt it was not realising the scale of RoI as other firms. Following the review and implementation of the consultants' recommendations, Coffin Mew partner Sue Bowler said "we hadn't been ambitious enough with our workflow following the initial move to the Bighand system".

DDS news in brief

First rollout for nFlow DDS 2.0 system

nFlow Version 5.0 – the company's next generation DDS has been successfully rolled out to users at top 50 accountancy firm Johnston Carmichael. Johnston Carmichael IT partner, Douglas Rintoul said although the firm had looked at both Bighand and Winscribe offerings "when we saw the nFlow Version 5.0 product we were completely blown away." Three law firms – names still to be made public – have also ordered Version 5.0.

- nFlow has created a new website containing free 'how to dictate' content.

www.dictationskills.com

Outsourced dictation doubles in three months

BACK Consulting, which outsources transcription work to India, says it has seen a 100% increase in the volume of work coming its way in the past three months. BACK says the biggest growth has come from Ireland.

www.backconsulting.com





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⇒ **Bighand launches 3rd generation mobile edition**

Bighand has announced what it believes to be the most advanced and complete set of mobile dictation capabilities available within the digital dictation market. The update is the 3rd iteration of Bighand Mobile, with new features including enhancements to the Blackberry (including full support for the Bold) and Windows Mobile editions. In addition there is now full support for various .amr formats allowing dictations to be sent from any email capable smartphone, such as the Palm Treo 680 and Symbian devices, such as the Nokia E71. The update also includes enhanced processing of multiple attachments, logging if no attachment is included, and superior fail resilience. A full report can be found on the Orange Rag blog (05.12.08).

Swapping foot for hand controls

Crescendo Systems is now offering Philips' new LFH2305 USB hand control unit as a direct 'plug and play' replacement for the traditional foot pedal. Crescendo say many transcriptionists will find the new unit, which sits in front of a keyboard, more ergonomically comfortable.

www.crescendosystems.co.uk

EMEA news in brief

Wikborg goes with Morningstar and Interaction

Wikborg Rein, one of the largest law firms in Norway, has selected Morningstar Systems to deliver a LexisNexis Interaction CRM solution. This is the second major project Morningstar has handled for Wikborg Rein – the other was an Interwoven DMS implementation. The firm's knowledge manager Werner Frimanslund commenting that "DMS and CRM are important for our organisation, similar to software such as Microsoft Outlook and Word".

DocsCorp success in South Africa

Webber Wentzel Bowens, the largest law firm in South Africa, has chosen DocsCorp's PDFDocs system as a replacement for Workshare Professional. Following a pilot, the firm is rolling PDFDocs 'bible' creation, PDF manipulation and document comparison to 600 users. The deal was won and is being implemented by UK-based Phoenix Business Solutions.

Epona expands consultancy team

Rotterdam-based Epona has expanded its consultancy team with the addition of Marjan Hermkes-van Ham to its team. Ms Hermkes-van Ham, who joins Epona from ⇒

⇒ Morningstar, specialises in document and knowledge management projects.

www.epona.nl

Three more Dutch firms go with Bighand

Morningstar Systems has sold the Bighand digital dictation system into three more Dutch law firms. The three are Ploum Lodder Princen, KienhuisHoving and PlasBossinade. These latest orders mean 25% of top 50 Dutch firms have Bighand DDS implemented by Morningstar.

- Morningstar's parent company I.R.I.S Group (no relation to the UK's IRIS Group) is holding its annual user congress – IRISLink – in Brussels on 2 & 3 February.

DocsCorp team up with r.o.w.

PDF and document content management specialist DocsCorp has formed a strategic relationship with r.o.w. consulting in Germany. The deal means r.o.w. will now resell the pdfDocs suite of products in Germany.

www.rowcon.de

Dutch archiving with Hanzo

Gemeenteweb BV of Apeldoorn in The Netherlands, who operate the Dutch Municipalities Web Archive, has selected the web archiving system from Hanzo Archives (020 8816 8226) to power the project.

www.hanzo.archives.com

Child to take on global role

Copitrak Systems has announced that as of January 2009, chairman Nicholas Child will also be taking up the new post of global managing director. The move comes as the cost recovery company seeks to consolidate its position as the market leader worldwide. For the past five years, Child has driven development in Europe, the Middle East and Asia and he will now add the UK to his remit to ensure an integrated approach to operations. Current UK managing director Stewart Hadley leaves the company this month.



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Insider featured job



InterAction Client Advisor

LexisNexis is recruiting for a London-based CRM Client Advisor to begin in January 2009 with responsibilities in the UK, Ireland & Europe. This is a client-facing role perfectly suited to someone with a strong working knowledge of CRM tools, principles, concepts and external frameworks, and a background in business development, marketing and/or CRM technology. Strong presentation skills and a desire to work with people in an innovative, problem-solving capacity is essential.

Direct Marketing & Data Manager

LexisNexis is looking for someone with at least three years' marketing experience for this current role on the London-based marketing operations team for the Global Client Development group. The person will manage direct marketing processes and support the sales and marketing teams by delivering effective and timely campaigns. They will have primary responsibility for the CRM database including: administration of users, compliance with DPA policies, team support as an expert-user and coach, and data quality stewardship. Ability to work in a fast-paced, collaborative environment is essential. Previous experience with InterAction and/or Siebel, as well as formal project management knowledge/skills are also preferred.

For more information on either of these roles, or to submit your CV, contact Amy Aldington at amy.aldington@lexisnexis.co.uk

Case Study #1: Sun shines its Sparc on Clifford Chance

To meet the growing demand for its services, in late 2007, Clifford Chance began looking at options for improving the performance of its Keystone/Oracle global practice management system (GPMS). As the firm was already implementing another application on Sun Microsystems technology, a team under enterprise architect Hisham Anis began investigating a Sun solution for GPMS.

In May 2008 the firm performed a proof of concept using a Sun Sparc Enterprise server and, satisfied with the results, Clifford Chance decided to migrate GPMS over to Sun. In a deployment project, expected to be completed in early 2009, the firm will run GPMS on Sun Sparc Enterprise M9000 servers, with Sparc64 VII quad-core processors in its main datacentre in London and disaster recovery site near Frankfurt. It has also chosen three Sun Sparc T5220 servers for its application tier at both sites and a Sun Sparc M5000 server to run its development and test environment. So far, so technical but what about the RoI ?

Based on tests and sample data, Anis expects the new servers to more than double GPMS performance capacity and application speed, as well as improve energy efficiency. Additionally, there is a projected full return on investment on hardware costs within two years. This stems from being able to standardise on Solaris 10 OS, exploit Sun systems' inherent scalability and virtualisation technologies, and shift away from multiple Unix platforms. Together this will allow Clifford Chance to consolidate 10 global datacentres into four and reduce the number of physical servers its supports by 90%.

Case Study #2: Getting virtual at LG

Following a disappointing pilot, the move to the firm's new offices and the arrival of a new IT director (Jason Petrucci), the IT team at LG (Lawrence Graham) went back to the drawing-board on plans to introduce virtualisation. Recalling an earlier meeting with the company, Petrucci involved virtualisation specialists VirtualizeIT in the project. The start point was a virtualisation environmental design initiative (VEDI) to help LG quantify the cost ➡

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⇒ both to wallet and planet of the present design versus the cost of a virtualised system. The resultant VEDI models provided cradle-to-grave proof of both £ savings and CO₂ reduction and illustrated how they could fully address the issues through the use of virtualisation and consolidation.

Petrucci says the business justifications to progress with virtualising the entire estate were compelling. Firstly, a move to new premises was a driver and start point to avoid physical relocation of surplus servers. Secondly, the system had to become stable and reliable with inherent disaster recovery. In addition, the amount of hardware and the cost of ownership needed to be driven down from the 80+ servers in existence. Lastly, the time to provision new servers needed to be reduced and capacity increased.

Petrucci says the firm's previous experiences sourcing virtualisation from other partners had left the IT team lacking in confidence, as too often they had been asked for a wish list and then presented back with a 'one size fits all' technology solution. In contrast, VirtualizeIT offered a refreshing approach and was appointed to provide support for the entire project. The subsequent technical specification was for a HP 8000 EVA, running 12 blade and 13 VMware ESX 3.01 servers, with Virtual Centre v2.5 for monitoring 20 virtual machines. For disaster recovery, a HP 4000 EVA was recommended with 6 blade and 6 VMware ESX 3.01 servers across 20 virtual machines.

And the results so far... Currently 80% of the environment is virtualised, with LG enjoying lower costs through reducing their investments in hardware. True clustering is now achieved over both live and disaster recovery sites and the team is pleased with the ease of management virtualisation brings. Petrucci adds "There are other tangible results we've seen. Disaster recovery is now guaranteed and new applications can be easily added without downtime. Now when we consider new systems, as a rule of thumb we explore if they can be virtualised before we will adopt them."

LG is now moving for full ISO 14001 certification. As for the future, LG are looking at virtual desktop infrastructures (VDI) and virtualised SANs

www.virtualizeit.com

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The top 250 reviewed

Time for our annual review of changes to the Insider 250 chart showing which systems the UK's largest firms either are using (or have stopped using) over the past 12 months. On the PMS front, the most noticeable feature is how little change there has been, with no change at the top (Elite with 67 sites) or at Aderant (30), LexisNexis Axxia (marginally down from 40 to 38 sites) or SOS (22). Pilgrim has increased its share (from 16 to 20 sites) and – despite the criticism it has been receiving – IRIS has actually increased its number of sites from 24 to 29 firms.

Turning to document management software (and there remain plenty of firms who are happy with the DMS functionality of their case and practice management systems) despites signs that Open Text is finally getting its act back together, over the last 12 months it still continued to lose ground to Interwoven, dropping from 33 to 23 sites, whereas during that same period Interwoven increased its share from 78 to 88 firms.

So what about digital dictation systems, how have the big three of Bighand, Winscribe and nFlow fared? Nothing short of a digital apocalypse looks set to dislodge Bighand from its first place slot, increasing its number of firms in the top 250 from 93 to 105 over 12 months. Winscribe, through its various channels, remains in second place with 48 firms (up from 44), while nFlow has increased its share from 19 to 26 firms. And there are at least 50 more firms in the top 250 who have yet to invest in any form of DDS.

- You can find the latest version of the top 250, plus an archive going back to 2003, on the Insider website.

www.legaltechnology.com

Orange Rag traffic hits new high

Visitor figures for the Insider's breaking new blog – The Orange Rag – have hit a new high. The total number of visitors (measured as distinct URLs) has increased by 40% from 11,000 in November 2007 to 15,500 in November 2008. And the site traffic (measured as page views) has increased by a massive 140% from 100,000 in November 2007 to 240,000 in November this year.

www.theorangerag.com

10 years ago today...

The big story in December ten years ago was the publication of the 1998 edition of the *Robson Rhodes Legal Survey* – a survey that in its heyday carried a lot of weight. This edition found that 80% of law firms only had websites because either they thought it would improve their image or their competitors had sites and they needed to keep up. It also found that, despite the publicity surrounding the looming 'millennium bug,' 55% of firms had not yet made any contingency plans to deal with a Y2K failure by either a major client or supplier. When asked what were the biggest challenges facing law firms in 1998, Y2K came in 12th place. With hindsight they were right not to care! The survey also reported that the market leaders in the PMS field were AIM (now part of IRIS) and Axxia (now part of Lexis) running neck-and-neck with each having 20% shares. DPS was the case management leader with 19%, followed by AIM on 12.5% and Solicitec on 7%.

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Next issue...

The next issue of the Insider (No. 216) will be published on January 29, 2009. The editorial deadline is January 23. In the meantime keep up with the latest news by visiting our blog at www.theorangerag.com



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