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 UK & EMEA Legal IT News

Document production the next battlefield ?

Over the years we've become accustomed to suppliers competing head-to-head for legal market share (Elite v. Aderant, OpenText v. iManage) but could this coming year see the emphasis shifting to document production tools, with Workshare and DocsCorp battling it out for supremacy?

At the outset Workshare dominated the document comparison market with its Workshare Professional redlining software. Then up popped DocsCorp with its rival compareDocs product and soon began securing not only its own sites but also winning swapouts from among Workshare users.

With DocsCorp also able to offer users its pdfDocs suite of PDF creation and management tools, this was an added headache for Workshare. But, over the past twelve months Workshare has started to fight back with a combination of improved customer care and product value, reliability and performance. The net result is Workshare is now claiming a 93% licence renewal rate among existing users, as well as starting to win back firms that had previously defected to DocsCorp. The latest switch back is Fox Williams, who have dropped DocsCorp in favour of Workshare Professional 5.2 SR3.

Last week Workshare launched Workshare PDF Professional, its own PDF creation, conversion and management suite. Based on Gaiho technology, the new product is pitched 'at a price of up to 80% less than other PDF solutions'. Workshare PDF Pro can also handle ↗

↗ bundling for ebibles, PDF to Word and RTF conversion, and Bates numbering for court filings.

Meanwhile DocsCorp hopes the ace up its sleeve for 2011 is the recruitment of Ben Mitchell, who previously headed OpenText's EMEA professional services operations, as the company's first VP of Sales EMEA.

Holman Fenwick put SAP flirtation behind them

Holman Fenwick Willan, which in April 2006 stunned the market with its decision to swap out its legacy Axxia PMS and move to a bespoke SAP implementation designed by Intalec, has now selected Elite 3E as its new financial and practice management platform for multi-currency and multi-branch operations. Readers will recall that after some initial enthusiasm, the Intalec project stalled giving SAP yet another false start in the UK legal IT market. Apart from the multinationals Linklaters and Baker & McKenzie, the only firm in the UK with an active SAP PMS/ERP project is Shoosmiths with its TCS LMS implementation.

Coming soon: Vinasty the sequel ?

The last time we reported on the activities of Vin Murria was in July 2007 when she departed from the CSG/IRIS legal software business (now IRIS Legal) she helped create. Now we are hearing reports she is back again and already approached two vendors (one in the mid-to-upper tier law firms sector, the other mid-to-smaller tier) about possible acquisitions. We look forward to seeing her at next year's *Legal IT Show* with her shopping list in hand. Vendors hoping to be bought please start forming an orderly queue.



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News in brief

IRIS + snow & trains Given the Tube strikes and disruption to road and rail services caused by the recent wintery weather, we're surprised to see that only IRIS Legal have been quick enough off the PR mark to send out a reminder that hosted and cloud based services provide a way of delivering remote access to applications and data for staff and lawyers stranded at home. Bank House Chambers (Sheffield) senior clerk Wayne Digby said by using IRIS Meridian Law Hosted, he was able to run the set's diary completely from home for several days. While Mike Sayers, the chambers director of Park Lane Plowden Chambers (Leeds) said the hosted solution avoided what in previous years would have been a classic crisis scenario.

Bighand + Rekoop At the recent Blackberry EMEA Innovation Awards, Bighand and Rekoop were awarded the *Love Working Together* award for the integration of their respective digital dictation and time recording software on the Blackberry platform.

FWBS + Phoenix FWBS and Phoenix Business Solutions have announced a reseller agreement whereby Phoenix will sell, implement and support the MatterCentre and MatterSphere matter and case management systems from FWBS in the UK and Australian law firms markets. Phoenix managing director Roger Pickett said one of the attractions of FWBS MatterCentre is its proven integration with the Autonomy iManage DMS.

Tikit + Iron Mountain Tikit and Iron Mountain have announced details of a new partnership whose first product is TikitSafe, an online data backup and recovery managed service. This provides electronic vaulting for servers running Windows 2000, Windows Server 2003 & 2008, plus Solaris and Linux. Specified data can be backed up at a scheduled time to either an off-site location or an onsite appliance. To minimise ↪

↪ bandwidth usage, TikitSafe only backs up data that has changed since the last backup, while the TikitSafe Time-Slice system allows users to restore a whole computer or just a few files, as well as choose to restore the most recent or a historic version of a file

Quote, Unquote

"Website designers have become the plumbers of the 21st Century." ...a marketing manager with a legal IT vendor complaining that, like plumbers, website designers don't understand other people's timescales, charge extortionate rates and usually vanish before the job is properly completed.



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December's wins, deals and rollouts

Pilgrim's new duo Pilgrim Systems has signed two further deals for its LawSoft PMS. The wins are with 30-user shipbuilding and offshore oil & gas boutique firm Curtis Davis Garrard (whose legacy system is IRIS AIM Evolution) and 75-user Abingdon commercial property practice Brook Street des Roches (whose legacy system is IRIS Videss). Pilgrim say these are their 16th and 17th new business wins this year and still expect to finalise another deal before December is out. Pilgrim's COO Colin Kennedy adds that the company's pipeline for 2011 "is looking even stronger than it did at the start of this year."

Comment: By way of balance, we do happen to know that, excluding upgrades and Laserform forms deals, IRIS Legal has secured a number of new business wins over the past few months but we are not allowed to mention the firms' names because they are still trapped in PR clearance hell.

Unity United Two more personal injury practices have selected Proclaim case management software from Eclipse Legal Systems. The firms are United Solicitors in Manchester, who are also taking the Proclaim accounts system to replace their incumbent PMS, and South Yorkshire start-up Unity Law, which has been set up by Chris Fry, a former partner and head of industrial diseases at Sheffield lawyers Wake Smith. Unity (no relation to United) will also be running Proclaim accounts as their PMS platform. Fry says the technology will help him embrace the opportunities presented by the seismic change in the legal services landscape.

- Eclipse has also announced further investment in its Proclaim A2A (application-to-application) technology to support not only further developments in the MoJ RTA (road traffic accident) claims portal but also any rollout of the portal approach to other areas of claimant injury work, such as low-value employers liability, public liability and medical negligence claims. Currently over 70 firms use the Proclaim A2A system, ranging in size from small High Street firms up to 450-user Minster Law.

Outset partner HR and employment law business Outset UK, best known for its InterAct employee relations telephone advice service, has selected TikitTFB's Partner for Windows system to replace its current Sage accounts and LexisNexis Visualfiles case management software. Outset will be using Partner for Windows as its integrated platform for accounting, billing, file management, document and workflow processes, contact management and management information reporting. Outset is the third HR and employment law business to recently implement Partner for Windows, prompting TikitTFB sales director Richard Higgs to say such deals "clearly demonstrate that Partner for Windows is readily adaptable to assist organisations with demands such as the introduction of Alternative Business Structures that are just around the corner."

Houthoff catch-up I.R.I.S Nederland are the implementation partners working on the rollout of an Autonomy iManage Workflow project at 700-user Dutch law firm Houthoff Buruma.



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More deals & rollouts

DNA upgrade in Northern Ireland Carson McDowell, one of the largest commercial law practices in Northern Ireland, has upgraded to LexisNexis DNA and will be using the system as the firm's business process management platform. The firm's IT manager Róisín Mullan said that with 37 practice areas, they needed a system that would ensure process control across the firm, including workflow capabilities and automatic audit trail checks. She added that by reducing the need to maintain multiple systems "we expect to see a return on investment in just 18 months."

- With feedback from clients indicating they would prefer ebilling, Carson McDowell will also be rolling out LexisNexis DNA's ebilling module along with the LexisNexis Counsellink ebilling toolkit, to create a billing process that includes workflows for automatically routing approvals.

BLM go live Berrymans Lace Mawer has completed the implementation of Aderant Expert as its new practice management system across nine offices and rolled it out to 1200 staff, including 590 partners and fee earners. The project included the transition of over 1.6 million bills and more than 22 million time entries from the legacy system to the new live database in under two days. The firm's head of IT Fran Evans said Berrymans plans to implement budgeting, profitability analysis and workflow functionality in the second phase of the project.

Top 250 revision now on

Legal Technology Insider has begun working on its annual update and review of *The Insider 250* chart showing which technologies the UK's largest law firms are currently running. Along with updating the firm rankings, to take account of the latest mergers and expansions, we'll also be reviewing

the product categories. We are also looking at new ways to display the data, in addition to our traditional Excel spreadsheet format, including an interactive graphics version and representing historical data to better identify longer term trends in product usage. All comments and suggestions welcome at 250chart@legaltechnology.com

IRIS Legal typo alert !

Last month's story about IRIS Legal contained an unfortunate typo when we said that *There are also end-of-support dates for either Opsis or AlphaLaw users*. It should have read *There are also **no** end-of-support dates for either Opsis or AlphaLaw users*. Apologies all round.



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Speech technology news

Farleys in DDS swapout Manchester-based Farleys Solicitors has selected Bighand to replace its incumbent digital dictation system. The firm has deployed the DDS to 120 users across 6 sites via Terminal Services. Many fee-earners are also using the Bighand Blackberry app for mobile working. Although the announcement does not give the details, the *Insider 250 Chart* reveals that Farleys' legacy DDS was a Winscribe system.

Commenting on the reasons for the switch, the firm's IT manager Steve Garbett said "We had been using our previous DDS for a number of years but the upgrade to the latest version didn't go smoothly. We encountered numerous technical issues which were exacerbated by us having to communicate via a reseller rather than directly with the software developer. Our reseller didn't have access to the code required to resolve the issues, they were totally dependent on the developers, who are based on the other side of the world. This intermediary step created even greater delays and we found their lack of influence very frustrating."

- The word on the grapevine is another Winscribe site – Farrer & Co – will shortly be announcing its defection to Bighand.

Comment: This is not a Winscribe-specific criticism but it does seem that what we might term *bipolar* vendors (those with management and R&D operations split geographically across the planet in different time-zones) are prone to more customer relations issues (particularly when they also sell through resellers) than those with centrally located HQ/R&D hubs and direct sales teams. It should also go without saying that software companies need to manage the competence and commitment of their resellers although many don't and are still surprised when a poor user/reseller relationship comes back to haunt them.

Just speak naturally Waddington Webber solicitors in West Yorkshire has rolled out Dragon NaturallySpeaking 11 speech recognition software from Nuance across the firm. The implementation and training was handled by local Nuance partner VoicePower. The firm is using speech recognition

➔ to create emails, statements and general correspondence.

- Nuance has launched two apps – Dragon Dictation and Dragon Search – for the iPhone, iPod Touch and iPad. They are available from the Apple iTunes Store.

Magnificent seven SRC report that over the last month, seven more law firms have started using SRC's range of speech recognition products. The firms are Appleby Shaw Solicitors, Cumberland Ellis LLP, Freeth Cartwright LLP, Lester Aldridge LLP, Hugh James, Powell Spencer & Partners and Laurence Ross & Associates. SRC's solutions now include: stand-alone speech recognition, speech recognition integrated with Winscribe digital dictation in both desktop and server modes, and also iPhone and Blackberry mobile options. Hugh James' IT director Jon Howells said the speech solutions have "universally saved time for every user" as well as provided extra efficiencies in such areas as form filling and using email.



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Fresh on the radar

Iron out your mobile problems As iPhones and iPads start making bigger inroads into the UK legal market, so firms are discovering they are not quite so easy to centrally manage as Blackberrys are through BES. One product aiming to address these issues is the MobileIron virtual smartphone platform, which is now available in the UK via IT Security Experts Ltd in Fareham.

MobileIron allows IT departments to manage iPhone, Windows Mobile, Blackberry, Symbian and Android devices from one console with 'zero touch control' so they can be managed in realtime without end-user interaction. There is also an AppStore facility that allows organisations to centrally control corporate apps, as well as corporate data protection that, for example in the case of an employee with their own iPhone leaving a firm, allows corporate data to be removed without wiping the entire device.

www.it-security-experts.co.uk/mobileiron

Get ahead with a headset Speechly Bircham is rolling out 500 Algabe 3.1 passive headset adaptors to its staff. The device, which runs without mains power or batteries, provides a link between a PC and a phone line so staff, who may need to use a headset for applications such as digital dictation and speech recognition, can still answer a phone call without having to remove and swap headsets.

Along with the convenience, the Algabe (which is compatible with most phone systems and both wired and wireless headsets) also means firms need only invest in one headset per user. Algabe say it also removes the need for firms to invest in devices such as SpeechMikes for digital dictation. Daniel Brown's PGS publishing-to-legal IT services business introduced Speechly Bircham to the device.

- Taylor Wessing has also signed up for the Algabe device. After a trial earlier this summer, the firm has installed 100 of the units, with the head of telecoms quoted as saying "the unit will pay for itself in a few months".

www.professionalgroupsolutions.com
www.algabe.com

E-learning insight Interesting new product here being used by the College of Law to monitor and manage the performance of web applications and help the College identify if problems with the online delivery of e-learning courses are caused by server issues, network capacity, external suppliers or internal end-users. Called TrueSight and developed by Coradiant, the system sits on the College's load balancer to provide realtime performance and trouble-shooting data, including the automatic identification and prioritisation of anomalies.

The College's IT director Nick Galt says another benefit of TrueSight is the extensive data reporting it provides. "The monthly stats reveal areas of growth so I can better predict where we need to invest in hardware. It helps me plan six to nine months out with more justification and eliminates guesswork." Galt adds that the usage data also helps when it comes to negotiating prices with external information providers.

www.coradiant.com



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DvD disks to go The production of DVDs and CDs for document efiles and similar projects is now an established part of the landscape for larger law firms. However one of the problems of handling this work inhouse is disk replicators are traditionally large, expensive to run (particularly the ink cartridges) and require manual supervision. Stephenson Harwood has addressed these issues with the installation of three Epson PP-100N DiscProducer systems – one is used by the efiles team, the others by the service helpdesk. The firm says the units are small enough to fit on a shelf, can produce up to 1000 disks on one set of ink cartridges (for the labels), can duplicate up to 100 disks on a single cycle, and can hold up to five jobs at one time without the need for manual operation or supervision. The Epson system was recommended to Stephenson Harwood by Fortuna Power Systems.

www.data-storage.co.uk for Fortuna

News in brief

Soft River gets a Handd Handd Business Solutions has been appointed the premier partner for South River Technologies Cornerstone MFT software. Cornerstone is a secure file transfer platform designed to address security issues with conventional FTP servers.

www.handd.co.uk



Diary date for I.R.I.S event The European systems house I.R.I.S (*no relation to IRIS Legal*) will be holding its annual IRISLink user conference in Brussels on 8th February 2011. The programme includes sessions on intelligent document recognition, optimising IT infrastructure, including virtualisation and DMS and enterprise content management.

www.iriscorporate.com/irislink2011

FWBS claims Microsoft first FWBS claims it is the first vendor in the UK legal IT sector to achieve the renewal of its gold certified status under Microsoft's revised partner programme. FWBS achieved certification in the ISV (independent software vendor) competency area. FWBS has been a gold partner since 2004.



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Ghosts of Christmas past

In the wake of the decision by Holman Fenwick to go with Elite 3E as its new practice management platform after the Intalec-SAP implementation debacle (*see front page*) we checked out our archives and found that Intalec were also briefly considered as a contender at Taylor Wessing in 2006. In the event the firm went with Aderant Expert but we were intrigued to see Taylor Wessing's legacy accounts package was JHC.

Back in its mid-80's heyday, John Hemming's JHC plc business sold its Forum system, which ran on an IBM AS/400 mini platform, into a number of mid and larger-sized law firms. (JHC also developed Lotus Notes-based legal applications.) By the middle of this decade however, most firms had moved elsewhere with Taylor Wessing and Andrew M Jackson (which migrated to Videss, now IRIS Legal) the last to go.

But whatever happened to JHC? The business is still providing IT services to the financial services sector but John Hemming, the individual, is now better known for his political activities (initially with Birmingham City Council and since May 2005 as LibDem MP for Birmingham Yardley) and colourful private life. He voted for himself in a *News of the World* 'Love Rat of the Year Award' after it was revealed his PA Emily Cox was his mistress. And (at the time of going to press) Christine, his wife of 30 years, is due in court today (16 December) on charges of burglary and having stolen Miss Cox's tabby cat.

10 years ago today...

Who'd be a sole practitioner or run a small law firm? As we approach the end of 2010, industry pundits are warning the imminent arrival of the Legal Services Act means the end of smaller High Street firms. But when we check the Insider archives, we discover that various industry pundits speaking at an APIL (Association of Personal Injury Lawyers) conference in December 2000 were warning that the end was nigh for High Street firms, because they'd be unable to meet the challenge of online conveyancing or manage legal aid franchises. Also that month Neil Gamble, the CEO of Solution 6 in Australia, said the group's "problems were behind them now" and described the CMS (now Aderant) PMS business as the "jewels in the group's crown."

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