LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

UK & EMEA Legal IT News

OLM unveil a Peppermint twist

Peppermint Technology, which claims to be the first major new entrant to the UK legal software market in over a decade, is working in partnership with Microsoft to develop a UK cloud-based Legal Services Platform for law firms.

The LSP is designed to enable firms to deliver consistent and integrated legal services directly to customers, referrers, business partners and fee earners from any device, at any time. The platform will provide a suite of business tools that, say Peppermint, go beyond the limitations of traditional case and practice management solutions. Already in development, the platform will be released on a modular basis with the first module available in March 2011 while the complete platform is planned for Q4 2011.

The workflow driven platform, which uses Microsoft Dynamics CRM 2011 as a foundation development platform, will eventually deliver back office functionality (such as case management, reporting, finance, accounts, performance management, time recording, billing and business intelligence) as a cloud-based SaaS offering, billed monthly (based on the number of users) to provide affordability, predictability and flexibility, with no upfront software licence fees or hardware to buy.

Arlene Adams, co-founder of the business said "We started the business because a team of us shared the frustration that existing suppliers ⇨

were not investing in new technology at a time when legal firms are crying out for new services to help them compete. The legal market has lagged behind other industries and we saw the opportunity to bring to market a fresh approach combined with technology innovation. We canvassed the market and found huge support from firms frustrated by the lack of innovation available. Our mission is simple. We want to work with firms in a symbiotic relationship to build software that allows them to outperform. We handpicked the best talent from the legal market to form a great team. We have every confidence that a combination of our people, our technology and our fresh approach to working with clients will set us apart in this market."

Peppermint say the LSP application intelligently links and contextualises data thus allowing management reporting and automated workflow which will help firms deliver improved services and manage risk. The choice of Microsoft Dynamics CRM 2011 reflects the demands of the Legal Services Act which is pushing firms to focus on a customer-centric approach to systems over traditional back office ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) systems that have proven cumbersome, costly and in many cases provided little return on investment.

Steve Morrow, director Microsoft Dynamics UK, added "By bringing together the depth of legal knowledge in the Peppermint team with Microsoft's technology expertise and products, we are confident this platform will challenge the status quo of the UK legal market."

Peppermint is backed by the OLM Group and co-founder Peter O'Hara who said "The evidence exists to suggest the market wants Peppermint Technology to succeed. Even before we launch the platform, we have signed a number of major firms as customers due to the fact we are listening and investing. I think this is an approach many more firms will embrace."

www.PeppermintTechnology.co.uk

• *More Microsoft legal news on back page...* ⇨

OpenText acquires BPM vendor Metastorm

So there we all were waiting for Autonomy to buy OpenText but instead last Friday OpenText announced it was moving into the BPM (business process management) market with the acquisition of one-time market leader Metastorm Inc.

Comment: The formal announcement talks of the deal strengthening OpenText's Microsoft partner strategy 'in particular with Sharepoint' which is a little odd as one of the mysteries with OpenText is why they continue to promote their DM eDOCS platform at the expense of their LIMS Sharepoint based DMS.

Not surprisingly, the announcement also makes no mention of the fact Autonomy is now starting to be seen as an increasingly credible player within the BPM/workflow sector, with several legal IT systems integrators now working on iManage + Autonomy workflow projects whereas previously Metastorm would have been the BPM of choice.

Scot's LawCloud launch

Earlier this month Edinburgh-based LawWare launched its new LawCloud service, which company founder Warren Wander describes as "a new generation of practice management and office software for Scottish lawyers." The system, which offers cash accounting, electronic case file, risk management and compliance tools, plus Microsoft Office 2010 with email and shared diaries, as well as automatic backups and updates, is delivered as a hosted, private cloud service "for a low fixed monthly cost". Gloucester-based Rise is providing the cloud infrastructure for the LawCloud service.
www.lawcloud.co.uk

More new legal apps

Face to face with iPads As part of its *Face2Face* business development campaign, personal and military injuries law firm Hilary Meredith Solicitors has teamed up with Apple to provide free, customised and pre-loaded iPads to seriously injured clients, particularly the profoundly deaf and those in need of rehabilitation and cognitive brain therapy. Senior partner Hilary Meredith said the objective was to provide clients with information in an accessible way.

LMS moves into apps Legal Marketing Services (LMS) has launched LATYS, a new app for the iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch platforms. The app is designed to help brokers to quote, instruct and track conveyancing matters through Apple devices. (Borrowers can also use the app to track progress.) Features of the LATYS app, which is available as a free iTunes download, include an instant quote (based on individual law firm fee structures) for leasehold and freehold sales and purchases, as well as remortgages; a law firm instruction service via phone or online; and a case tracking facility covering mortgage applications and property transactions. LMS say the rationale behind the app is that in commoditised markets where there is little variance in pricing "it is paramount to offer customers something unique, that adds real value and will encourage them to choose your products and services over others."

No apps please we're manufacturers Last month we reported on the launch of the Accident App, by Manchester law firm Croftons. The app is designed to capture the details of workplace incidents but according to managing partner Simon Leighton, has only received a lukewarm response from manufacturers who apparently do not appreciate the value of gathering contemporaneous information. "We are struggling to engage them in debate," says Leighton.

February's wins, deals, swapouts and rollouts

Lexis win two FFW deals Field Fisher Waterhouse has deployed the LexisNexis Interaction CRM system, coupled with LexisNexis Streamline to create an integrated, practice-wide client relationship, client opening and business process management platform. The firm's previous CRM software was Pivotal.

IBB swap out Axxia FloSuite has announced that IBB Solicitors has signed up as a customer in a deal that will see IBB gradually move away from LexisNexis Axxia as the firm's workflow and case management platform and deploy FloSuite software to manage case inception and time recording, as well as case and matter management.

Elite 3E in, Miles 33 out London law firm Bircham Dyson Bell LLP has selected Elite 3E as its next generation financial and practice management system. The evaluation and selection process was managed by 3 Kites Consulting to locate a solution that could assist in areas the firm's legacy Miles 33 system could not address.

Manx Law Soc pick Accuity The Isle of Man Law Society has selected Accuity as its preferred supplier of AML (anti-money laundering), PEPs (politically exposed persons) and sanctions list e-verification solutions. The deal means the Society's members will be able to use the Accuity system for their own compliance purposes.

Farrer & Co outsource to Intelliteach Farrer & Co has selected Intelliteach to manage its out-of-hours and weekend helpdesk operations on an outsourced basis. The firm will also use the Intelliteach IQTrack web-based call tracking system to monitor ticket volumes and establish support benchmarks.

Kennedys choose Hubbard One Hubbard One has signed up Kennedys as a new customer for ➡

➡ its Web Center software platform. The platform enables law firms to use the web to communicate with target audiences, as well provide a foundation for content globalisation, mini-site and blog development, as well as email marketing, alumni and career sites.

Copitrak latest London law firm Simons Muirhead & Burton has selected cost recovery specialist Copitrak to supply copy and print tracking charge-back systems for its new fleet of MFDs (multi-function devices). Copitrak say the past six months has seen 'a sharp increase in sales' of cost recovery systems to small-to-mid size firms.

High five for HighQ Ajay Patel of HighQ Solutions has been in touch to say that over 30 of the largest law firms in the UK and Europe are now using the company's dealroom/dataroom and enterprise/social collaboration/client extranet systems.
www.highqsolutions.com/sitepoint.html

More wins and rollouts

Spratts use P2 Spratt Endicott Solicitors has employed P2 Technologies to provide managed IT services, including strategic guidance on how the firm can get more out of its existing IT systems and third-line support.

Cloud group joins SOA The Cloud Computing Centre, a provider of tailored cloud services, has been awarded membership of the Solicitors Outsourcing Association (SOA) which aims to provide law firms with access to a range of outsourced support services. The SOA currently provides seven core services, including HR and employment services, voice and data IT services, legal cost advice and accounting and bookkeeping services.
www.cloudcomputingcentre.co.uk
www.thesoa.co.uk

IntApp has record year in UK IntApp reports having a record year in the UK in 2010, securing eight new law firm customers for the company's software – Allen & Overy, Bond Pearce, Clifford Chance, DWF, Hogan Lovells, Linklaters, Ogier and SJ Berwin – as well as winning additional business for existing users Berwin Leighton Paisner, Norton Rose, Addleshaw Goddard and Field Fisher Waterhouse.
• IntApp also expanded its network of certified UK services partners with Opes Consulting (Kevin Smith's specialist consultancy) and Athenian IT (Neil Renfrew's latest venture).
www.intapp.com

IRIS wins ICA deal The International Cotton Association has selected IRIS Legal Solutions IRIS Law Business case and practice management system to centralise document management and also as a customer relationship management tool. The ICA believes that along with improving internal efficiencies, the new system will allow ⇨

⇨ complete transparency on the progression of all matters, with clients and arbitrators able to track the status of their cases.
• IRIS Legal reports that the 2010 calendar year saw 85 new law firm customers select case and practice management products from the group, while another 170 firms bought IRIS electronic legal forms for the first time.

Bar news in brief

Temple Gardens Tikit win The 2 Temple Gardens barristers' chambers in London has selected Tikit NIS (Network & Integration Services) to improve its IT infrastructure management. As part of the deal, the set has moved its server hardware break fix maintenance across to Tikit NIS rather than use the server manufacturers' own support because Tikit could offer a more flexible service including repair to pre-failure state with a rebuild and data restoration.

New website for Outer Temple Outer Temple Chambers in London has used the digital agency Mosaic Brighton to redesign its website in a style that avoids 'a generic legal online presence' and 'differentiates (the set) by giving the site 'a bold look and instinctive navigation'.
www.outertemple.com
www.emosaic.co.uk

Quote, unquote

Neat line in a new case study about barristers' set Wilberforce Chambers. Talking about their use of the IRIS Meridian Law Connected system, the set's head of finance and administration John Treacy says "As for the ultimate seal of approval, put it this way: it keeps our clerks quiet, so it must be performing well."

Big two go head-to-head with product launches

Interesting times in the digital dictation world with the two major software developers Winscribe and Bighand both having major new product releases.

Winscribe, which last year announced its diversification into the broader business workflow market with the launch of its Winscribe BPM product, has now integrated this system with its long established Winscribe Dictation system to give users a far wider range of workflow capabilities than was previously possible, so dictation and transcription can be merged with the broader document production process.

Meanwhile arch-rivals Bighand have launched version 4 of their eponymous digital dictation and voice productivity system. This is the system that converges the best of the old nFlow software (which Bighand acquired last year) with the Bighand platform but in addition has added some important new functionality.

New features include improved integration with the Autonomy iManage DMS, a speech recognition pre-learning utility to maximise voice-to-text accuracy (we've tried this and it really works.) In addition, primarily for the US market, Bighand has introduced enhanced mobile email integration, so an email can be attached to a voice file on a smartphone, plus support for dictation on Google Android phones.

But, probably the key enhancement is the Advanced Multistep Workflow. This allows users to build complex workflows to move dictations and associated documents through a series of actions but within the core dictation product and without the need to buy additional BPM software, a development that puts clear blue water between Bighand and Winscribe's approaches to BPM.

Speech technology news

Southerns mobilise with SRC Southerns Solicitors has started using a mobile digital ⇨

⇨ dictation solution provided by SRC and based on Winscribe v4.0 running on Windows 7 and Blackberry devices.

New Grundig hardware Grundig Business Systems has launched its new Digta 7 series of digital dictation devices. Along with a new 'touch pin' slide switch and 2Gb internal memories, other features (available only on some models) include the ability to transfer dictation files to a smartphone via a Bluetooth link.

New Philips software Philips has launched SpeechExec Pro 7, the latest version of its digital dictation workflow management software. Along with a new user interface, including a 'Transcribe Carousel' to help typists keep track of workloads and a simplified toolbar, Pro 7 also breaks with the hardware-based licensing model of previous versions and introduces a web-based licensing system.

Latest events

Legal IT Show next week Next week, should you need reminding, the *Legal IT Show* takes place at the Islington Business Design Centre in London on 1st & 2nd March (doors open 9:30am). Along with the UK's largest legal technology trade show, this year's event also includes an extensive conference programme including a panel session and a working lunch/masterclass led by Professor Richard Susskind and two keynote interviews conducted by Insider editor Charles Christian. At the time of going to print the Day 2 interview has still to be finalised but the Day 1 interview is with the shy and retiring Jan Durant of Lewis Silkin.
www.legalitshow.com

Key strategies discount NetLaw Media, the organisers of the *Key Strategies for Law Firms* conference in London on 18th May (the speakers include Insider editor Charles Christian) are offering readers a 15% discount price of £339 + VAT to attend the event. Call 020 3176 4200 quoting NLM-KSLTi-566 or visit
www.netlawmedia.com

Litigation support news

Euro on-demand service launch Recommind has launched its new Axcelerate On-Demand facility in London, providing an end-to-end hosted edisclosure review platform for the European market. The London launch follows the success of a similar hosted service in the United States. Simon Price, Recommind's European director said having a UK-based data centre also avoids cross-border data transmission issues and helps ease compliance with the EU Data Privacy Directive.

Bernstein joins LDM Garry Bernstein, most recently the VP of business development at the Legal Solutions Group and a past chair of the Council on Litigation Management, has joined LDM Global as the company's new head of corporate business development. ⇨

Capsure eBible creator Capgen has launched its new Capsure eBible Creator for automating the CD/DvD eBible production process. The company says that along with reducing costs, the system can cut production times by over 70%.
• Capgen is holding a seminar on the afternoon of 10th March at Fujitsu's Baker Street, London offices to demonstrate the Capsure eBible system.
www.amiando.com/NDQDYXY
www.capgen.co.uk

Free ediscovery book EMC[2] has sponsored a new ebook *Bringing eDiscovery inhouse for Dummies* in the popular 'for Dummies' series from Wiley Publishing. The book, which is available as a free download (*see link*) is designed to help inhouse teams analyse ediscovery issues, including cost and implementation, and learn how to make ediscovery a repeatable process.
http://altfarm.mediaplex.com/ad/ck/
16417-121066-36995-0

Fresh on the radar

Access all points We start this month's Fresh on the Radar with news of a new managed cloud solution provider for the legal sector. Called Accesspoint, the management team contains some familiar industry faces including David Amies and Kevin MacDonald. Currently about 40 law firms are using the company's services and they are also providing hosting platforms for legal system suppliers Pace Professional and Cognito Software. The latest Accesspoint win is London family law specialists Blacklaws Davis LLP who have now migrated their entire software and data to the cloud as an alternative to replacing their fleet of ageing server hardware.
www.theaccesspoint.co.uk

Riskenomics embrace standards We first mentioned BSCM Operational Risk consultancy in our July 2010 issue, since then there have been some further developments with the company and its services. The first is the company has entered into a strategic partnership with eOrigin, the UK distributor of the Riskenomics cloud-based risk and dependency application. e second is BSCM has extended its portfolio of dependency modelling solutions based around Riskenomics to include the BSI 9001 quality management and 27001 information security management standards.

BSCM has now negotiated a licence with BSI to sell their standards embedded within their models so that, in conjunction with using the Riskenomics system, they will assist an organisation with planning, implementing, auditing and managing quality standards projects. The pricing model starts at £2995 for a year 1 five user licence and subsequent recurring years at £1500pa. However when you consider how much external consultants charge for standards projects and how much of their work could be taken inhouse with a system like this, the pricing ⇨

⇨ starts to take on a different perspective. BSCM has also been talking to the English Law Society and hopes to launch a Lexcel 4.1 Standard model in the near future.
www.bscman.com

nScaled now in UK And back to cloud computing again, this time with nScaled Inc which has now expanded into the EMEA region and opened a UK office in London's Covent Garden district. nScaled has been operating in North America for over two years offering what it describes as its 'hybrid cloud data centre solutions' for legal, venture capital and professional service firms. Cooley LLP, which plans to go 100% cloud computing, is probably nScaled's best known legal sector customer.

Mark Hadfield, the CEO of nScaled (motto *Cloud resources for risk intolerant industries*) says the 'hybrid' cloud differs from the more common public clouds (such as those operated by Amazon and Google) by focussing on enterprise IT systems, regulated industries requiring high levels of confidentiality and including both on and off premise components and software. In addition, this global network of physical infrastucture with local delivery, to avoid jurisdictional and European data protection laws and regulations, is available on an on-demand basis. The net result is what Hadfield describes as an "elastic data centre" that can increase or decrease capacity with customer demands.
• nScaled has appointed Michael Evans, a former managing director of LexisNexis Asia and Ruleburst EMEA (now part of Oracle) as its European managing director.
• nScaled's first UK legal sector customer is Leigh Day & Co who have used nScale's London data centre to upgrade their backup and disaster recovery infrastructure.
• In addition, nScaled has appointed Phoenix Business Solutions as a partner and authorised solutions provider with a focus on delivering infrastructure services to UK and European ⇨

⇨ based customers. Phoenix managing director Roger Pickett commented "nScaled is a key component in the launch of our infrastructure services business unit. We believe this will assist us in offering our clients a number of benefits including managed services and disaster recovery, as well as enabling a first step towards hosting. We were impressed with the technology and approach from nScaled and feel this partnership will deliver extended benefits to our customer base."

www.nscaled.com
www.phoenixbs.com

Comment We have moved very quickly from a situation of '*if* cloud computing ever takes off for law firms' to one of '*when* firms switch to the cloud'. As a consequence, we are starting to see far more interest being taken in the quality, security and reliability of cloud operators' services. And about time too, as we are also hearing reports of some law firms having 24 and 36 hour service outages because their cloud providers' servers cannot cope with the demands being placed on them.

Everything else is just Gravy Another new face, this time Gravy Solutions which specialises in security systems. The company's main product is BioSYN, an e-signature system for embedding signatures into documents and converting them to a PDF file format.

Jonathan Sherwood of Gravy says the system has been designed to be intuitive, with a simple interface that can be integrated into a firm's document management system. In addition, BioSYN can verify a signature and biometrically authenticate the signatory by the characteristics of how the signature is made (speed, angle, direction, acceleration, air moves etc). Gravy has already got the system running as a pilot at Browne Jacobson LLP, where the firm is looking at achieving greater efficiencies where printing-to-sign was the accepted method of making documents legally binding.

Sherwood says law firms are looking for an e-signature system that goes beyond *sign and certify* functionality of something like Adobe ⇨

⇨ Acrobat Pro in terms of authentication and anti fraud measures, yet simultaneously is part of the natural digital document production process and does not require documents to be printed out, physically signed, scanned back into the workflow and archived. With BioSYN all documents, at the time of signing, are converted to PDF and cannot be changed without the signature becoming invalid.

www.gravysolutions.com

Online client management Next up we have Law-Writer, which is a Linux-based online client management system that was launched last October. We are waiting for more details but essentially this a client-centred, case independent document production and client communications system for small firms. Law-Writer is delivered as a cloud application however there is an optional Law-Box local back-up appliance available.

www.law-writer.com

Expert-Answers Finally, we have a new online legal advice site that hopes to provide an alternative business model in the new Legal Services Act regime. Called Expert Answers and devised by solicitor James Mather, the site stands the normal model for the provision of legal advice on its head.

Instead of the client asking a question and the lawyer setting the price for the answer (which often results in complaints about poor value for money) the person who poses the question also sets the price they are willing or can afford to pay. Prices paid so far range between £10 and £50. The business model rationale is people are generally reluctant to approach solicitors but with legal aid under pressure and Citizens Advice Bureaux closing, it is becoming harder and harder to get free preliminary legal advice on whether to pursue or defend a claim or action. Expert Answers aim to fill this legal information gap and while £50 may not sound much, it could prove a nice little earner if it attracts large volumes of the legally disenfranchised.
www.expert-answers.co.uk

People & Places

TikitTFB to sponsor Legal Aid awards TikitTFB has signed up as a sponsor for this year's *Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year Awards* and is supporting the *Social and Welfare Lawyer* category. The awards ceremony will be held on 28th June at the Globe Theatre, London. For more information on the awards, including how to nominate, visit
www.lapg.co.uk/legalaidlawyer.cfm

Bryan Roberts to head Frayman UK As part of a strengthening of its UK & EMEA operations, the US based risk management systems vendor Frayman Group has appointed Bryan Roberts as its UK managing director. Prior to joining Frayman, Roberts was UK sales director for LexisNexis Enterprise Solutions and before that with Aderant.

Partnership for IT director Jonathan Swan, the Operations & IT director East of England law ⇨

⇨ firm Roythornes LLP has been promoted to the partnership and board. Swan, who joined Roythornes in 2008, has previously worked with LexisNexis, as well as a number of major London and regional law firms.
Comment: Although professional rules permit it, there are still relatively few firms that have taken the plunge and appointed non-solicitors as partner managers. Well done Roythornes.

OSCRE's new board OSCRE (the Open Standards Consortium for Real Estate) has appointed a new chairman and three new board members. The new chair is Ed Lubieniecki of RealFoundations and the new directors are Alex Maries of Jones Lang LaSalle, John Bennett of Yardi and Chad Wiech of Asset Record Company.

New CMO at ISYS Search software specialist ISYS has appointed Mark Vadgama, previously with M&C Saatchi, as chief marketing officer.

Meanwhile, elsewhere on Planet Microsoft . . .

Last month it was the Lewis Silkin/Sword *Jesus DMS* software launch. This month it is the Peppermint Technology Legal Services Platform announcement. Both mark a growing trend among legal software market vendors to base their applications upon standard Microsoft applications and then add a legal 'skin' to it.

Furthermore, they are not alone. Over the past month we've also had reports that **LAWIN**, the largest law firm in the Baltic States with offices in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, now has a practice management system built on the Microsoft Dynamics AX platform (an earlier version of the software LexisNexis is using for its new PMS to replace Axxia Arista and Artiion). **Winckworth Sherwood** is now rolling out a Sharepoint based DMS developed for the firm by ClearPeople. And **Clifford Chance** has confirmed its new Sharepoint Server 2010 project means it will be able to 'retire' its legacy OpenText DM5 document management system. And if the largest firm on the planet is dropping its traditional DMS in favour of Sharepoint...

• The Clifford Chance, Lewis Silkin and Peppermint stories have all been generating a huge amount of comment and controversy on our Orange Rag breaking news blog. Follow it here… **www.theorangerag.com**

10 years ago today . . .

How times have changed! In the February 2001 issue of the Insider, one of our top stories was a report by Keystone Solutions (subsequently acquired by what is now Aderant) that 92% of law firms were opposed to the ASP (application service provider – what we would now call cloud/SaaS) because of concerns about security. We also reported that Keystone was anticipating raising £11million through a share issue on the London Stock Exchange. February was also the month that Corel announced it was 'committed' to 'going back to word processing basics' in belated recognition that it still had a loyal customer base of WordPerfect users. Fine words but Corel blew it and the market shifted away to Microsoft Word.

Legal Technology Insider

The next issue (No. 240) will be published on Thursday 17 March 2011. To keep up with the latest news visit the **www.theorangerag.com** blog and Twitter **@ChristianUncut**