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Mixed reports on London Legal IT Show

We've been receiving decidedly mixed reports on this month's *Legal IT Show* in London. Although the number of stands was down, audience volumes were broadly comparable to last year, there was a distinctive buzz about the event and the show did not trail off halfway through the second day (in part attributable to the organisers moving the event away from a frequently snow blighted early February to early March.) The conference sessions were undoubtedly popular, there were some interesting new product launches (see page 6) and vendors such as TikitTFB, SOS, Linetime, Eclipse Legal Systems, DPS, Cognito and FWBS all reported a steady stream of visitors who were in the market to buy new systems.

That's the good news. The bad news is more big names were missing this year, notably IRIS Legal, LexisNexis and Aderant. With consolidators IRIS and Lexis accounting for about 10 previously independent vendors between them, including Axxia, Visualfiles, AIM, Videss who regularly vied with each other to have the biggest stands, it is hardly surprising the venue looked empty. Why were they not present? With IRIS, Lexis and Aderant all now running their own user conferences in the UK (in addition to the usual seminars and roadshows) their respective marketing departments all said they felt they could make better use of their budgets on their own events, rather than spending so much on ➡

➡ one single trade show. If any more 'big names' pull out next year, it will be interesting to see how much longer the organisers ICBI will continue with the event but, despite it being a little bit *meh* this year, the Islington *Legal IT Show* still remains the UK's premier legal technology industry event.

- Curiously, the one vendor everyone was talking about at Islington – Peppermint Technology – was also not present however this did not prevent its upcoming Microsoft Dynamics CRM 2011 solution being the subject of widespread speculation and not a little wishful thinking.
- On a lighter note, the prize for the cutest, most popular giveaway goes to nQueue Billback for its kangaroo-with-a-little-joe-in-its-pouch soft toy.

Law Society selects Tata for tech 'transformation'

In its latest foray into the world of technology (remember its selection of Wang?) the Law Society of England & Wales has chosen Tata Consultancy Services (best known in the UK legal market as the developers of the SAP-based Legal Management Solution) as its 'strategic transformation partner'. TCS will initially work with the Law Society on 'a significant system development project which aims to create a more effective online service for the Law Society and its members' as the market gears up for the Legal Services Act. The new TCS application will also help the Solicitors Regulation Authority towards regulating not just individuals but also firms and alternative business structures.

All change at IRIS - again

More change at the IRIS Software Group with the board this month announcing the resignation of Martin Leuw as group *continued on back page* ➡



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CRM - suddenly there are viable alternatives

Almost since the day the product was first launched into the UK, lawyers have been grumbling that the Interaction CRM application is too complex and cumbersome for their needs. Or as David Gilroy of Conscious Solutions (*more about them shortly*) puts it “for most law firms, Interaction is a very big sledgehammer being used to crack a very small nut.”

But, over the past month the entire legal CRM landscape has started to change. First, three substantial regional law firms – 30 partner Nelsons in the East Midlands, 25 partner Mayo Wynne Baxter in East Sussex and 31 partner Higgs & Sons in the West Midlands – have openly stated they have live projects underway to use the open source SugarCRM system as their client relationship management platforms. Nelsons are rolling out to 158 users along with some integration to their Miles 33 PMS, Mayo Wynne are running a pilot and Higgs are due to rollout next month.

There are four other firms also involved in similar SugarCRM projects and all seven sites are working with Conscious Solutions on the implementation and customisation of the system, including using the Legal Pack that Conscious have specifically developed for law firms. Gilroy says the SugarCRM breakthrough is attributable to two factors: the growing acceptance of open source software in legal and a change in marketing habits, with firms recognising the main challenge in adopting CRM is their culture, habits and processes, not the technology.

www.conscious.co.uk

The second development, which featured in the chairman’s statement in Tikit’s annual results announcement a fortnight ago, is LexisNexis has terminated its Interaction reseller partnership with Tikit with effect from 9th May 2011. As Lexis ➡

➡ has recently terminated relationships with other partners, the motivation seems to be boosting revenues by axing resellers rather than any indication of dissatisfaction. Leaving aside the fact Tikit has more experience of Interaction (introducing the system to the UK in 1996) than LexisNexis (which only acquired it in 2004) it does prompt the question what will Tikit do next?

In its public statements to-date, Tikit talks about ‘driving forward initiatives’ and having ‘unmatched’ CRM development teams. But it is also worth noting that Tikit subsidiary TikitTFB has already sold and implemented the Client Profiles CRM4Legal system (based on Microsoft Dynamics CRM) into three UK law firms: Gordons, Rix & Kay and Fisher Jones Greenwood, while more recently Capsticks selected CRM4Legal from TikitTFB in a head-to-head competition with LexisNexis Interaction. So, will we now see Tikit embrace Microsoft Dynamics as its new CRM platform?

Bar Library go with Google Apps

In a big step forward for open source technology, The Bar Library of Northern Ireland has selected a Google Mail plus Google Apps for Business cloud solution to provide a secure email platform for its members. Although the Library did consider Microsoft’s hosted Exchange offering as an alternative, it was rejected as too Windows-centric as many of the Library’s members run on Mac, Linux and/or smartphone platforms.

The Bar Library used Google enterprise partner Ancoris to implement the project “go Google and migrate to the cloud”. Since completing the project, the Bar Library now has around 700 users on Google Mail, the Library’s own staff are using Google Docs instead of Microsoft Office and a growing number of barristers are also using the Google Calendar app.

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March's wins, deals, swapouts and rollouts

Pilgrim win Miles 33 swapout Guildford-based Stevens & Bolton has selected Lawsoft from Pilgrim Systems to replace the firm's legacy Miles 33 practice management system. The firm will also be using Lawsoft for reporting, workflow, CRM, matter management, billing and KPIs.

Informa on the cloud Informa (the group behind this month's Legal IT Show in London) has selected NetDocuments (in a deal to be implemented by Quintec International) as its cloud based document system. The DMS will eventually be accessed by 8000 staff in 150 offices in 40 countries.

www.quintecinternational.com

Another Sharepoint DMS win The Amsterdam law firm VMW Taxand is to use Epona's DMSforLegal and Sharepoint 2010 platform as its document management system. The firm will also implement Epona's ContactManager CRM system.

Two Hubbard One wins Hubbard One's UK office has signed up two more law firms as users of its Contact Manager Communicator (CMC) system. The firms are RadcliffeLeBrasseur, a former Elite Apex site, and Bircham Dyson Bell. CMC combines contact and list management with email marketing and website integration.

Nabarro currently aware After a three month trial, Nabarro has rolled out UC Logic's SyseroCA current awareness application into key practice areas to help lawyers consolidate updates from multiple legal information resources, including RSS feeds, static websites and email alerts into "one single user friendly email".

- Fragomen, one of the largest immigration law practices in the world, has gone live with its new Global Reference Library. This is a Sharepoint-based knowledge management system that uses Sysero KMS and Concept Searching.

www.uclogic.com

Microsystems win more sites Pannone has become the latest UK law firm to sign up for the Microsystems +3BClean metadata leakage application. And, Nabarro and Slaughter & May have licensed DocXtools document productivity software from Microsystems.

Total see strong start to 2011 Legal telecoms specialist Total Ltd reports a good start to the year with recent wins including Francis George Solicitor-Advocate, Kendall & Davies, Keith Evans & Co, PJE Solicitors and WBW Solicitors.

Adams & Adams alive South African law firm Adams & Adams has gone live with an Autonomy iManage Worksite 8.5 upgrade and rollout handled by Phoenix Business Solutions.

- Phoenix is holding a seminar in Birmingham on Office 2010 rollouts on 30 March and a seminar in London on 7 April to introduce their partnership with FWBS and MatterCentre. For details email lauren.evans@phoenixbs.com



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More wins and rollouts

71 not out Lancashire law firm Davies & Gribbin has become the 71st new business win for Eclipse Legal Systems in its current trading year. The firm has selected both the Eclipse Proclaim accounts and case management software as part of its plans to gear up for the post-ABS marketplace.

For Price the IRIS is right Manchester-based law firm Price & Slater has turned to IRIS Law Business Hosted to provide it with online and on-demand accounts, case and practice management software. Over 100 firms have signed up for the IRIS hosted service over the past 12 months.

And the other I.R.I.S. Meanwhile the other I.R.I.S. in the legal technology marketplace has been selected to implement Autonomy iManage Worksite projects at both Vienna-based law firm Wolf Theiss and at P+P Pollath & Partners, which has three offices across Germany.

- The Brussels-based I.R.I.S. group has also won a new contract from the West African Economic & Monetary Union (UEMOA) to support its archive digitisation project.

Birketts rationalise with Canon East of England law firm Birketts has signed a contract with Canon to rationalise its business printing and document production processes. Currently the firm has 270 desktop printers and 35 small multifunctional devices (MFDs) located in four offices across the region. Working with Canon, the firm will replace the majority of these printers with a fleet of 50 new Canon MFDs, as well as install eCopy v5 and Canon uniFlow v5 software to provide an improved scanning and printing workflow.

Dedicated print solution West Midlands law firm Higgs & Sons has used Altodigital to advise it on the selection and then implement a new print platform. The new technology includes Ricoh ➔

➔ MFDs for printing and scanning, Equitrac print management software and HDD encryption to ensure any data stored on MFD hard drives was securely protected.

www.altodigital.com

SGH outsource with Tikit London law firm Sprecher Grier Halberstam has outsourced all its IT support and strategic consultation work to Tikit as part of a fully managed service deal. SGH managing partner Emma Shipp said the contract will allow the firm to keep a tight control on costs for infrastructure, server coverage and end-user support whilst still being able to call on Tikit's "industry knowledge to help us maintain our edge".

Consultancy raises head

Had an interesting meeting with Alwin Grey of CCL Independent Consulting earlier this month. We've previously reported on the activities of a sister company within the CCL group (digital investigation specialists CCL Forensics) and Grey explained the consultancy was now seeking to raise its profile in the legal vertical market as a provider of expert witness, system selection, due diligence and IT department review services. Grey described CCL's mantra as 'de-risking the process'.

www.cclnet.co.uk

Quote, unquote

Speaking at last week's Lex 2011 conference in London, legal sector Twitter stalwart Brian Inkster (aka [@BrianInkster](https://twitter.com/BrianInkster)) said that while his firm now had more Twitter accounts than lawyers, their data indicated that more than 20% of the firm's new business (including referrals) was directly attributable to their online presence.



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Speech technology news

Irish report on iPhone + Bighand Rol Dublin law firm Eversheds O'Donnell Sweeney says it has increased out-of-hours productivity as a result of implementing Bighand's server-based speech recognition module and iPhone app. IT director Nicholas Eustace said the firm were impressed with how quickly the Dragon NaturallySpeaking software learnt the Irish accent, with one partner's accuracy increasing from 23% to 95% after just one round of corrections. Eustace said the aim of speech recognition is not to replace secretaries but provide an out-of-hours productivity tool for fee earners, with the speech recognition transcribing dictations and automatically returning the recognised text back to their iPhones for a final edit.

SRC win DDS swap-out Wheelers Solicitors has replaced its legacy digital dictation system with combined desktop speech recognition software and a Winscribe DDS supplied and implemented by SRC.

- Challinors Solicitors are widening the scope of their original SRC Winscribe digital dictation software implementation. Recent developments include linking the DDS to outsource transcription provider DictateNow and integrating it with the firm's practice management system.
- SRC has been appointed a Nuance healthcare premier partner for its expertise with Dragon speech recognition software in the NHS market.

Winscribe BPM 2 Winscribe has launched BPM 2.0, the latest version of its business process management software for mid-sized law firms. It features an enhanced graphical workflow designer tool. Winscribe has also announced the availability of an optional package of pre-built workflow processes called the Headstart Pack, covering such tasks as expenses, matter intake, tenders, cheque requisitions and leave requests.

New dictation apps for Apple Philips has launched the Philips Recorder app which turns an iPhone or iPad into a wireless digital dictation ➡

➡ recorder. The new app integrates with the Philips SpeechExec Enterprise suite, allowing users to record, edit and send dictation files directly from the mobile device.

Where there's a will

Later this month Jordan Publishing will launch a version of DPL Professional's will writing and assembly software under the Jordans Professional Wills brand. DPL has also entered into a deal with Bloomsbury Professional Publishing to license precedents from *Drafting Wills in Scotland* (by Barr, Dalgleish & Stevens) for the company's soon to be launched DPL Professional Wills Desktop Scotland product. Along with the will software and precedents, the new system will also include a will commentary and continuing powers of attorney.

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Legal IT Show round-up

As tech events go, this year's *Legal IT Show* was a little short on major product launches (as distinct from point upgrades) however the following products caught our eye...

Tikit unleash the TLO On the TikitTFB stand, the company unveiled its Tikit Legal Office (TLO) platform. This can best be described as an 'integrated best-of-breed solution' that brings together a portfolio of legal software applications in a pre-bundled and ready to rollout format that can be delivered over the cloud on a SaaS basis.

The core is the TikitTFB Partner for Windows practice and case management system but with the addition of the CRM functionality of the Tikit eMarketing Suite, Tikit Carpe Diem time recording, template management and document assembly via Tikit TMS, the matter and file management capabilities of Tikit FileNote and the enterprise-grade document management of Autonomy iManage.

Tikit have high hopes for TLO and see it as an ideal product for aspirational law firms that have outgrown the traditional integrated legal systems of smaller suppliers yet lack the IT resources and budgets needed by larger firms to implement and deploy best of breed solutions. The cloud/SaaS delivery model also means firms can manage or refresh their IT operations in a more cost effective way, without any pricing uncertainties or large upfront capital investments.

- TLO will also work on an Apple iPad.

Blue Car: Open Text They are a new name to us but Blue Car Technologies have already created webparts for the Elite PMS and at Islington they launched their ECM Workshop. This is a collection of software tools to manage OpenText eDOCS environments. There are three elements (which can be licensed individually or as a bundle) namely ECMRescue to detect and recover zero byte files, ECMMechanic to check client software installation and patch levels, and ECMHistory to manage eDOCS activity logs.

www.bluecartechnologies.co.uk

Visualise those contracts Codean were demonstrating their Visualizer contract analysis software, which helps lawyers to read, analyse and proofread complex legal contracts faster and more efficiently by automatically generating a hyperlinked version of the document.

www.codean.com

nQueue + Rekoop nQueue Billback announced a tie-up with Rekoop that will not only see the company reselling the Rekoop time-capture-on-a-Blackberry system but also integrating Rekoop data with nQueue Billback's own cost recovery software. Stewart Hadley, the EMEA VP of nQueue Billback, said that while capturing time and cost recovery data is important, the real value is derived from understanding that data (what nQueue call information accountability) and using it to drive costs down by, for example, questioning why a firm needs so many printers and copiers.

www.nqbillback.co.uk



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All aboard the Black Pearl We also caught up with US-based workflow and BPM software specialists K2. Their K2blackpearl BPM engine (*who has been watching too many Pirates of the Caribbean movies then*) has already been used to develop and streamline simple business processes running on Elite and Aderant PMS platforms and, more recently, has been gaining increasing traction as a case management platform for Microsoft Sharepoint environments. Recent K2 projects include being used to create an integrated new matter intake system at US law firm Sonnenschein in a LegalKey + Sharepoint + Elite environment; and, being used to create a Sharepoint-based document workflow and scanning process for the Legal Aid Board in South Africa. (About 50% of K2's work is with government agencies.)

www.k2.com

Interactive apps for lawyers Finally, reports Joanna Goodman, after identifying a gap in the market for an app that would allow law firms to quote and receive instructions and for brokers and clients to track the progress of their cases, LTS (the technology division of LMS) launched LATYS. This is an interactive iPhone/iPad/iPod Touch app that allows third-party introducers to contact law firms for an immediate quote, instruct them to proceed and track cases using their Apple devices.

LATYS is configured by LTS to each law firm's profile, brand and product suite, and then linked to its case management system. Once the app has been licensed from LTS, the firm can invite third-party business introducers to download it free from iTunes, so they can then use their mobile devices to contact the firm for a quote and instruct them to handle a case.

The app is only part of the functionality of the LATYS system. Client data entered via the app is automatically transferred to the firm's case management system, enabling case tracking by brokers and clients. Gateway software enables firms to update the app automatically and ➡

➡ directly from their case management systems.

LATYS is being sold as a white label application and as it is tailored to each firm, it requires no development or maintenance work. The cost is £99 a month which can be offset by banner advertising with links to related services. There is a specific space on the app for banners and monthly click-through data is provided. For example, a conveyancing firm might complement its services with a link to a removals company. LATYS is aimed at the mid-market and is receiving considerable interest from firms involved in commoditised legal services, including property transactions, RTA and PI claims.

www.techservices.org.uk + www.lms.com

New product launches

SRA complaints system Case management software developers iCasework has launched an online SaaS complaints management system for the legal community. Called UsefulFeedback! for Law, it is effectively a risk management system to help law firms, barristers and inhouse legal teams avoid inadvertent non-compliance with the Solicitors Regulation Authority's code of conduct. The system can be accessed on-demand via the web (there is also on-site alternative) and there is a free trial available.

www.usefulfeedback.com/trial.html

Crawling for lost documents DocsCorp has launched the pdfDocs Content Crawler OCR module (initially for Autonomy iManage 8.2 and OpenText eDocs 5.1.05 or higher) to help capture documents that are 'lost' within DMS repositories. Documents can become lost because they have been scanned or otherwise added to a DMS as a non-searchable PDF or TIFF without a text layer. Content Crawler identifies such files, then uses OCR to convert them into text searchable files before saving them back into the DMS.

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Fresh on the radar

Sorting out those Office formats Iphelion, a software solutions and services company which has been operating in the UK legal space since 2006, is now rolling out its marketing suite of applications for Microsoft Office users, with two apps already available. These are Signature Creator (for Outlook) and Outline for Word, which are both template, styles and macro management systems designed to maintain a single corporate brand across an organisation. Both products are .NET applications, with Outline supporting Word 2007/2010 and the docx file format, while Signature supports Outlook XP and above, with optional Blackberry integration available soon. Iphelion director Andy Driskell says the Signature Creator product is already live and implemented in two large law firms, whereas Outline is in beta with one firm and the company is looking for other early adopters.

www.iphelion.com

Ravn on Ravn Systems is a new London-based consultancy specialising in information retrieval with a particular focus on enterprise search. The company's Ravn Legal Search & Knowledge Management platform offers a way of finding and managing a law firm's structured and unstructured data. In addition to full text search capabilities, the platform also include features that makes it easy to manage taxonomy structures, tag content and suggest similar content to a particular document or work that is currently in progress.

www.ravn.co.uk

Just Jive talking We are starting to hear good things about Jive Software and their range of social media software applications. The company describes its platform as 'integrating the best features of social networking, collaboration software, community software and social media monitoring to extend a layer of social capabilities across every level of your business'. Probably Jive's nearest competitor is OpenText's Social Workplace platform although that has yet to win any serious traction in the legal sector. ➡

• At last week's Lex 2011 event, Matthew Arnold Baldwin were talking about their experiences with Jive as a intranet platform.

www.jivesoftware.com

News in brief

Site wins quality mark The new online legal advice site Expert Answers (see *February Insider for first report*) has been awarded a quality mark by the Legal Services Commission.

www.expert-answers.co.uk

Digital Reef gets Euro reseller The US-based early case assessment, information governance and ediscovery software vendor Digital Reef has entered into a European reseller agreement with eOrigin Limited.

www.digitalreefinc.com + www.eorigin.co.uk



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⇒ **New PI claims site** Blake Laphorn has launched a specialist website providing specialist legal advice and information about personal injury, clinical negligence and overseas claims.
www.blclaims.co.uk

Contract management white paper Dolphin Software has published a new white paper on contract management including legacy and contract lifecycle issues. To obtain a free copy email dolphin@ambrosecomms.co.uk

Scrappage is back Select Legal Systems has just announced what it describes as the legal IT industry equivalent of 'scrappage' for old cars and is offering law firms up to a 30% discount when they trade in their old software licences for new Select LawFusion licences.
www.selectlegal.co.uk

People & Places

Terry Dickinson joins 7Safe Terry Dickinson has joined the 7Safe ediscovery team as an associate director. Dickinson began his career at Allen & Overy before joining BSG in the litigation support market with its Lotus Notes review tool JFS. He was part of the MBO team that turned the JFS business into G3 Consulting, which in turn was acquired by the FTi Group in 2006.

All change at Browne Jacobson All change at Nottingham-based Browne Jacobson, with the departure of IT director Peter Birley for a life in consultancy and the arrival of Dan Simms, most recently working in consultancy, as his replacement. Simms, whose formal title is IT & Business Operations Director, has previously worked for Eversheds and Addleshaw Goddard. Birley's new strategic consultancy has a strapline of 'Business Technology Aligned'.
www.peterbirley.com

Lauwerys moves Ian Lauwerys has moved on from heading up IT at Kennedys and is now with Barlow Lyde & Gilbert. It will be interesting to ⇒

⇒ see how long the firm's Miles 33 + Prolaw combo remains in place.

Thorpe on cue Alison Thorpe has joined nQueue Billback as EMEA business development manager. Thorpe, who will be based out of the company's London office, has worked for some of the legal IT industry's best known names including Aderant, LexisNexis and most recently The Frayman Group.

New face at Inpractice Andrew Taylor, a qualified accountant and former law firm finance director, has joined the Inpractice UK legal consultancy as a financial management consultant. He will be joining Inpractice's recently formed mergers team.

Hobs relocates Hobs Legal Docs relocated last weekend to new offices at 58 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3BP. The main office number will be 020 3217 0300.

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All change at IRIS *from page 1...*

chief executive after 10 years in the hot seat. Leuw, who will retain his involvement with IRIS as a non-executive director, is succeeded by Nick Discombe as group chairman

At the same time, IRIS announced that the group was being split into two business units, namely IRIS Accountancy Solutions and the IRIS Software Group (ISG). The latter comprises all the other divisions of IRIS including Legal, Not-for-Profit, Payroll & HR, Field Service & Hire, Ticketing, Healthcare & GPs, and software assets and compliance. The board has begun a search for a new CEO for IRIS Software Group but in the interim Neal Roberts, who will continue as Group CFO, will also act as CEO.

Apart from this, the current management team remains unchanged, including the position of Doug Hargrove as managing director of the IRIS Legal division. We met a very bullish Doug Hargrove last week who said he felt Legal had turned a corner for three reasons: the removal of the end-of-life notices, the growing enthusiasm for the division's IRIS Hosted cloud/SaaS offering, and recognition of the value of the additional products and services IRIS can now offer legal customers.

- Martin Leuw joined IRIS as group chief executive in 2001, during which time the business has grown from 100 employees to 1200, revenues have risen from £9million to £120m, and market capitalisation from £30m to over £500 million.

10 years ago today ...

Ten years ago, in March 2001, our top stories all featured the number 10. We reported that new research suggested law firms were keeping their core accounts and practice management systems for at least 10 years before considering replacing them or implementing a major upgrade. This was far longer than most vendors at the time budgeted on, which probably explains our second big story that at least 10 major UK legal software vendors had founders and/or majority shareholders looking for someone to buy them out. Events a few years later suggest those founders should have remembered the old warning of being careful what you wish for, when both Vin Murria of CSG (now IRIS) and Kate Holden of LexisNexis did just that.

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