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Acquisitions ahoy! It's takeover time again

The days are getting longer and vendors pockets are getting deeper with this month seeing four takeover deals (with a total value of \$1460 million between them) over the last fortnight alone.

First off the mark was **Nuance Communications** (probably best known in the legal market for its eCopy and Dragon Dictate businesses) acquiring the one-time cost recovery and print management systems market leader **Equitrac** for \$157 million (£96m) in cash. The Equitrac product range will now be merged with Nuance eCopy ShareScan scanning and workflow solutions, as well as the OmniPage, PaperPort and PDF Converter Professional desktop applications.

Next, we had **Thomson Reuters** buying the London-based **World-Check** business due diligence information service, which currently serves 49 of the world's top 50 banks and 200 enforcement and regulatory agencies. World-Check, which employs more than 500 staff, will now become part of the GRC (Governance Risk & Compliance) division of Thomson Reuters. The financial terms were not disclosed but CNN say the sale price was around \$530 million (£326m).

Finally, we have the strange saga of one company accepting a lot of money to get out of the ediscovery business and another paying a large amount of money to gain entry. On its way out is **Iron Mountain**, which has sold its digital division (including its archiving, ediscovery and

online backup operations) to **Autonomy** for \$380 million (£234m). The deal segues very neatly with Autonomy's existing activities in the data storage and ediscovery sectors and, coincidentally, brings Autonomy's private cloud data to over 25 petabytes in size. (By our calculations, this is the equivalent of 8,500,000 million pages of A4.)

Meanwhile, heading in the opposite direction, **Symantec** last week announced it was buying the highly-rated ediscovery systems specialist **Clearwell Systems** for \$390 million (£240m). Symantec sees Clearwell as a natural fit for its existing backup, archiving and security business but also quotes a Gartner study saying the ediscovery sector is growing by 14% a year and will be worth \$1.7billion by 2014. Formed in 2004, Clearwell is a privately owned company that has only ever received \$33 million in venture capital backing.

- Insider sources suggest there are at least two more major acquisitions/sales imminent in the legal IT space.

Let the good times roll

Of course one reason why the acquisitions side of the legal IT business has picked up is because vendors are once more starting to make serious money. Speech technology specialists **Bighand** yesterday announced their results for the financial year to 31st March 2011. Highlights include a 20% increase in staff numbers, 20,000 more individual users, turnover up by over 50% and increased pre-tax profits to £3.4 million.

Workshare is telling a similar story, reporting earlier this week a 23% rise in annual sales bookings during its year ending March 2011. According to company vice president Dan Filby "We are seeing a clear trend in the Americas, Asia Pacific and European regions that technology budgets are returning for software solutions that solve real business challenges."

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Peppermint still flavour of the month

At events we attend, the legal IT vendor everyone is talking about continues to be Peppermint Technology, so here is a round-up of the latest news coming out of their Nottingham offices...

Oxford-based Darbys has engaged Peppermint to implement the Peppermint Portal as a business intelligence and KPI reporting front-end to the firm's existing IRIS AIM Evolution practice management system.

In addition to fee earner productivity and reporting tools, the portal also offers a prospect and client-facing CRM facility that can help manage the lifecycle of any relationship from initial enquiries through to providing a self-service ability for referrers and clients to access, track and update matter information on a real time basis. The Portal is the first module of Peppermint's new Legal Services Platform to be released, with the full product still on schedule for a Q4 2011 launch. To see a demo of the portal visit www.pepperminttechnology.co.uk/home/video

The latest additions to the Peppermint team include Tracy Kitchen, previously with Civica, who joins the senior management team as head of service delivery, and Andrew Goodman, previously with TikitTFB and before that LexisNexis Visualfiles, who joins the sales team.

At the recent *Legal Futures Conference* in London, Peppermint conducted a survey of delegates. Among the findings was a feeling law firms had to be more approachable, with 83% saying legal services needed to be available beyond traditional office hours. Online services were another hot topic, with 58% saying self-service was a concept law firms would have to adopt. And, 16% said loyalty schemes would be an important tool to thank clients for their business, reward them for recommendations and to keep a firm's name in front of them.

Technology refresh under way at Olswang

Olswang has embarked upon a major technology refresh project, selecting Elite 3E to replace its legacy LexisNexis Axxia practice management system. The firm's finance director Edward Gordon Hall said "3E will enable us to drive profitability through enhanced financial management. In addition (it will) provide the platform to empower our people to better manage their clients and their own performance."

Also, after looking at several products and piloting two, Olswang chose Phoenix Business Solutions to supply and implement the DTE Axiom time recording and capture application. IT director Clive Knott said "As well as being more user-friendly and intuitive, DTE Axiom proved a better fit for the business strategically in terms of our technology roadmap." The system has been integrated with Blackberry and Outlook.

- Still in the world of Elite PMS systems, 200 lawyer CMS Derks Star Busmann has become the first Dutch law firm to upgrade to Elite 3E.

Sharepoint DMS fever spreading

After an 18 month proof of concept involving commercially available search engines, the European Court of Human Rights has selected Microsoft FAST as its strategic search platform. ECHR head of IT John Hunter said "FAST with its Sharepoint integration represents the best overall platform in terms of the functionality we require for both the public HUDOC case law archive and internal data sources." Last week the ECHR published an ITT for its new HUDOC platform.

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May's wins, deals, swapouts and rollouts

SOS takes two more IRIS sites Solicitors Own Software (SOS) has signed up two more IRIS Legal sites. Harrison Clark, which is based in Cheltenham and Worcester but in July merges with a Ross-on-Wye firm to create a 200+ user practice, has selected SOS Connect to provide a case, practice and marketing management system to replace its legacy IRIS AIM Evolution system. Bill Kirby's Professional Choice Consultancy assisted in the specification and selection process. And Willans LLP, also based in Cheltenham, will implement SOS Connect as part of an IT refresh that will see the replacement of its incumbent Cognito accounts, LegalDocs document assembly and IRIS Videss case management systems.

Pilgrim wins Axxia swapout Manchester-based Linder Myers has signed contracts with Pilgrim Systems to implement a 200 user LawSoft 10 system. The new system will provide the firm with a consolidated PMS platform to replace the firm's core LexisNexis Axxia Arista accounts system, as well as DPS, Eclipse and Mountain software inherited during recent mergers and acquisitions.

Linklaters gets a new IDOL Linklaters is to implement a new enterprise search platform to support its training and knowledge management operations. The firm is working with systems house Okana, developers of the Sense2 user interface, to create a platform powered by Autonomy IDOL. The IDOL system is currently being used to index some 250,000 curated legal knowledge documents. At the present time it appears the firm will continue to run its Documentum DMS.

www.okana.com

Two wins for LexisCheck Lewis Silkin (*you didn't think we could let an issue of the Insider go by without mentioning this firm?*) has selected the LexisCheck Monitor system to monitor references in internal documents for changes in the law. The

↗ system, which has been integrated with the firm's Sharepoint platform, will automate checking knowhow documents, precedents and client files for out-of-date citations. Tees Solicitors (formerly Stanley Tee) which has offices across East Anglia, has also implemented LexisCheck.

- Secondcap, which operates in the secondary private funds market, has selected Lexis Diligence from LexisNexis UK to perform customer due diligence services for the purposes of anti-money laundering and Bribery Act compliance.

Copitrak win Bournemouth firm Aldridge Bownlee has rolled out the Copitrak Eclipse embedded cost recovery system across its fleet of Canon copiers and printers.

Shoosmiths backup Shoosmiths has signed up for InTechnology's managed backup service, with the intention of putting the firm's entire 20+ TB data estate into the cloud, as a cost-effective secondary storage and recovery option.


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More wins and rollouts

Vinsons outsource to Lineal Vinson & Elkins RLLP has awarded Lineal a contract to deliver a range of on-site and off-site litigation and corporate support services, including outsourced post and reprographics services. Lineal will also assume operational and managerial responsibility for the firm's on-site post and print room facility.

www.linealservices.com

Totally winning Recent new wins for legal telecoms specialist Total Ltd include Goldsmith Williams, Harris Fowler, Brand Mellon, Chawner Grey & Co, Willans LLP and Wilmot & Co. In addition, existing customers Marcus Sinclair and Quality Solicitors Jackson & Canter have implemented Blackberry Enterprise Server Express.

Record year for LawFusion The last 12 months have seen 34 law firms, including a number of start-ups, sign up for the LawFusion practice and case management system from Select Legal Systems. As a sign of the times, 28 of the new sites (82%) have opted for the cloud-based version of LawFusion.

Your Conveyancer on e-know.net Scotland's leading volume conveyancing services provider (and long term cloud user) Your Conveyancer has selected e-know.net as its new IT hosting partner. Along with the ability to host the LexisNexis Visualfiles case management software the service uses, Your Conveyancer's IT director Steven Lilly said a key factor in the selection (along with its data centre facilities and ISO27001 accreditation) was the fact e-know.net "could get what we were about... and work with us to driving things forward so we can go to the next level."

Watson Burton upgrade SRC has been working with Watson Burton LLP to streamline dictation, workflow and document processes. The project ➔

➔ has included upgrading the firm to the latest version on Winscribe, server virtualisation and introducing the Blackberry smartphone dictation option to fee earners working out of the office.

Taking the strain out of merging Rather than face an upfront capital outlay on a server refresh hard on the heels of last November's merger between Sibleys LLP and Elston Germain Davidson, the Borough (London) based firm of Sibley Germain LLP opted to migrate to an IRIS Law Business Hosted service for its accounts and practice management. The migration took place over a weekend, so the new system was available from Monday morning.

According to Stephen Sibley, the firm is also seeing the benefits of people being able to access the service from anywhere, providing they have internet connectivity. "Instead of the dead time hanging around (court) waiting for cases to be heard, fee earners can now work effectively on other matters away from the office."

Kaspersky avoids ideoes of March Newbury-based family law firm March Solicitors has rolled out Kaspersky Small Office Security v2 to provide an all-in-one online security solution. The firm was concerned about any possible threats to its case management portal and after evaluating a number of products selected KSOS2. A key factor was the system's low memory footprint which meant security scans did not slow down PC performance.

Quote, Unquote

"Pilgrim Systems are about to launch the best PMS matter costing and pricing tool, almost as good as the one I designed 15 years ago." ...consultant Neil Cameron tweeting from Pilgrim's LawSoft User Conference in Edinburgh earlier this month. The product he refers to is the Matter Estimating & Monitoring module, available in LawSoft 10.



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European news

Iceland SPO selects Clearwell The Special Prosecutors Office in Iceland, which is currently investigating the collapse of Icelandic banks in the fall of 2008, has selected the Clearwell E-Discovery Platform to support the digital side of its investigations.

Norwegian firm stays with OpenText After reviewing the latest document management systems from its incumbent supplier OpenText and four other vendors, the Norwegian law firm Advokatfirma Kluge DA has recommitted to Open Text. The firm is now upgrading to eDOCS 5.3 with the assistance of Stavanger and Oslo based OpenText partner Contesto AS.

www.contesto.no

- OpenText has also released German and French language versions of its eDOCS 5.3 DM system.

But Schoenherr selects iManage In contrast, the Central European commercial law firm Schoenherr has selected the I.R.I.S. Group to implement its new Autonomy iManage Worksite DMS. This will be the first time the firm, which has 12 locations and 300 lawyers across Central and Eastern Europe, has used a document management system.

Stibbe gets ABBYY habit Stibbe, which has offices across the Benelux region as well as in London and New York, has implemented a Fine Reader OCR (optical character recognition) system from ABBYY to help automate document conversion. One of the attractions of the Fine Reader system was its ability to recognise multiple languages as Stibbe staff regularly work in English, Dutch and French.

Claeys implement Mimecast Claeys & Engels, which has six offices across Belgium, has selected Mimecast's cloud-based email management system. The implementation was carried out by I.R.I.S. The firm's IT manager Genkis Gurlek described email management in the cloud as "a dream for IT managers."

Bar news

IRIS wins LEX swapout London barristers set No.3 Fleet Street has returned to the IRIS Legal fold after briefly using a Bar Squared LEX chambers management system. The set's senior clerk Lee Parkes said "We found the LEX system increasingly irritating the longer we used the application. On reflection we should never have moved away from IRIS. Whilst the price of the new system was extremely attractive at the time, we now realise that the grass is not always greener, particularly if you are a small set!" The set is now running the IRIS Meridian Law Connected system.

Havers and Justis partnership Legal publishers Justis and the barristers data source Havers are now working together to promote the work and specialisms of barristers to a wider legal audience.

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Chris Bull going it alone

Chris Bull, previously with Osborne Clarke and currently global solutions group head at legal outsourcer Integreon, is leaving the company next month to set up his own consultancy. Bull told the Insider he felt there was a gap in the market for someone working with the chief operating officers and management teams of law firms, inhouse legal departments and legal service providers to advise them on operations and business management. In other words, looking at how they can significantly transform their business models through operational reviews and examining how they spend their money. Bull will not be offering advice on mergers or IT projects.

Panic in social media park

Last week's Netlaw Media *Key Strategies for Law Firms* conference in London drew one of the biggest audiences we've seen at a legal event in the last 12 months. Along with the formal conference presentations, the event also included a number of roundtable workshop sessions. Insider editor Charles Christian, who chaired two of the IT sessions, reports that four key issues voiced by law firm delegates were:

- Business development teams alone (whether or not they are working in close association with IT departments) cannot drive marketing technology initiatives. To have any hope of lawyer buy-in, the lead for such projects must come from the firm's senior management.
- There is a growing concern that in the post recessionary legal market, individual departments within law firms are reasserting their autonomy and increasingly wanting to do their own thing when it comes to marketing initiatives.
- Law firms are now regularly reviewing three products as alternatives to LexisNexis Interaction when it comes to selecting CRM systems. The three are Microsoft Dynamics CRM, Sugar CRM and Salesforce.com.
- Finally, there is a worry, verging on paranoia ➡

➡ that social media (particularly Facebook and Twitter) are out-of-control communications channels with the potential, through a few careless postings, to damage in minutes a reputation a firm may have taken years to establish. Delegates seem to have been swayed by the recent experiences of one firm when it invited guests to tweet about an event it was hosting. See www.RollonFriday.com for 20th May for full report.

There's an app for that

The relentless march of the apps continues. This month's batch includes... **ETSOS** has announced a mobile version of its conveyancing quotation and referral system. It is available free of charge and will run on iPad, iPhone and Android devices. **DLA Piper** has implemented the Good for Enterprise system from **Good Technology** to ➡



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to provide secure business email on its staff's iPads, iPhones and Android devices. According to Good Technology, about 20% of professional services firms (not just law firms) now support the Apple iPad through either corporate procurement or BYOD (bring your own device) initiatives.

Finally, Merseyside law firm **Canter Levin & Berg** has launched a workflow app for the iPhone and iPad to assist individuals involved in road traffic accidents. Called First Call and available free of charge on iTunes, the workflow uses GPS tracking to accurately determine driver locations, combined with images taken by the device's built-in camera, plus voice prompts to generate a recording of the client's replies, so there is no need to rely on data being typed in.

The net result is a complete record of the accident taken at the scene, which is then automatically transferred to Canter Levin's Eclipse Proclaim case management system and logged as a new claim for processing. The app's integrated matter tracking system also allows clients to monitor the progress of their claim. The firm's operations manager James Whelan says "The app provides what I consider to be an unbroken pathway between a 'legal event' (the accident) and a 'legal solution' (the claimant solicitor)."

Fresh on the radar

Online with Azure Peapod Legal Office has moved PrintaForm Online, the hosted version of the company's digital legal forms product, to the Microsoft Azure cloud.

Mitrates Seal deal Bracknell-based Seal Software has signed a partnership deal Mitrates that will deliver a discovery and audit system to help inhouse legal departments with contract lifecycle management. Seal CEO Ulf Zetterberg says the emphasis is on legal and financial risk management to help organisations locate orphan, forgotten, expired, disputed and legacy contracts still lurking within corporate servers to ensure there are no missed opportunities to renegotiate.

www.seal-software.com

PPI caseload solution Eclipse Legal has released a new version of its Proclaim Financial Claims system tailored for processing Payment Protection Insurance claims. The move follows the British Bankers Association's decision not pursue further legal action over PPI, which is expected to create a surge in mis-selling compensation claims.



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Good events, fun causes and exceptional deeds...

Great event, pity we can't report it Well done Pilgrim Systems for hosting an excellent Lawsoft User Conference in Edinburgh earlier this month and for booking barrister-turned cook and TV presenter Clarissa Dickson Wright as the after-dinner speaker. Unfortunately all her anecdotes were so outrageous (including why former Prime Minister Tony Blair earned the nicknamed Miranda when he was a young barrister) that we can't repeat them here.

Marathon man in Prague Converge IT's Nigel Wright recently took time off from setting up a new legal IT services division to run in the Prague Marathon. Despite the 23c degree heat, he completed the course in 4 hours 49 minutes and raised £1000 for the Northern Ireland Hospice.

Cycles across Skye As part of the company's pledge to raise £25,000 for the charity Macmillan Cancer Support this year, Fiona Hamilton, the product manager for IRIS Legal's barrister division, is setting off on Saturday (28th) to cycle 95 miles across the Isle of Skye in the Skye Mor race. Fiona hopes to complete the race in under 6 hours.

Climbing the ladder LILIconnect, the Ladies in Legal Information networking group (now sponsored by LexisNexis) is holding its next meeting on Wednesday 22 June at the Corinthia Hotel, Whitehall Place, London. The topic is Climbing the Management Ladder, with speakers from Shoosmiths, Taylor Wessing and Davis Langdon. The event starts at 6:30pm and to register visit LILI Events on LinkedIn

New kids nominated Well it was almost congratulations to online property services ➡

➡ company ETSOS which, despite only opening for business just over 12 months ago, was nominated in four different categories at the recent Property Professional Show (PPS) Awards. Sadly, despite being nominated more times than anyone else, they didn't win anything – except some new business deals and potential partners.

Eadie of the Arctic And then there is the saga of Foot Anstey's IT & Business Services director Duncan Eadie. Last month he left the sunny climes of Devon to face -40c Arctic temperatures as he sledged his way across polar ice fields. Why? Along with being part of an expedition attempting to make the first British crossing of the Penny Icecap, a desolate glacier 6500 feet high on Baffin Island, he and two colleagues are also testing the technology that will be used in an Antarctic expedition to commemorate the centenary of Captain Scott (also from Devon) next year.

Anyway we're glad to be able to report the expedition was a success. Duncan is now back in Devon, with the team completing the crossing as well as completing a coast-to-coast trip across the world's fifth largest island. Along with some close encounters with polar bears, Duncan had a narrow escape when he fell through sea ice in a blizzard and went for an unexpected swim with his skis in -25c water. You can find out more about the expedition here www.etelive.org

KM can cut costs by 25%

New research published by PLC (Practical Law Company) and the OMC Partners consultancy suggests law firms that have adopted a more structured approach to knowledge management can reduce the cost of creating knowledge by up to 10% and, in some instances, cut the overall cost of matter delivery by up to 25% consistently. ➡

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⇒ The report – *The Knowledge Imperative* – also looks at some of the barriers to successful KM projects in law firms. These include decentralised knowledge functions, cultural resistance to new ways of working, and decision making processes for implementing new approaches that are dominated by cost without a rational assessment of the benefits. For a free copy of the report visit www.practicallaw.com/about/knowledge

People & Places

New faces at Norton Rose As the firm tackles its growing international operations (along with the Deacons Australia merger last year, the firm is merging with Canada's Ogilvy Renault and South African firm Deneys Reitz as of 1st June) it has made two appointments to fill the new roles of Group CIO and Group Director of Knowledge Management. The CIO role goes to **Sheila Doyle**, most recently the Royal Mail IT director, while the KM post goes to **Sam Dimond**, currently the director of global knowledge systems at Clifford Chance. Doyle is already at Norton Rose while Dimond (who has been at Clifford Chance for 13 years and originally trained there as a solicitor) joins in August. **Jeff Roberts** remains with Norton Rose LLP in London as Head of IT.

Boening, Boening gone Frank Boening, Workshare's EMEA vice president, has resigned and now left the company to become vice president EMEA of CertiVox. CertiVox, which two months ago raised \$1.5million in funding, specialises in security technologies for cloud and SaaS operations. Dan Filby has taken over from Boening in the newly promoted role of Global Sales & Support Executive.

Honey drawn to Tikit Andrew Honey, who has worked with both regional, national and offshore law firms over the past 20 years, has joined the Tikit Group as Head of Project Office, with responsibility for project management services to clients in conjunction with Tikit's specialist business consultants.

Moving on Mark Harding is moving on from KnowHow Consulting and now looking for new opportunities and new ventures. You can find him on LinkedIn as [MarkHardingUK](#)

New consultants at Integreon Integreon's London operation has made two new appointments to its consulting services for law firms and corporate legal departments. They are **Janet Taylor-Hall** and **Claire O'Brien**, both previously with Clifford Chance. The London consultancy team also includes former CMS Cameron McKenna COO **Tony Wright**.

Appointments at IRIS IRIS Legal has added three more people to its senior management team. They are **Andrew Wood** (ex-Thomson Reuters and Lexis Nexis) as New Business Sales Manager; **Nick Dearden** as Head of Development and **Jitendra (JV) Valera** (ex-Elite and Sweet & Maxwell) as Chief Marketing Officer.

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LexisNexis say full steam ahead for Dynamics ERP

LexisNexis UK last week published an update on the progress of its plans to create a legal sector PMS/ERP (enterprise resource planning) system built on the Microsoft Dynamics AX platform.

Lexis say the early adopter programme is already fully subscribed and that the first Registered Interest Group (RIG) presentation will take place in June, with quarterly meetings to follow. RIG is a restricted group and participants will be asked to sign an NDA. For more details email laura.whitehead@lexisnexis.co.uk LexisNexis is also organising a series of networking lunches in London, Bristol, Edinburgh and Manchester during June. For details email heidi.cranfield@lexisnexis.co.uk

Although the new system (which in the UK will replace the old Axxia Arista and Artiion products) is based in Dynamics AX 2012, which does not become generally available until this August, LexisNexis say the platform development is being undertaken in six phases 'to ensure the end product (scheduled for early adopter implementation in Q1 2012) is the result of an iterative process and that it meets the specific requirements of all types of legal businesses.' The first phase is underway with a presentation to interested firms scheduled for the end of June via the company's RIG forum.

10 years ago today ...

Things were heating up on the corporate front in May 2001 with Technology for Business acquiring the insolvent Scottish legal IT supplier CB Business Systems. Two weeks later TFB was reported to also be in negotiations to buy Avenue Legal Systems, while Tikit was announcing its own plans to float on the London AIM market. In a neat symmetry, TFB did buy Avenue and some years later Tikit bought TFB. Elsewhere, Norwel suffered a double whammy when two of its largest sites – Berwin Leighton and Paisner & Co – announced that following their merger to form BLP, they had selected Elite as their new practice management platform. Finally, RIM said its Blackberry device would be arriving in the UK in the autumn.

Legal Technology Insider

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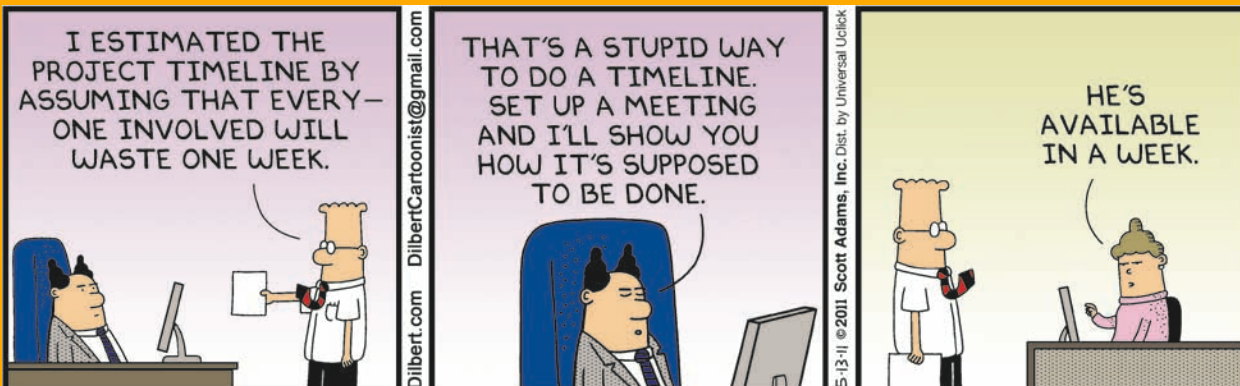
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