LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER
UK & EMEA Legal IT News

Acquisitions continue as Elite buys FWBS

While the UK legal market is currently awash with rumours of more vendor acquisitions and disposals, the Thomson Reuters group continues its buying spree with the latest acquisition, made via Elite, being UK-based matter management and front office automation specialists FWBS.

The company has already worked with Elite on some joint projects and Carry Burch, the COO of Elite, said "Our strategic acquisition of FWBS eases the integration burden by offering law firms a single, reliable platform for financial, practice and matter management that is available in Microsoft Outlook and on the mobile devices where lawyers work."
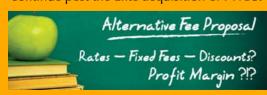
The terms of the deal were not disclosed and we hope to have more news of the transitional arrangements later this week however it caps an exciting summer for FWBS which has enjoyed a string of wins. These include Mills & Reeve, a long-time VisualFiles site which selected FWBS MatterCentre to automate processes and improve matter management; Matthew Arnold Baldwin, which picked FWBS in conjunction with an Aderant Expert PMS to replace its legacy IRIS Videss software; and, at the end of last week, Worcester law firm Stallard March & Edwards which is to roll out MatterCentre in conjunction with an Indigo PracticeCentre accounts system. The relationship with Indigo will, incidentally, continue post the Elite acquisition of FWBS.

And it's also been a good summer for...

While **FWBS** may have enjoyed a good summer (*see separate story*) it is not the only UK legal IT vendor to have been busy. **Solicitors Own Software** has reported new business wins at Robertsons Solicitors in Cardiff and Harrison Drury, which has offices in Preston and Garstang, as well as an upgrade to SOS Connect at Rothera Dowson. In addition, following the merger of SOS users Hooper & Wollen with Axxia-users Harold Michelmore to form the new Devon practice of Wollen Michelmore, the consolidated firm is to standardise on the SOS Connect platform.

Eclipse Legal Systems was picked by Leeds personal injury lawyers Michael Lewin Solicitors for a firm-wide roll out of Eclipse Proclaim case management software, while Sunderland-based Sweeney Miller is rolling out Proclaim case management and accounts. However the flagship deal for Eclipse this month was an order worth £250,000 from HDCS (Hill Dickinson Claim Solutions, a specialist unit at Hill Dickinson LLP) who are swapping out their legacy claims management system in favour of Proclaim case management software.

Finally, **Pilgrim Systems** had a spectacular summer with wins that reposition them as more than merely the popular choice to replace legacy systems from Axxia, AIM and Videss. Wright Hassall in the West Midlands selected Pilgrim LawSoft to replace its Elite Enterprise system (the project will also see LawSoft integrated with the firm's iManage DMS).In London Bolt Burdon, Bolt Burdon Kemp and Igloo (two law firms and their independent service partnership) have gone live with LawSoft to replace their Elite Enterprise system. And Pannone's Court of Protection (COP) team has selected Pilgrim LawSoft as its core financial and workflow platform rather than run it on the firm's existing Axxia DNA system.

Hey you, don't get off of my Cloud

The steady march (or should that be float) of the legal world onto the cloud continues, with news of more migrations, as well as more new services.

DPS Software this month launched its new DPSCloud brand that bundles together its existing hosted services and private cloud facilities which are already in use in over 100 law firms. And, Leeds-based cloud computing specialists **virtualDCS** has launched its own private cloud service for law firms. Current clients include Yorkshire law firm Clarion.
www.dpscloud.com
www.virtualdcs.co.uk

Elsewhere in the market, Scottish law firm **Inksters** has moved into the cloud with a **Denovo** Intelligent Cloud software as a service (SaaS) solution, while **Field Fisher Waterhouse** has announced plans to migrate its IT infrastructure from an internal physical environment to an agile cloud via a **Virtustream** xStream enterprise cloud computing platform. Field Fisher say the combination of server consolidation and cloud migration should, over the next five years, cut power consumption by up to 70% and its carbon footprint by 900 tons, as well as reducing server costs associated with renewals, hardware and maintenance.
www.denovobi.com
www.virtustream.com

Fresh on the Radar

Bar Marketing A lot of new services and business launches to cover this month, starting with Bar Marketing Ltd, a new consultancy for barristers chambers that has been set up by Catherine Bailey, the former head of marketing for the IRIS Legal group. The consultancy aims to offer operational marketing and communications as well as budgetting, branding and more strategic advice and services.
www.barmarketing.co.uk

⇨ **Insight Legal** Tim Smith, a former technical director at AlphaLaw and more recently a development manager at IRIS Legal, has launched Insight Legal. Smith describes it as an accounts and practice management system for smaller (defined as outside the top 1000) law firms who want modern software with a clear product roadmap. Prices start at £50 per month, with low cost data migration from legacy systems available. The first users are scheduled to go live before Christmas and there is an early-adopter scheme.
www.insightlegal.co.uk

Quote, unquote

"*Most of the challenges in legal IT today are not technology but leadership related.*" ...a consultant at last month's ILTA conference pondering whether the description of a speaker as a 'legal IT director and thought leader" was an oxymoron.

September's wins, deals and rollouts

Clifford Chance has deployed an **IntApp** Wall Builder system to provide information barriers both on the ground, to secure its OpenText DMS infrastructure, as well as on Microsoft Sharepoint Server 2010 to support the firm's ongoing cloud DMS initiative. IntApp has also signed up media lawyers **Wiggin LLP** as users of the Time Builder 'found time' time recording system. The firms says the system should "pay for itself in weeks".

As part of a technology refresh, **Speechly Bircham** has selected OneView from **Hubbard One** as its new intranet platform. The firm is also implementing a **LexisNexis Redwood Analytics** business intelligence (BI) system, including the Planning Application module to assist with alternative fee arrangement work.

Still in the BI sector, **Informance** has won new orders for the QlikView Business Discovery system from claimant personal injury lawyers **Fentons Solicitors** and **Berwin Leighton Paisner**. BLP plans to rollout QlikView to 1400 staff worldwide.

Wolferstans is swapping out its current hosted **LexisNexis Axxia** PMS in favour of a fully-managed hosted IT solution from **DPS Sofware**. Along with switching to DPS case management and accounts, the firm is also dropping its **Winscribe** digital dictation software in favour of the DPS TeamTalk product.

Coltman Warner Cranston has selected a DebtimeSQL system from **Linetime** to support the firm's growing debt recovery practice. Linetime has also won an order for a case management system from **Leonard Gray LLP**.

Macfarlanes has selected the **Frayman Group** Compliguard platform as its business intake workflow, conflicts management and information barriers solution. The firm will integrate the system with its Elite PMS, Interaction CRM and iManage DMS.

Thomas Eggar has outsourced its legal library management, research and information services to **Integreon**. ⇨

⇨ **Martineau** is now running a Kappris print reduction system from **Kutana** to help reduce the amount of Microsoft Outlook-related printing. Email printing now accounts for about 20% of a typical law firm's print output and Martineau hopes to cut the number it prints "by at least 50%." Martineau also plans to migrate its IT infrastructure, including all production servers, to the cloud using a **Virtustream** xStream platform. www.kutana.co.uk

Ladbrokes has selected a **Tymetrix** 360° ebilling and legal spend evaluation system to help its corporate legal department manage its dealings with its panel law firms.

Olswang has awarded **Phoenix Business Solutions** a contract to supply and implement an **Autonomy iManage** document management system. The firm's legacy DMS is **OpenText** eDocs.

Charles Russell LLP has implemented an **nQueue Billback** iA Expense Manager system to capture all the firm's expense data electronically.

More wins and rollouts

Pinsent Masons has licensed the latest version of ContractExpress DealBuilder document assembly software from **Business Integrity** for use across the firm's network of offices.

Stephens Scown, which in July announced it was dropping AIM in favour of Pilgrim LawSoft, has awarded managed services provider **e-know.net** a contract to supply its Managed Desktop solution to 200 users across three offices. In addition, e-know.net will host and manage a new IP telephony system for the firm based on **ShoreTel** hardware.

Microsystems has signed up **Speechly Bircham** and **Maples & Calder** as new users for its 3BClean metadata removal software. Maples & Calder has also licensed Microsystems' DocXtools application, as has **Ashfords**.

New Quadrant Partners has become the first firm to sign up for the new Tikit ClientConnect CRM system. The deal was handled by **TikitTFB**.

Helen Pidgeon Solicitors in West London is now running an **IRIS Opsis** Hosted accounts, case and practice management system. And, over on the Bar side of its business, **Renaissance Chambers** has upgraded to an **IRIS Meridian Law** Connected diary, fees and chambers management system.

Meanwhile the other **I.R.I.S.** in the legal IT sector (the one that operates in Continental Europe) is implementing a **Mimecast** email management system at **Eversheds Faasen Lawyers & Notaries Public**, which has offices in Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

Rowe Sparkes Partnership, one of the largest criminal defence firms on the South Coast, has selected managed communications provider **Quore** to supply a new unified communications system (based on the **Vodafone** One Net Solution and VoiP) across its three offices. The project has been structured so there will be no upfront capital expenditure nor any internal call charges.
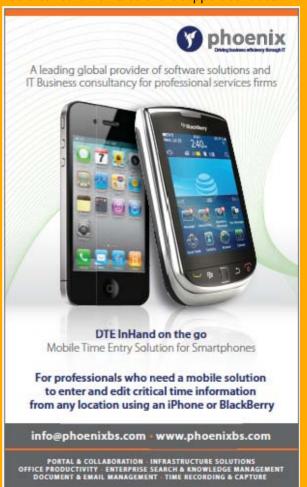**www.quore.co.uk**

Nabarro is now working with **Iron Mountain** to handle its records management and storage requirements whereas previously the ⇨

⇨ time-consuming nature of the work, combined with limited storage space in its London and Sheffield offices, was 'overwhelming' the firm. As part of the deal, three Iron Mountain staff are now based full time in the firm's London office.

IT maintenance and support provider **Maindec** is now providing **Maclay Murray & Spens** with support for the firm's business-critical servers and entire printer estate.
www.maindec.com

Vital statistics: £10k

We know law firms have pruned their IT budgets in recent years but one 200-user UK firm (although it entered the recession as a 300-user practice) has managed to spend a total of less than £10,000 on IT (excluding staff salaries) in three years. And 'yes' it did cancel all of its software support contracts.

Speech technology news

Biggest speech recognition rollout Following an earlier pilot, Shoosmiths has embarked on what is believed to be the largest deployment of speech recognition by a UK law firm. The firm is rolling out an integrated Dragon Naturally Speaking + Bighand server-side speech recognition solution to a further 100 authors. The project is a collaborative venture between the HR and IT departments to increase support staff and fee earner efficiency.

In other Bighand news…

• W. Davies Solicitors say the deployment of the Bighand speech recognition module has cut by 30% the average time it takes secretaries to transcribe dictations.

• Anthony Gold Solicitors say deploying the Bighand for iPhone dictation app has increased lawyers' mobile productivity, improved document turnaround times and cut hardware costs.

• Bighand has promoted Rob Lancashire to the new role of chief operating officer (COO) and Ben Mills to Lancashire's old job of managing director, EMEA Legal & Professional Services division.

iPad dictation In what may be a UK legal IT first, SRC has rolled out the Winscribe Mobility Suite digital dictation system to fee earners' iPads at Southerns Solicitors. The firm has also rolled out Winscribe onto fee earners' Blackberrys.

New product launches

OpenText for SharePoint OpenText has released Legal Content Management for Microsoft SharePoint 2010. The company says LCM is designed for small-to-mid sized law firms wanting document management within a Microsoft Office 2010/SharePoint 2010 environment.
www.opentext.com/legalcm

Enquiry tracking Library and information management systems Bailey Solutions has launched its new Enquire enquiry tracking system for libraries, PSLs, KM teams and new business ⇨

⇨ teams within law firms, where there is a need to record, re-use, monitor and manage enquiries, as well as keep track of costs. Enquire is browser based, can be hosted or installed inhouse and be used simultaneously by different enquiry teams.
www.baileysolutions.co.uk
www.knowallenquire.com

New workflows Select Legal Systems has launched three new workflows for its LawFusion case management system. The new workflows are for industrial disease claims, immigration work and PPI (payment protection insurance) claims. The industrial disease workflow can handle multiple defendants, insurers and insurers' lawyers as well as cases involving group limitation orders.

• Milton Keynes new start-up Kingsley David says the firm's selection of LawFusion as its accounts and case management system has supported the firm's rapid growth, which has seen turnover increase by 842% in the three years since 2008.
www.selectlegal.co.uk

An iPhone is not just for Christmas

Charles Christian... UnCut

During the course of this month, Apple will start shipping the next generation of its iPhone, along with the company's latest iOS 5 operating system and iCloud consumer cloud services. Why is this of interest? Because market research suggests as many as 40% of mobile phone users in the UK and US will buy the new iPhone 5 (aka the *JesusPhone*) including a growing number of disenchanted Blackberry users.

And yes I know there are law firm IT directors and software vendors all across the Western World now girding their loins and preparing to send me 97 reasons why the Microsoft Windows 7 phone is a superior device. Well good luck to them and no doubt in an earlier life they would have been arguing the merits of Sony Betamax over the VHS video tape format.

Unfortunately this is the sharp end of the consumerisation revolution sweeping through the business world – and law firms. End users now have access to their own technologies in the home and on the move – and they are starting to question why they are required to learn and use a parallel set of clunkier devices at work. True, you could probably safely ignore this issue if it was just the minions who were grumbling but increasingly it is the partners who are bringing their own devices to work.

They don't want to be told why these are unsuitable gimmicky, gadgets bought over the Christmas holidays or how they should wait for six months to see if they become an established platform. Instead, they want to use them, and they want to use them now. The balance of power has changed in law firms since the recession and the challenge for IT directors and vendors is therefore to either embrace these new platforms – or else risk finding themselves replaced by others for whom the word 'app' is not heresy.

Fresh on the Radar 2

PDF/A on its way Blue Car Technologies has teamed up with German systems house Luratech to deliver a series of tools for handling and validating PDF/A-compliant documents within legal software applications including case and litigation support management systems.
www.bluecartechnologies.com

New BI software Understanding the true financial position remains a big issue for many law firms so here's a new business intelligence tool – called BI24 from C24 – that is worth looking at. Unlike older BI systems it doesn't use OLAP cubes but instead employs 'Google-esque' search technology that can be viewed from tablet, iPhone and Android devices as well as the desktop. C24's Martin Calkeld also wants to talk to PMS vendors about integrating BI24 with their systems.
www.c24.co.uk

People & Places

More changes in the law firms sector: We hear **Jeff Roberts** has now left Norton Rose following an internal reorganisation and that **Stuart Walters**, previously head of applications at Eversheds, has taken over Tim Hyman's old job as head of IT at Taylor Wessing. **Thereza Snyman** joined Kingsley Napley as head of IT last month. As far as we can tell, her old firm Boodle Hatfield no longer has anyone in a senior IT role, with operations now in the hands of the finance department, a trend we are seeing repeated in a growing number of law firms as the balance of power seemingly shifts from IT directors to FDs and CFOs.

Two new appointments at **SOS** with **Louise Eagle** returning to the company as senior marketing executive after seven years in the outside world. **Adam Jobling** has also joined SOS as a scripting consultant on the client services team. He was previously with Manchester law firm Colemans-ctts. Also, congratulations to Ian Snipe's Blackpool-based PI and RTA claims law firm **Snipelaw** which last month celebrated 20 years of using SOS software.

In other vendor news, **Peppermint Technology** has been recruiting over the summer months and now has a total headcount of over 25 staff. The latest recruits are **Martin Heslop**, who will lead the customer support team, and product consultant Tom Willis. Over in Europe, **I.R.I.S** has appointed **Jeroen den Exter** as operations manager and **Rob Ameerun** as business consultant. Den Exter returns to the group after four years – he was then with the predecessor company Morningstar Systems, while Ameerun is probably better known as the editor of the *Legal IT Professionals* webzine.

The **Legal Software Suppliers Association** (LSSA) has held its AGM and announced a number of new appointments. **Ian Wimbush** of Peapod has been re-elected chairman, **Roger Jackson** of Cognito is vice-chairman, **Roger Hancock** is the chief executive, **Phil Snee** of Linetime is treasurer, **Kerry Frater** of Cognito becomes chair of the disciplinary committee and **Hilary Fisher** of Quill Pinpoint will chair the ⇨

⇨ membership committee. LSSA now also has a series of working parties liaising with government and regulatory bodies. **Glyn Morris** of IRIS will head the Legal Services Commission (LSC) working party, **Dominic Cullis** of EasyConvey heads the Land Registry team and Roger Hancock heads the HMRC team. In addition, Hilary Fisher will head the newly renamed Regulation Working Party which will liaise with the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA), the Institute of Legal Executives (ILEX) and the Council of Licensed Conveyancers.

New buzzword: Frankendoc

A *Frankendoc* is a document or precedent template that has been compiled over the years from different Microsoft Word files and is now an unstable jumble of code, styles and formatting.

Flosuite acquired by TR

Thomson Reuters has been continuing its acquisitions strategy, with Scottish-based case management and workflow software developers Flosuite Legal Solutions becoming the latest target. Thomson Reuters say Flosuite, which has law firm customers in the UK, Australia, Canada and Cayman Islands, will be 'aligned' with the group's Legal UK & Ireland business and will 'accelerate TR's move into software and productivity solutions for the UK legal market."
Comment: Unlike some other recent TR legal IT industry acquisitions, such as eBillingHub, Whitehill and now FWBS, Flosuite has not become part of the Elite/Business of Law unit at TR. The acquisition terms were not disclosed.

Alt IT now mainstream

The LexisNexis *Alternative Legal IT Conference* had its third annual outing at the end of September, building on previous years with not only more law firm delegates but also more vendor sponsors. In fact this year's event hit maximum capacity levels so there was a waiting list for both delegate and sponsor places, which would seem to suggest this event really does hit the mid-tier law firms' sweet spot. It was also good to see a healthy 3:1 ratio of law firm delegates to vendors among the 140 attendees.

10 years ago today . . .

Disasters featured heavily in September 2001 with, not unsurprisingly, the 9/11 attack on the New York World Trade Center Twin Towers dominating the front page. While the human toll on lawyers was mercifully light, the event did highlight the importance of implementing serious disaster recovery and contingency planning. For example it was estimated that in the chaos and road closures following the WTC attack, over 14,000 lawyers – about 20% of all lawyers in New York City – were unable to use their offices. There was also bad news for Keystone Software, which reported a loss of £7.6 million on a turnover of £4.5m, and for legal dotcommas Epoch Software which went into voluntary liquidation. Epoch was subsequently acquired by its founders and a decade later is still successfully trading as Epoq Legal.

Legal Technology Insider