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## IRIS Legal to focus on three inhouse centres

Following a decision to move all offshore software development back inhouse and hire 36 new staff across development and product management, IRIS Legal last week announced plans to focus investment in three 'centres of excellence' in Hull, Knutsford and Grantham. Both Knutsford and Grantham (the old Laserform and Mountain sites) have already been expanded and refurbished, while the Hull site (the old AIM site) is relocating to larger and more modern premises.

These plans do mean the closure in June of the company's Liversedge site (the old Videss offices) however IRIS has no plans to reduce headcount and all Liversedge staff will have the option to work from the other locations. IRIS Legal say support and development work will continue on both the ILE and ILB products and add that over the past six months they have recruited staff "from Elite, LexisNexis, Pilgrim and Eclipse amongst others."

## Weightmans "exploring" LexisNexis ERP offering

Top-50 firm Weightmans LLP says it is "exploring" the deployment of the LexisNexis next generation Microsoft Dynamics AX-based ERP solution, with a view to completing a feasibility study in mid ➡

➡ 2012. The firm, a long-time Axxia site, had been running a small pilot of LexisNexis DNA but "recent guidance issued by the Axxia division indicates that its DNA product is not suitable for top tier firms such as Weightmans". The guidance is based on the findings of an independently commissioned 3rd party scalability test of DNA.

## The Future of Legal Technology free passes

As an Insider subscriber you are entitled to two complimentary passes to the UK's biggest one day legal IT event *The Future of Legal Technology* to be held on 15 March at London's Victoria Park Plaza.

Insider editor Charles Christian and Netlaw Media are proud to present *LawTech Futures 2012*, a ground-breaking one day legal IT conference and exhibition with an international line-up of experts who will examine, explore and showcase the new technologies that will drive law firms and legal businesses into the next decade and beyond.

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The free pass entitles you to admittance, event bag and magazine, light breakfast, morning and afternoon tea, buffet lunch and an invitation to the post-event reception. With 48 days to go, this event is nearing sell out capacity so register today to take advantage of the free passes offer.



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## BLM iManage order upsets Sharepoint fans

Microsoft Sharepoint's long march towards global domination of the next generation of law firm document management systems suffered a credibility blow last week when Berrymans Lace Mawer LLP selected HP Autonomy iManage WorkSite\* to replace its incumbent bespoke DMS.

If the comments on *The Orange Rag* blog are anything to go by, what rattles Sharepoint fans is the fact BLM hired an independent consultant (Paul Longhurst of 3Kites, a person with no love for iManage as he used to work for arch-rival Hummingbird) to evaluate not only 'the usual suspects' of iManage and OpenText but also three Sharepoint alternatives: Workshare Point, MacroView DMF and Sword Excalibur although only Excalibur made it to the final shoot out.

**Comment:** True, BLM was also looking for a DMS that would tightly integrate with the firm's core Aderant PMS, Winscribe DDS and FloSuite case management applications but these are all widely used, Microsoft-friendly systems so this alone should not have scuppered Sharepoint's chances. We'll leave readers to draw their own conclusions on whether the industry's first Sharepoint versus 'traditional' products head-to-head competitive tender suggests Sharepoint still can't cut it as a full-blown legal document management system.

\* The contract to supply and implement iManage at BLM went to Phoenix Business Solutions.

## Law Socs issue guidance

Over the past month, the Law Society of England & Wales and the Law Society of Scotland have both issued guidance and practice notes on two topical areas of legal technology.

The English Law Society's practice note (dated 20th December) deals with social media and essentially says it sees no issue with solicitors adding clients or colleagues as contacts on ➡

➡ LinkedIn but warns they should be "cautious and think carefully before adding a client as a friend on Facebook... (as this) merges professional and personal lives, and could risk a breach of client confidentiality." The guidance ends on the positive note that "The nature of social networking, including the ability for status updates and posting of opinions, can present challenges to the core duties of solicitors (eg personal integrity and confidentiality) but if steps are taken to mitigate the risks then online social networking can be advantageous to the legal profession."

The Scottish Law Society's guidance on cloud computing (posted on the Society's website on 16th January) not only covers regulatory and compliance issues, including data protection but also practical matters. According to Paul Motion, the convener of the Society's technology committee, "Anyone considering cloud technology systems should think about the importance of access to and security of client information to determine how stringent the pre-contract diligence and service level agreement should be. Think of your SLA as your insurance policy and be sure it meets your specific needs."

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## January's wins, deals and rollouts

The UK's largest friendly society **LV=** (aka the Liverpool & Victoria) has implemented Proclaim case management software from **Eclipse Legal Systems** for its inhouse legal and secretariat team. LV= will use the Eclipse system to support the organisation's internal clients.

**Lewis Silkin** has selected MetaData Assistant from the **PayneGroup** as its new metadata removal application. The firm's director of IT & Operations Jan Durant described PayneGroup as "pioneers in this industry."

[www.payneconsulting.com](http://www.payneconsulting.com)

**Attwaters Solicitors** is swapping out its IRIS AIM practice management system for **Peppermint Technology's** Legal Service Platform. The implementation is scheduled to take place during Q2 of this year.

**King & Gowdy Solicitors** has migrated to Bigband digital dictation software and Blackberry and iPhone smartphone apps to replace a legacy standalone dictation system and analogue tapes.

**TikitTFB** has had another good month for its Partner for Windows case and practice management system with wins including **Gardner Leader LLP**, **Berkeley Law**, **Candey LLP**, **Fox Solicitors**, **Spring Law** and the **Co-op** which has merged its group and CFS legal teams.

**Turcan Connell** and **Roythornes** have both implemented **Copitrak's** new ThreadPrint software to help cut the waste associated with printing Microsoft Outlook emails by making the default option to print only the last message and not the entire thread. Nick Silverstein, the IT infrastructure manager at Turcan Connell, estimates ThreadPrint will cut paper consumption by about 10 million sheets and print costs by £10,000 a year. You can download an evaluation version of ThreadPrint from the Copitrak website.

[www.copitrak-europe.com/copitrak\\_threadprint.html](http://www.copitrak-europe.com/copitrak_threadprint.html)

The legal services team at **South Lanarkshire Council** has implemented the **Civica Legal** system to improve case management, time recording and court bundling. ➡

➡ **PACE**, a technology supplier to the broadcast and broadband industries, has selected **Ascertus** to supply and implement an Autonomy iManage DMS to its legal department.

The **SITS Group** has worked with Cumbrian law firm **Temple Heelis LLP** on an IT infrastructure refresh project including server virtualisation, data replication, disaster recovery and a migration of back-up data to the cloud.

**Nuance** has reported new **Equitrac** deals with **DLA Piper** taking Equitrac Office and **Freeth Cartwright** opting for Equitrac Professional.

**Clifford Chance** has worked with **Dimension Data** on the design and integration of a Check Point R75 Software Blades integrated network security solution from **Check Point Software Technologies** to prevent data loss and protect against security threats across the firm's distributed global network.

[www.dimensiondata.com](http://www.dimensiondata.com)

[www.checkpoint.com](http://www.checkpoint.com)

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Jeff Wright, Partner and Information Technology Director, Morgan Cole LLP





## More wins and rollouts

Following the opening of new offices in Zurich and Luxembourg last year, **Speechly Bircham** has selected **BSO Network Solutions** to provide a 10Mb VPLS (virtual private LAN service) to provide high speed, low latency communications between the offices.

[www.bsonetwork.com](http://www.bsonetwork.com)

**Afridi & Angell** in Dubai has ordered **Autonomy iManage** DMS from **Phoenix Business Solutions**, along with Phoenix's own Worksite utilities. Phoenix has also signed up three firms, including **Wilsons Law**, for the **nScaled** cloud services it resells.

**DocsCorp** has sold its pdfDocs software into three more organisations: the law firms **Ashfords** (pdfDocs Desktop) and **MacRoberts** (Desktop and Binder) plus the **European Court of Human Rights** (OCR Server).

Following recent wins at **Herbert Smith** and **Irwin Mitchell**, **Pannone LLP** has become the latest firm to turn to **Nexum** as a replacement for the firm's legacy I-Many/Beaver debt recovery and collections software. Rather than a simple ASCII integration with its accounts/PMS, Pannone has opted for a web services interface.


[www.nexumsoftware.com](http://www.nexumsoftware.com)

**Tikit's** new ClientConnect CRM system is starting to gain more traction with new sign-ups by **Breeze & Whyles Solicitors**, **Howell-Jones LLP**, **Blacks Solicitors**, **Barnes Marsland**, **Lewis Onions** and **Gannons Solicitors**.

## News in brief

**New alliance** TikitTFB and Bighand have agreed a technology partnership that will see Bighand becoming the key provider of digital dictation and speech recognition systems for TikitTFB customers. The new relationship supersedes a previous alliance TikitTFB had with Loasys.

**40,000 a month** Peapod LegalOffice's online legal forms service PrintaForm Online (which )

 is hosted in the Microsoft Azure cloud) is now getting over 40,000 page views a month. For a free trial visit the company's website.

[www.mycase.org.uk/pfonline/login.aspx](http://www.mycase.org.uk/pfonline/login.aspx)

**Prospero alliance** Ascertus and Prosperoware have formed an alliance that will see Ascertus reselling the Prosperoware Milan and Zone family of iManage and Sharepoint-friendly matter and risk management applications across the UK and European legal market.

[www.prosperoware.com](http://www.prosperoware.com)

[www.ascertus.com](http://www.ascertus.com)

**Rilience alliance** Quill Pinpoint has signed up with Rilience Software to offer Quill's 600+ customer base with an affordable way to managing their risk and compliance obligations under the new SRA handbook.

[www.quill.co.uk](http://www.quill.co.uk)

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## Workshare: the new chef in the kitchen can cook !

We had an interesting meeting with Nicky Bowman, the new Workshare EMEA sales director at *TheKnowList Awards* last week. Bowman, who has worked in the legal space before, most recently with ISYS, says she is "familiar with some of the highs and lows of Workshare" but says she is "surprised at some of the misconceptions about Workshare's state of health in the UK". Citing latest sales statistics, she points out that 86,550 existing UK seats renewed last year and Q4 2011 was the company's best ever quarter for sales.

Bowman says Workshare is like a restaurant. There were problems but the new product development management has fixed them (she says readers will be seriously impressed by the functionality of Workshare Point v1.2). "We now have a chef who can cook and I'm the maître'd whose challenge is looking after the diners. I'm going to mend relations and make it a happier place to be."

## Mergers & Acquisitions

Although we've had no new acquisitions by Thomson Reuters this month (tut, tut, there's still a couple of vendors looking for a new home) there is still plenty of activity taking place on the legal IT M&A front.

The biggest deal has been the announcement by the European private equity firm **Cinven** that it is to acquire the global IP management, offshore document review, LPO (legal process outsourcing), and LSO (legal services outsourcing) business **CPA Global** for an undisclosed sum. The transaction is expected to be finalised over the next couple of months.

Closer to home (and probably more relevant for Insider readers) **Total Ltd**, who specialise in telecommunications for the professional services sector, has acquired the **K-Cloud** cloud, IT and managed services provider

for an undisclosed sum. K-Cloud has now become a subsidiary of the Total group of companies and will continue to operate from its existing London offices.

Total Ltd director Stuart Davis said "For some time Total has been looking to launch a Cloud offering tailored to the professional services market and K-Cloud is the natural choice." While K-Cloud co-founder and CEO David Fazakerley added "Current and future customers can look forward to enhanced offerings across the virtual desktop, legal applications, telecoms, networks and IT services portfolio. Total's investment also allows K-Cloud to invest in enlarged service support teams, increase the rate of client implementations and broaden the range of technical and product services on offer."

- One of K-Cloud's largest legal sites is Thomson Snell & Passmore, which is implementing Pilgrim Lawsoft, Office 2010, Sharepoint, Bighand and Mimecast on a cloud platform.



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## Do vendors think you are stupid, it's a joined-up world

Two weeks ago, we had an interesting article on *The Orange Rag* blog (see 12th January posting) by Kim Walton, the professional services development manager at SNR Denton UK, on the subject of document comparison, redlining and track changes. In this article she made the concluding comment that "Instead of third party vendors explaining the limitations in using native Microsoft Word comparison, perhaps they could tell us about the deficiencies or dangers of their own comparison products when producing track changes documents?"

This is a particularly valid point in the current, bitterly competitive document comparison niche market, where some vendors seem embroiled in their own private *Celebrity Deathmatches*. However it is also equally applicable within the broader legal software sector, where too many vendors devote their energies to rubbishing the alternatives, rather than providing prospects with a balanced analysis of all the options.

Yes, of course I expect vendors to sing their own praises but vendors also need to realise law firm IT teams are not stupid. They know they live in a joined-up, integrated world where it is not possible to use one system in complete isolation from everything else. And one system all firms must work with – because their clients rely on it – is Microsoft Word. So, if your system has incompatibilities with Word, don't blame Microsoft, blame your developers and fix it.

## New product launches

**ABS software first** Eclipse Legal Systems says it has launched the market's first ABS-specific case management systems based on the company's Proclaim software. Currently two applications are available: Proclaim ABS for consumer-based legal services, which can link into the full Eclipse portfolio of workflows; and Proclaim ABS PI for the volume personal injury claims management and medical reporting sector.

**Peapod in the clouds** Peapod LegalOffice has developed three new cloud-based applications for the High Street solicitors market. The apps are: a client communications, progress reporting and document sharing system called MyCase, an Inheritance Tax calculation system called MyIHT, and an online document storage facility, based on Microsoft Azure, called MyArchives.

**eConveyancer integration** DPS Software has completed the integration of its Outlook Office case management with the eConveyancer web-based conveyancing and case-tracking service.

[www.econveyancer.com](http://www.econveyancer.com)

**Phoenix IMS** Phoenix Business Solutions has launched IMS (Infrastructure & Managed Services), an IT infrastructure offering covering everything from strategic consultancy and platform evaluation, through to planning, migration, implementation and ongoing-support services.

**Bundles from Zylpha** Zylpha, which specialises in utilities for the old LexisNexis Solcase and Visualfiles systems, has launched a new electronic document bundling transfer system that allows case management users to pull together PDF and Microsoft Office documents into one fully indexed and paginated electronic bundle for use either in litigation or as a deal bible. ...continued



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⇒ **Taking DR to the Edge** SmartLegal.it has added a disaster recovery option to its Edge family of cloud-based service offerings. Stockport firm O'Neill Patient Solicitors LLP is one of the first practices to sign up for the new service which uses real-time imaging to provide continuous data replication at the SmartLegal data centre to cover single server failure, as well as a complete off-site DR facility in the event of a full site failure.

## Two dates to remember

**Steve Chivers** of **Cognito Software** has been in touch to say he recently visited a law firm that, when with another vendor, he sold an accounts system in 1992. The firm is still using the same software despite the fact it has not been supported by the original supplier since 2002.

**Solicitors Case Management Systems** is celebrating ten years in business by making a 10% donation to charity on the first ten orders it receives this year. [www.scams-law.com](http://www.scams-law.com)

## People & Places

**Mike Gilpin**, most recently with Microsystems and before that with Clifford Chance, has taken over as the new head of IT at **Kennedys**. The firm's interim head of IT **Chris Rose** jokes he's now back selling copies of *The Big Issue* on London Bridge.

**Kieron Walker**, most recently with LexisNexis and Aderant, has joined the **Tata Consultancy Services** global sales team with responsibility for selling the new TCS Legal Management Solution into the large law firms sector. TCS LMS is a SAP-based legal ERP system.

**Epiq Systems Inc** has appointed **David Fryer** as its new general manager of UK operations. A former managing partner at Taylor Walton Solicitors, Fryer is probably best known for his time as CEO at Bighand.

After six years as independent consultants **Sam Suri** and **Odette van Ommen** of **IT MattersConsulting** are hanging up their hats and

⇒ joining the team at **IntApp**.

**NetDocuments**, the US cloud DMS service provider, has launched an EMEA regional hub with new sales and support services based out of Cambridge, along with two fully redundant data centres in London and Harrogate. **Matt Duncan** previously a senior sales manager with the company in the US, has been appointed EMEA general manager (020 2455 6770).

<https://eu.netdocuments.com>

Well done **Mark Hovell**, managing partner of long-time **Norwel** systems users **George Davies Solicitors LLP** in Manchester, for winning the recent *LawNet Managing Partner of the Year Award* for his "fearless attitude to change".

Finally, congratulations to **Ian Brown**, a senior consultant with **Capensys**, who represented England in the *International Masters Hockey Tournament* world cup in Singapore, where his team won the gold medal. The event was sponsored by **Stephenson Harwood**.

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## Best awards ... probably

Last week's *TheKnowList Awards 2012* in London was one of the best legal IT awards ceremonies we've attended. Well run, good atmosphere and just the right number of categories so the audience doesn't lose the will to live while the nominations are being read out. Add in an excellent compère/entertainer (the Canadian comedian Stewart Francis) and nothing could go wrong. Possibly a further measure of the event's success was the number of people we saw there *this* year who told us after *last* year's event that they'd never attend again because they didn't win anything. Here are the results...

- *Account Manager of the Year* (sponsored by Picture More executive recruitment) **Eliza Hedegaard** of Mimecast
- *Best User Interface* (sponsored by Alternative, a comms services provider) **Avaya**
- *Business Project of the Year* (sponsored by NovaPlex Business Solutions) **Hill Dickinson LLP**
- *Best Customer Services* (sponsored by Olive Communications) **Bighand**
- *Industry Innovation Award* (sponsored by Logicalis) **Autonomy iManage**
- *IT Team of the Year* (sponsored by Mimecast) **Hill Dickinson LLP**
- *Microsoft-based Solution of the Year* (sponsored by Dell) **FWBS**.
- *New Product of the Year* (sponsored by Bluecar Technologies) **Rekoop**
- *Legal IT Rising Star* (sponsored by Tikit) **Ben Wightwick** of HighQ
- *Services to Legal IT* (sponsored by FWBS) **Liam Flanagan** of Tikit.

## 10 years ago today

The top story in January 2002 was the news Mountain Software had moved into the barristers IT market, with the acquisition of Meridian Law. At the time Meridian systems were in use in about 60% of barristers chambers. Mountain subsequently increased this percentage and later acquired its only serious rival ACE before being in turn acquired by what is now the IRIS Group.

We also reported that Microsoft had begun another of its periodic flirtations with the legal market. As with previous and subsequent Microsoft initiatives, this would end in tears.

And, we predicted (*correctly as it turned out, which is always nice*) that *The Next Big Thing* in legal IT over the coming years would be voice technology. Someone called Jan Durant (*that name rings a bell*) was extolling the virtues of Lewis Silkin's Bighand digital dictation implementation, while SRC (now part of Winscribe) was promoting Dragon v5 (now v11.5) speech recognition.

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