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Bighand turns up the heat



If you were wondering where next for the UK digital dictation systems market, the answer appears to be competitive swapouts. This week top 30 law firm Hill Dickinson announced it had swapped out its legacy Winscribe DDS system in favour of Bighand software, including the Blackberry mobility app.

The firm's director of IT & operations Keith Feeny said the "primary objective was to improve the availability and uptime of our dictation software. We were receiving a staggering 400 calls per week from users requesting help from IT in order to administer work. The upgrade to Bighand has totally eliminated dictation related support calls and this has enabled us to redeploy resources (the equivalent of one full-time support person) to other projects." Feeny adds that the firm will shortly be integrating Bighand with Dragon speech recognition technology.

- Insider sources say Chester-based Walker Smith Way, which has 150 staff at six offices in the North-West, Midlands and London, is also swapping out its legacy DDS in favour of Bighand.
- Bighand, one of the sponsors at next month's *LawTech Futures* event in London, has also supplied personal injury and medical negligence specialists Price & Slater with its Small Business Edition hosted dictation system. The firm, which describes itself as 'cloud based' with fee earners mainly working from home in the Manchester area, runs Bighand on Android smartphones, with transcription handled in Australia.

TCS planning game change announcements

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), a company currently best known in the UK legal market for its LMS (Legal Management Software) SAP-powered project at Shoosmiths, is planning to announce a raft of new product initiatives at next month's *LawTech Futures* event in London. *Legal Technology Insider* has obtained an exclusive preview of two of these initiatives (*there is also the possibility of another announcement but that is awaiting approval by a 3rd party*) and believes they are potential game-changers that could transform both the national and global markets for legal practice management systems. Both initiatives will become available during 2012.

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Nihec/Copitrak extends its social media buzz

At the end of last year Nikec Solutions (a division of Copitrak Systems) dipped its toes into the social media management systems sector with the introduction of the Netbox Blue SafeChat system into the UK. Now the company has gone one step further with the launch of BuzzNumbers.

Whereas Netbox Blue SafeChat is an inward-looking application for managing a firm's own use of social media to interact with the outside world, BuzzNumbers is an outward looking system that monitors and reports on the online and social media coverage a firm and/or its clients are receiving in the wider world. Damian Jeal of Nikec says the value of BuzzNumbers is that it can alert a firm of potential issues, so that they can react proactively to online comment.

Nihec say a combination of Netbox and BuzzNumbers will give law firms a 360 degree, warts and all view of their social media presence. To enhance the Buzz product, Nikec is also offering social media consultancy in the form of regular reports and data analysis for law firms.

BuzzNumbers is an Australian company that has won a number of large orders from Australian government agencies. The company has also completed Sharepoint integrations and developed an iPad app. BuzzNumbers is a SaaS application and makes its UK debut at next month's [LawTech Futures](#) event in London.

Phoenix launches new product 'family' concept

This week Phoenix Business Solutions introduces its new concept of product 'families' with the launch of Phoenix Centre, a range of business productivity services and web-based applications including document and email management, KM plus DMS platform security and monitoring.

The company has two more product ➡

➡ families, namely Phoenix Connect (a suite of integration and connectivity applications) and Phoenix Bespoke (core, easily customised products) scheduled for launch during Q2 2012.

All change at Aderant and Peppermint

We first reported in December that David Thorpe had left Aderant and was talking to other vendors. As later reported on blog, at the beginning of February he joined Peppermint Technology as director of business development. Meanwhile back at Aderant, Thorpe's old job has been taken by Jacqui de Gernier, who has now been promoted from sales executive to EMEA sales director. De Gernier has previously worked at TFB, Tikit and Pilgrim. Both Aderant and Peppermint are involved with next month's [LawTech Futures](#).



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February's wins, deals and rollouts

Following a competitive tender, **Wragge & Co LLP's** Finance Insolvency Recoveries & Sales Team (FIRST) has selected the Liberate case management system from **Linetime** to streamline its systems and services.

- In other Linetime news... PPI claim resolution specialist **ism@rt Consumer Solutions** has selected Liberate case management, plus a number of other Linetime applications, to support its operations; and **Wilkin Chapman Grange** has extended its use of Linetime case management to its personal injury claims department.

Essex Legal Services, the legal department of Essex County Council, has extended its use of **LexisNexis** Visualfiles to its Public Law Department, which also supports the activities of smaller district councils that lack inhouse case management technology.

Portsmouth-based **Biscoes Solicitors** is the latest firm to select a DPSCloud fully-managed, hosted solution from **DPS Software**. The firm will eventually run case management, accounts and digital dictation in the cloud across six offices.

Tikit has provided its TMS template management system and related services to **Linklaters LLP** as part of the firm's upgrade to Microsoft Office 2010.

St Helens law firm **Quality Solicitors Keith Park** has selected the Peppermint Portal from **Peppermint Technology** to provide a client and referrer from end to its incumbent IRIS Videss case and practice management system.

As part of a major infrastructure overhaul **TLT** has rolled out SOS Connect from **Solicitors Own Software**. The firm, which now has 700 staff, is a long time SOS user that began with just 20 SOS licences 15 years ago.

IP telephony specialist **ShoreTel** is supplying **SGH Martineau** with new mobility and unified communications infrastructure. Among other benefits, ShoreTel say routing mobile calls over the firm's wifi network should save an estimated 30% on mobile call costs annually.

Dublin law firm **LK Shields** has gone with the pdfDocs Desktop application from **DocsCorp** for managing PDF content and **Anderson Strathern** in Scotland has selected pdfDocs Binder.

Quality Solicitors Jackson & Canter is rolling out the Clear business process automation application from **Converge IT SmartLegal** and **Rowlinsons** in Cheshire is deploying the company's Smart CRM system.

Mark Harding's new company **Sessou** has been working with **ECMConnect** and **SeeUnity**, developers of the eDOCS Conversion Utility, to help **Wiggin Osborne Fullerlove** upgrade from **OpenText** eDOCS 6 to eDOCS 5.3. Once set up, it took only 14 minutes to convert the firm's entire DMS repository of half a million objects to 5.3.

Pinsent Masons has implemented the **QuestBack Group's** EFM (enterprise feedback management) software to provide better feedback, including using online client satisfaction surveys, on the firm's CRM activities.

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New product launches

Dictation in the clouds We're all familiar with the concept of cloud-based digital dictation services however Lexacom has gone one step further with the development of new mobile apps for the iPhone and Blackberry. These permit dictations to be recorded, submitted for transcription and subsequent approval while the user is in the clouds, en route on a plane journey. The system has already been successfully tested at 32,000 feet on an Emirates Airbus A380 flight to Sydney using the plane's wifi service. The apps will be launched during the next month – and Lexacom would like to remind users that they should only be used aboard an aircraft when it is permitted to do so. Lexacom is one of the sponsors of next month's *LawTech Futures* event.

www.lexacom.com/mobile

SRA security from Oyez Oyez Professional Services (now part of OfficeTeam Ltd) has launched its new Oyez Information Security Management System (ISMS) toolkit to help law firms comply with the information management provisions of the SRA regulations. Oyez managing director Nick Hodges said the launch had been timed to coincide with the SRA requirement that law firms nominate compliance officers (COLPs and COFAs) by 31st March this year. The Oyez ISMS toolkits have been split into four separate products to suit the needs of different sizes of firm. The core of each product comprises guidance notes, policy documents, online staff assessments and an update service on regulatory changes.

www.oyezsecurity.com

New LSA resource Solicitors Own Software has launched a multimedia resource portal for firms seeking to learn from the successes of others as they face the challenges of the post Legal Services Act legal business landscape. Launching the microsite, SOS managing director David McNamara said there has been a lot of "scaremongering" about the potential negative impact of the LSA so "the aim of the site was to stimulate a more positive tone to this business ➡"

➡ critical conversation" particularly with regard to alternative business structures (ABS). The site, which will be added to over the coming weeks, already includes case studies, infographics, video clips and a free white paper *How can law firms succeed in the new legal era?*

www.soslegal.co.uk/success

Peppermint extends platform Peppermint Technology has announced three further additions to its soon-to-be-launched Legal Service Platform. These are: Collaboration Suite, a virtual dealroom environment that can be enhanced by audio, video and document sharing links. A Collaborative Telephony App, based on Microsoft Lync, that allows users to identify a colleague's availability and select the most effective way to communicate with them. And an Activity Feed that will allow users to communicate with clients and colleagues through a Facebook-style social media interface.

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There's an app for it

Over the last few weeks the UK's major legal publishing groups – LexisNexis and Thomson Reuters Sweet & Maxwell – have been upping their game in the apps stakes. Sweet & Maxwell is backing the Thomson Reuters ProView ebook reader application for the iPad and the first ebook title it has released is the criminal practitioner's handbook *Archbold*. According to the company's own research, over 23% of solicitors specialising in litigation already use an iPad to access legal information, with a slightly higher usage among barristers. ProView can be downloaded free from the Apple App Store.

Meanwhile over in Chancery Lane, LexisNexis has developed three apps for the iOS platform. These are: *Write My Will*, designed for the consumer market and currently awaiting final approval from Apple before it is launched, plus ➔

➔ *Legal Terms* and *On the Case* for practitioners. *Legal Terms* provides legal definitions, links to the legislation where the terms were defined and key cases about the definitions. *On the Case* provides an on-the-go ability to search for case law by topic, name, citation or key words. These are both available now on the iPhone free of charge to *Lexis Library* subscribers and can also be accessed on an iPad but in a iPhone format.

Vital Statistics: 66%

According to a recent survey, 66% of the UK population now suffer from *Nomophobia* – the fear of being left without a phone. Younger people (18-24) are the most nomophobic generation on 77%, women (70%) are more nomophobic than men (61%) yet men are more likely to have two phones (47%) than women (36%).

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155 days and counting to the Olympics

No, this is not a sports report but it is now just 155 days until the Summer Olympics kick

off in London on the 27th July. They run until the 12th August and are followed a fortnight later by the Paralympic Games (29 August to 9 September). So far so good and interesting viewing it will no doubt make however what kind of impact is it going to have on London-based law firms and IT vendors?

Leaving aside the fact it coincides with the summer holiday season plus the fact keen sports fans among staff will be wanting to take time off to attend the Games (which in itself is a double whammy in terms of staff resources) there is a growing concern that the London transport system will gridlock during the games.

So what happens when your staff can't make it into work or else arrive two hours late and immediately start stressing about the return journey home? Do you have any contingency plans in place to support home working? For law firms, an added complication is they may have contingency plans but do the IT vendors and support services upon which they depend have *their own* contingency plans in place? Outsourced support services are of little use if the outsourcers are stuck on a Tube train at Cockfosters!

We've heard of a couple of law firms and one London-based vendor that are in the process of running risk assessment exercises and updating their contingency plans for staffing resources but so far that's as far as it goes. And tomorrow there will only be 154 days to go until the Olympic flame is lit in Stratford.

Don't waste your CRM resources says Eclipse

Eclipse Legal Systems has begun an interesting campaign arguing 'CRM' (tools to assist in sales, marketing and client management) should not be seen as a separate discipline or product. Eclipse marketing manager Darren Gower suggests the management of prospects, clients, referrers and subsequent ongoing relationships should all be carried out within a firm's main case management system and that using a third-party CRM is a duplication of effort and waste of resources.



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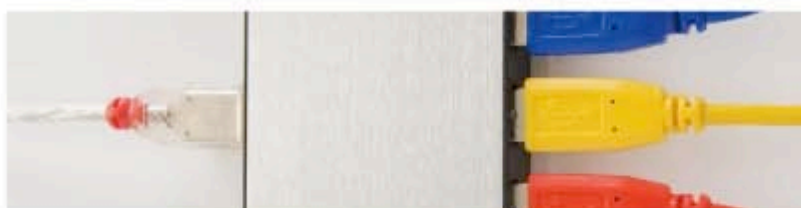
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Elite strengthens Chrome River relationship

Formalising a relationship dating back to 2008, Elite has added Chrome River, a provider of SaaS-based expense reporting and invoice automation, as an integration partner. Both Elite and Chrome River are sponsors of the [LawTech Futures](#) event.

- **Factoid:** Alan Rich was one of the founders of Elite, which was subsequently acquired by Thomson Reuters. Now he is the co-founder and CEO of Chrome River.

Buzzword Corner: Publicity

Writing in *The Orange Rag* blog earlier this week, Gerd Leonhard, one of the keynote speakers at the [LawTech Futures](#) event described data "as the new oil" and predicted that *publicity* (the opposite of privacy) would become the new normal.

People & Places

After 18 years at Manches, the firm's IT director **Derek Brookes** has left to take up the role of chief operating officer at **Russell-Cooke LLP**. ➔

➔ **Solicitors Own Software** has hired **Chris Beck** as an SOS Connect support analyst, along with **Jennifer Smith** who joins the Virtual Practices team to provide legal cashier services.

10 years ago today

The top story in February 2002 was the news Linklaters had awarded SAP the contract to supply its next generation practice management system. Elsewhere, Solution 6 (now Aderant) confirmed it was in acquisition talks with Keystone Solutions. And Axxia Systems said it had developed its new PKC business intelligence portal in JZEE because Microsoft .NET was too novel to be stable.

Legal Technology Insider

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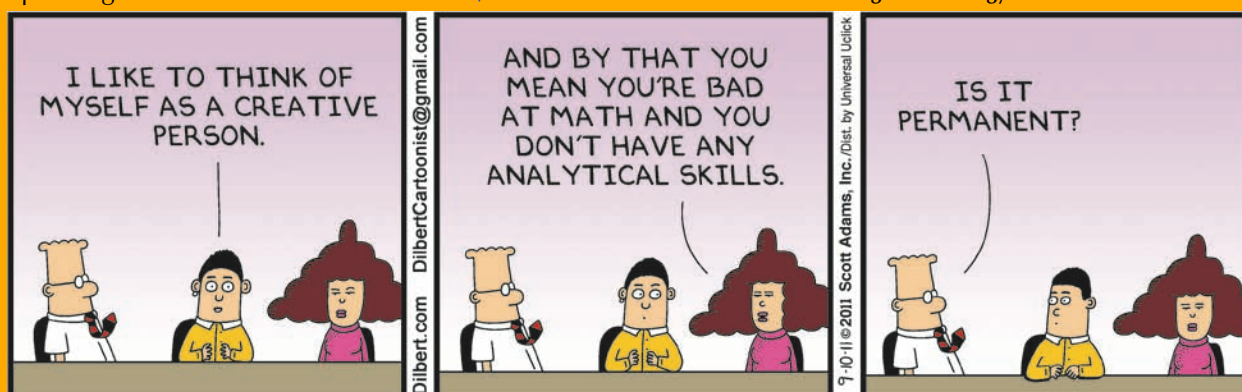
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