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The legal IT vendors are revolting

In the wake of some lacklustre legal IT exhibitions and conferences earlier this year, a group of UK legal technology vendors (the people who sponsor and/or pay for stands at these events) are getting together to discuss tactics and possibly agree on which events to support in future and which to drop. We understand that 18 vendors have already expressed an interest and Thursday 28th June has been set as a provisional date for the meeting. For more details email Stewart Hadley at nQueue Billback on shadley@nqbillback.com

Comment: As long time devisers of both event formats and programmes, we're clearly conflicted out of suggesting which events vendors should support. However we would say one thing: *all* events have a sell-by date that eventually expires. Remember the old *SOLEX* show at the Barbican that, once upon a time, no vendor dared miss? It had nearly 15 good years before going from hero to zero in its final two years. Most legal IT vendors have limited marketing budgets and they need to spend it wisely. Continuing to support events that are past their prime and not delivering audiences will seldom yield a return on investment.

Windows clean-up ?

Following a less-than-enthusiastic reception for the public preview release of the upcoming Microsoft Windows 8 operating system, we are hearing reports of law firms bringing forward their Windows 7 upgrade rollout plans to ensure ➡

➡ any new PC hardware they have to buy is *not* preloaded with Windows 8. With suggestions that Windows 8 "could be another Vista" firms do not want a replay of 2006 and 2007, when IT departments were having to strip the Vista operating system out of new hardware and replace it with Windows XP.

The RTM (release to manufacturers) date is going to be in late July this year, after which most new PC hardware will ship with Windows 8. The retail release will take place in early October.

Timeline: Microsoft Windows 1.0 appeared in November 1985 however it was not until the release of Windows 3.1 in April 1992 that the platform really began to gain traction. The current iteration Windows 7.0 was released in October 2009 and will be supported until January 2020. Both the developer and consumer preview releases of Windows can be downloaded now and will not expire until 15th January 2013.






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More acquisitions: DMS + apps skills in demand

Although the UK legal IT sector is not seeing anything like the activity taking place in the US market, where over a dozen ediscovery and litigation support services companies have already been acquired since the start of this year, the last couple of weeks has seen two UK companies snapped up – and both by American companies.

The first to go was **Apsmart**, a London-based developer of apps, mobile applications and music software, which has been acquired by **Thomson Reuters**. With Thomson Reuters and its legal information business Westlaw now one of the biggest publishers of legal market apps, the company said it made more sense to acquire an established app development company than hire developers on an ad hoc basis.

The second deal saw the US **Huron Consulting Group** acquire the London-based legal systems integrator **Ascertus**. Ascertus, which mainly operates in the UK/Continental Europe corporate legal departments market, has a long established reputation for its work with ebilling, matter management and document management systems, including Autonomy iManage and Prosperoware.

Ascertus will become part of the Huron Legal division, which last year acquired two other UK-based companies: the H4 Partners consultancy and Nigel Murray's Trilantic ediscovery business. The terms of the deal were not disclosed however Ascertus founder Roy Russell is staying on as managing director of Huron Legal, based out of the London office.

Comment: We asked the CEO of a company that regularly deals with Ascertus about the acquisition and he said "Huron finally has the document management depth it has wanted for a while. The competitive landscape just changed. Tikit and Phoenix had better watch out." We'll leave those two companies to look after themselves but it is interesting to note that both Ascertus and Apsmart were acquired for their respective skill sets.

Sherry Bevan launches own consultancy

Based on her long career in the legal service and technology support arena, Sherry Bevan has launched her own consultancy business Sherry Bevan Consulting to provide advice, support and coaching on service management, customer service, internal communications and change management. Until recently Bevan was the UK business manager for outsourced help desk specialists Intelliteach and before that she was with McDermott Will & Emery UK but she is probably more widely known as one of the founders of the UK Document Excellence Group (UKDEG). She was also the researcher for the Intelliteach Guru's Guide to law firm help and support desk trends.

www.sherrybevan.co.uk



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Head of Programme Management
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June's wins, deals swapouts and rollouts

East Midlands law firm **Flint Bishop** is deploying compareDocs from **DocsCorp** to handle its need for "anything-to-anything" document comparison. This deal was through DocsCorp's UK reseller **Phoenix Business Solutions**. In another deal, Portuguese law firm **Miranda** is swapping out **Workshare** in favour of DocsCorp compareDocs. And **Dundas & Wilson** is rolling out the DocsCorp pdfDocs system for binder functionality, including court bundles and matter bibles.

As part of its recent office relocation project, **Stephenson Harwood** has rolled out **Palo Alto Networks** next-generation firewall for improved security for the firm's new network infrastructure. Palo Alto was chosen by the firm in conjunction with IT consultancy **Krome Technologies**, who were employed to help with the infrastructure relocation.

www.paloaltonetworks.com

www.krome.co.uk

Phoenix Business Solutions has provided **Autonomy iManage** document and email management software, plus the Phoenix suite of WorkSite tools, for 600 users working at the offshore financial services company **Capita Fiduciary Group**. Capita has offices in Amsterdam, Budapest, Jersey, London, Luxembourg and Zurich.

Private equity fund placement advisers **Acanthus Advisers** has deployed the **Intralinks** cloud-based virtual dealroom platform to store due diligence information relating to its clients' funds, with secure permission access to its global investor community.

Atteys Solicitors is now getting ready to go live on **IRIS Legal** following a data extraction exercise handled by **ForestGold Solutions**. David Vickers of ForestGold said the project, which including moving accounts, PMS and workflow data from Axxia Arista running on Unix/Informix into a SQL staging database and then exporting the data mapped CSV files to IRIS, was completed on time and within budget. ➔

➔ As part of a "six-figure deal" full service North Yorkshire firm **Crombie Wilkinson Solicitors** is implementing **Eclipse Proclaim** case and matter management software. The firm is also swapping out its incumbent accounts software in favour of an Eclipse practice management system.

Long-time **Winscribe** digital dictation users **Gorvins Solicitors** in Manchester has increased its investment in Winscribe technology by rolling out Winscribe Mobile software to the firm's Blackberry users.

UK top 200 firm **Maxwell Winward** has rolled out an integration of **Bighand v4.2** digital dictation workflow software and **Nuance Dragon NaturallySpeaking** speech recognition. HR manager Kay Oliver says the integrated approach enables fee earners to dictate attendance notes and emails on their desktop or Blackberry and send them for automated transcription, freeing secretaries to focus on document manipulation and other more added value work.

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First look: Windows 8 pre-release version

David Tuck, principal consultant at Plan-Net plc, has been looking at Windows 8 for us and reports on his experiences...

I've downloaded and run the pre-release version of Windows 8 and personally found it very good. It is however a little different on first use with the new interface but, having also operated a Windows Mobile 7.5 phone, I found it not totally unfamiliar. Some people will take a little while to get used to it, as you really do need to start using the *Windows* key on your keyboard to get back to the main user interface.

Having said that, you can run a Windows desktop and it looks just the same as you have today on Windows 7 without the start button. Positioning your mouse on the left and right

of the screen starts *Options* and once you are familiar with this, then it is quite easy to run.

One good thing about the new UI is the *tiles* can show information or be animated. For example, the UI could display your calendar or LinkedIn, with information on the contacts or meetings visible via the tile without actually going into the application. Also, regularly used applications can be placed directly on the UI.

The stability of the product was fine and comparable to Windows 7. In my tests it never once failed or lockedup, not bad considering this is a pre-release version.

The challenge for Microsoft has definitely been to get it working with both mouse and touch screen and I think Windows 8 probably lends itself better to a touch screen. The advantage of this is to enable a true single device. Docked in the office you can use a large screen and conventional keyboard. On the train you have the touch screen. Then at home either the touchscreen or docked. But all using the same single device and the same business applications you use today. If Microsoft get Windows 8 right, Apple may have a true fight on its hands in the business tablet market.

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Events news

Phoenix Business Solutions is going on the road next month with its **Phoenix User Group Autonomy Worksite Support Roadshow**. The programme includes an overview of Phoenix support services, disaster recovery options and an update on Worksite 9.0. Each session takes place in the afternoon and the schedule is **Edinburgh (Tuesday 3 July)**, **Jersey (Friday 6 July)**, **Dublin (Tuesday 10 July)** and **London (Thursday 12 July)**. For more details email Phoenix marketing manager nikki.bhogal@phoenixbs.com

Programming is underway for the first **LawTech Europe Congress** which takes place in **Prague on Monday 12 November 2012**. Chris Dale is involved with the ediscovery/electronic evidence side of the programme, while Insider editor Charles Christian is putting together the legal ➔

➔ technology schedule. Topics being developed include social media, cloud computing and how will tomorrow's lawyers work.

www.lawtecheuropecongress.com

Programming is also underway for **LawTech Futures 2013**, which will take place at *The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre* in **London on Tuesday 30 April 2013**. More details will be released over the next few weeks however the keynote speaker, who is being flown in exclusively from the United States, is one of the world's most influential technology innovators and widely regarded as "the futurists' futurist".

NetLaw Media (*the event is jointly produced by NetLaw Media and Legal Technology Insider*) is currently circulating details of the sponsorship and exhibition opportunities and one of the headline sponsorship packages has already been taken. For more details email darmstrong@netlawmedia.com



REUTERS/Hamad I Mohammed

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Fresh on the radar

Redwood Telecommunications have been telling us about their new Microsoft Lync-based unified communications (UC) solution, which they are now reselling for Active Communications (ACS). The older ACS Repartee unified messaging product was used by firms such as CMS Cameron McKenna and Simmons & Simmons, as well as rebadged as Unity and sold by Cisco.

The new ACS Lync system contains a number of features which Greg Easton of Redwood says removes the things that made Enterprise Lync so difficult to implement and manage. These include virtualising the multiple server requirement so it can now be deployed as a turn-key solution on a single appliance; full integration with existing Active Directory schemas; a web-based management console; and pre-vetting of all Microsoft updates and patches.

"Effectively," says Easton, "ACS has taken a fairly complex beast and turned it into an appliance that is easy to install, configure and support. It can be deployed in many scenarios including as a full (including voice) UC platform or integrated with an IP PBX."

• To see a Redwood Powerpoint presentation on ACS Lync, click on the *Cloudbox* link

www.redwoodtele.com

<http://cloudbox.legaltechnology.com/Lync.pptx>


Cloud services - have you read the SRA handbook ?

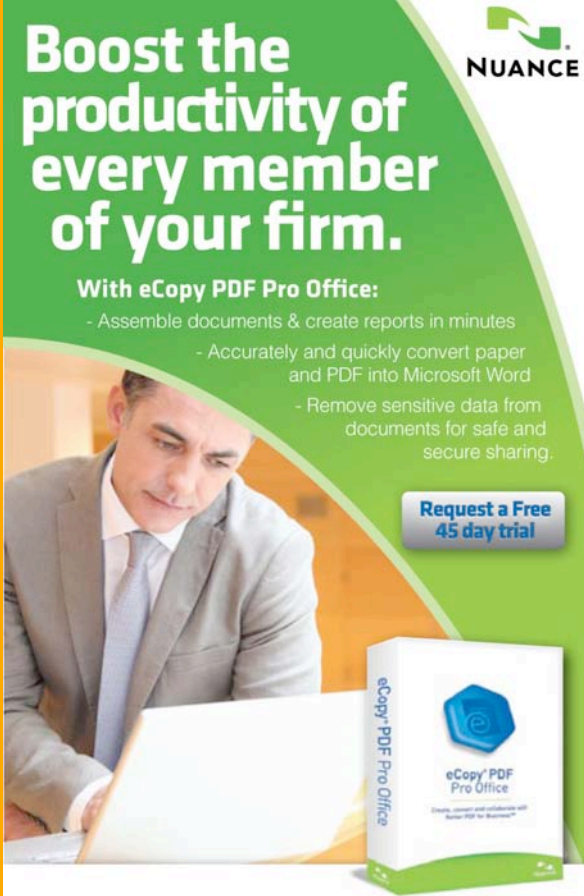
Writing on *The Orange Rag* blog (see 11th June posting) solicitor Charles Drayson suggests law firms considering outsourcing parts of their IT infrastructure to the cloud should familiarise themselves with the *SRA Handbook*. For example, does your contract with your service provider include provision 'to allow the SRA and its agents to obtain information and inspect records and enter third party premises in relation to outsourced services?'

New product launches

Litéra last week released Metadact-e 2.0, which is designed to help users more easily prevent metadata leaks, including information sent from mobile devices. New features in v2.0 include the ability to clean attachments in more file types, such as password-protected zip files and embedded email messages. Users can now also be alerted when auto-detected tracked-changes are present and define the action to be taken.

www.litera.com

Quill Pinpoint has teamed up with compliance specialists **Lawclient Ltd**, the publishers of the cloud-based *Office Procedures Manual* which provides a comprehensive guide to the SRA's new COLP and COFA regulatory regime. Lawclient managing director Paul Wilkinson said Quill Pinpoint-using firms will now never be more 



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www.quill.co.uk

Eclipse Legal Systems has now added YouTube integration to the list of social media platforms that can be supported by the company's Proclaim case management system. As with Proclaim's Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook integrations, YouTube channels and videos are fully embedded with Proclaim and do not require having access to a separate browser.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=E_M9XyJCBLk

Zylpha has launched a Microsoft Azure cloud-based Legal Panel Management System for local authorities to automate and manage the distribution of cases to the barristers they instruct. Features of the new system include: a secure PDF distribution facility for case documentation; online acceptance or refusal of cases by chambers; extensive case progress monitoring and metrics; financial analysis and KPI reporting on timescales and success rates.

The new system stems from a proposal by Gerard Kamath, the Joint Legal Services Manager for the London Boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark (the two councils already share legal resources) and subsequently developed by Zylpha. Zylpha now manages the system and local authorities pay on a per-case basis. Zylpha CEO Tim Long says he believes the system will succeed because the concept originated from people working in the sector. The next phase will see the development of an automated billing system that will integrate with local authority and chambers back office systems.

www.zylpha.com

The Swiss-based litigation technology company **H7b1** has launched two new services. The first is a file decryption audit service to determine the effective accessibility of encrypted files. The second is a technology-assisted audit service for litigation or investigation databases to determine the completeness of the data collected.

www.h7b1.com

People & Places

North West law firm **Brabners Chaffe Street** has appointed **David Griffiths** as its new IT director. Griffiths was previously the head of IT at **Pannone**. He began his career in legal IT 15 years ago with Weightmans.

Samia Rauf has joined agile information integration specialists **BA Insight** as vice president EMEA. She can be reached at srauf@bainsight.com

Phoenix Business Solutions was named as the *Autonomy Protect EMEA Partner of the Year* at the recent **HP Autonomy** partner summit in Chicago. Phoenix director **Ray Burch** collected the award for Phoenix's work with the iManage DMS platform (part of the Autonomy Protect division).

The Belgian-based **I.R.I.S.** group (no relation to IRIS Legal in the UK) has expanded its sales presence in the UK by entering into a distribution agreement with **Northamber**.

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EagleEye to give TR Deal Proof a run for its money?

Last month we looked at Thomson Reuters' new Deal Proof system, which is effectively a proof reading application for legal documents that automatically highlights discrepancies and inconsistencies. Thomson Reuters say the initial response to the system has been very positive. Let's hope so because now Microsystems has entered the arena with a rival system called EagleEye.

EagleEye, which Microsystems is pitching as *the* agreement checker, is also designed to enhance the drafting and review of legal agreements by using automation to check for defined terms, inconsistent phrases, internal and external references and punctuation to ensure an agreement's completeness, accuracy, consistency and lack of ambiguity. Following EagleEye being tested on real legal document by law firms in the UK, US and Canada, Microsystems is confident it will give Deal Proof a run for its money both in terms of functionality and competitive pricing.

www.microsystems.com

Vital Statistics: 77% & 30%

According to research by SkyDox, 77% of law firm staff now use free cloud-based file sharing platforms, such as DropBox, but only 30% tell their IT departments about this.

www.skydox.com

10 years ago today

Jim Cummings, the founder and in June 2002 still the chairman of Pilgrim Systems (now part of Elite) said he would take "immediate and forceful legal action" against "certain individuals" employed by rival legal IT vendors if they continued to spread rumours about the financial viability of Pilgrim.

Elsewhere John Boles, SAP's then account manager for the legal sector, said SAP's recent deal with Linklaters was not a one-off exercise but the start of a long term commitment to the legal market. The then Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine said HM Land Registry would have a "world class, speedy, easy-to-use electronic conveyancing system" in place by 2006. Thanks to Elite, the LEDES 2000 XML standard for legal billing transactions was given a lifeline after beancounters PwC closed the official LEDES website. And, in our *Buzzword Corner* section, we explained to readers the meaning of the word 'webinar'!

Legal Technology Insider

Editor-in-Chief: Charles Christian

Tel: 01986 788666

Email: news@legaltechnology.com

Advertising Manager: Philip Woolley

Tel: 0800 0988175

Email: philip.woolley@innovatorsinlaw.com

The next issue (No. 256) will be published on Thursday 26 July 2012. To keep up with the latest news visit the www.theorangerag.com breaking news blog or @[ChristianUncut](https://twitter.com/ChristianUncut) on Twitter.

ISSN 1740-5033 © Legal Technology Insider 2012

