



APAC IT market set to boom in 2012 but low NRI holding up performance

Confusing data is emerging from the Gartner Consultancy and the World Economic Forum about the prospects for IT spend with the Asia Pacific region.

On the positive front, the latest Gartner forecast for global IT spend predicts that while total global spending is set to increase by 2.5% this year to AU\$ 3.55 trillion, the market in Asia Pacific will grow by more than 3 times this rate to reach AU\$667 billion by the end of the year.

These findings must be set against the latest *Global Information Technology Report 2012* from the World Economic Forum which ranks countries according to how they perform against a *Network Readiness Index*. The NRI is scored on the basis of how a country performs in ten categories, including political and regulatory environment, skills, infrastructure and the environment for business and innovation.

Using the NRI measure, Singapore came in second place on the global scale but there were no other APAC countries making it into the global top ten. Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong and New Zealand were placed 11th-to-14th, followed by Australia in 17th place and Japan in 18th. Malaysia only made 29th place, while China and India were far behind, in 59th and 61st place respectively.

www.gartner.com/technology/research/it-spending-forecast/

<http://reports.weforum.org/global-information-technology-2012>

Slater & Gordon gets UK ABS licence approval

Slater & Gordon's AU\$80 million acquisition of the UK law firm Russell Jones & Walker (RJW) completed this week, following the approval of an Alternative Business Structures (ABS) licence by the English Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). Slater & Gordon, the world's first publicly listed law firm, was also amongst the first organisations to be granted an ABS licence by the SRA. Slater & Gordon has also notified the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) of the deal.

Commenting on the deal, RJW CEO Neil Kinsella said his team knew dramatic changes were necessary "to stay at the forefront of a changing legal landscape" and that Slater & Gordon was "the perfect partner."

RJW equity partners have exchanged ownership of a traditional partnership for shares in Slater & Gordon. The RJW partners are required to hold the Slater & Gordon shares for a minimum of four years. RJW will now trade as *Russell Jones & Walker part of Slater & Gordon Lawyers*.

Thomson Reuters launch skills training in India

Thomson Reuters has launched an online skills training programme for lawyers in India. Called the *Legal Advancement Programme*, it is designed to provide law graduates with a grounding in the practical skills they will need in a legal career, including contract drafting, legal writing, legal research, trial advocacy and civil procedure.

The course runs for four months (or 80 hours) and culminates in an examination. Students securing a distinction will receive assistance in securing a legal internship.

- In India nearly 60,000 students graduate in law every year.

<http://legalcareertraining.com>

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April's wins, deals swapouts and rollouts

Brisbane-based **Cooper Grace Ward** has selected the **IntApp Integration Builder** system to help the firm connect and automate applications and business processes as part of an initiative to replace legacy business intake software and streamline new business inception.

www.intapp.com

In Japan, the **Nikon Corporation** has chosen the **Symantec Clearwell eDiscovery Platform** for inhouse ediscovery. The system will be used to perform early case assessments and first-pass reviews. Symantec say the attractions of the Clearwell solution include: its support for cross-border, multi-jurisdictional litigation; its ability to be deployed on a hosted or onsite basis (so ediscovery can be conducted in Japan without data having to be transferred to the US for processing); and its support for double-byte character sets and Japanese encodings.

www.symantec.com

More vendors in international alliances

Another round of international alliances this month serves to highlight the growing importance of the Asia Pacific region in the legal IT sector.

First off the mark was the announcement of a strategic partnership between California-based **iEnvision Technology** and Melbourne-based **Caseflow**. iEnvision specialises in information lifecycle management, including developing tools to support the Autonomy iManage DMS, while Caseflow is best known for its Acumen suite of case, matter and workflow management systems.

Commenting on the deal Brian Smith, the president & CEO of Caseflow, said "Partnering with iEnvision allows Caseflow to expand further into the North American legal market." While iEnvision founder & president Matt Hobbs added "We are pleased to introduce Caseflow Acumen to our customers. The out-of-the-box integration of key business systems, including time and billing, document management, CRM and email/office products is unique. Acumen is practical to ➔

➔ implement and a proven approach to deliver complex processes and documents to a demanding user base."

www.caseflowacumen.com + www.ienvision.com

One week later the UK-based and AIM stock market-quoted **Tikit Group** announced a reseller agreement with **ServTouch-Wywy**. The company (previously Wywy Office Solutions) is one of Singapore's leading technology integration providers and has already deployed Workshare and Autonomy iManage systems to law firms based in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and India.

As part of this new agreement, ServTouch will now resell Tikit's Carpe Diem suite of time recording software and its ClientConnect CRM and emarketing system, which is rapidly gaining traction as an alternative to LexisNexis Interaction.

Commenting on the news, ServTouch CEO Agus Djunaedi said "Tikit's international reputation is second to none. Through this partnership, ServTouch will be able to extend this excellence to firms based in the Singapore region. Because Tikit's products are fully multilingual, firms will be able to benefit from technologies used in leading US and European law firms."

www.tikit.com + www.servtouch-wywy.com


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Christian UnCut : run a project - how hard can it be ?

Richard Susskind tells a joke (although it is no laughing matter) that a lawyer will go off on a three day project management training course, then return to the firm and say “Look, I’m a project manager now!” Susskind then asks how lawyers would like it if project managers went on three day legal training courses, then came back and declared they were lawyers!

Speaking as an ex-lawyer, I know there are few creatures more egotistical than lawyers. I once met the managing partner of a US law firm who claimed, in all seriousness, that along with clocking up 2200 hours of billable work each year, he also micro-managed the running of the firm. “I’m an aviation lawyer,” he said. “By comparison, how difficult can law firm finance, marketing, HR and IT be?”

Precisely! And that is why the big differentiator among many law firms today is not the calibre of their lawyers but the calibre of their managers. Or, more to the point, whether lawyers let their professional managers get on with the business of running the firm as a business.

Lawyers will tell they are members of a profession that practices law. They are not. They are employees of a business that tries to solve problems and, in the process, manufactures documents on an industrial scale. Yes, of course it helps if the firm understands the law and gets the legal advice right. But that is not always what clients require.

With corporate clients, the exigencies of business will often mean commercial considerations take priority over legal issues. This possibly explains the findings of a recent Lexis Nexis Martindale-Hubbell study that when it comes to selecting a law firm, 72% rated *an understanding of business needs, objectives and culture* more highly than *lawyer expertise* (54%). Similarly, among issues influencing retention, lawyer expertise was flagged as the least important factor. ➡

➡ More recently, we have seen a growing awareness among more ‘traditional’ law firms (as they start to come under pressure from alternative legal business models) that the key discipline in any client engagement is not matter and case management (essentially *lawyering* expertise) but rather project management.

This involves the multidisciplinary expertises of law (for the domain expertise) marketing (is there a demand), HR (do we have the people), finance (will we make a profit) and IT (can we deliver the work on time and/or in the way the client wants). In other words, the legal element of the engagement is now recognised as only being part of the picture and to run this properly, you can no longer expect a lawyer (even one who has been on a three day course) to manage it. Instead you need project management.

News in brief

Time recording expert in APAC Matt McInerny, the director of Development & Professional Services at Atlanta, Georgia (US)-based Advanced Productivity Software is going to be in the APAC region for four weeks meeting existing customers, prospects and business partners. APS is probably best known for its DTE Axiom time recording system, which is currently being implemented at Henry Davis York by Phoenix Business Solutions. For details email nikki.bhogal@phoenixbs.com

Project management systems Along with developing fee change administration, mortgage enforcement/debt collection, HR and case management systems, as well implementing workflow projects based around the Metastorm BPM platform, Sydney-based BTP Australia is now able to offer a pre-packaged legal project management solution for law firms.

BTP’s managing director Ian Dunn says he believes that after a slow start, commercial pressures will drive more firms to embrace project management. “There are great opportunities here. Fixed-price engagements are the new normal. To drive efficiencies, to control engagements and to scope changes and variations, law firms need project management tools. As well as being a differentiator, the RoI here is avoiding the big write-offs so many firms are forced to make.”

www.btpaustralia.com.au

News in brief

Sydney breakfast briefing Phoenix Business solutions is holding a *Food for Thought* breakfast briefing in Sydney on Thursday 19th July on the topic of *The Unanchored Professional - Lawyer Mobility Challenges & Opportunities*. The event takes the form of a panel discussion by senior law firm management on the evolving trends for mobile working and information management. The invitation-only event, which takes place at *Quarter Twenty One by Becasse*, Level 5, Westfield Sydney and starts at 8:00am, is being held in association with Lawyers Weekly magazine and Janders Dean. For more details email info@jandersdean.com

Risk survey underway The 2012 *Law Firm Risk Survey* is now underway. The survey is inviting firms in four geographic zones – US, UK, Canada and Australia – to participate and will be looking at a wide-range of law-firm related risk issues. <http://www.lawfirmrisk.com/2012/05/2012-law-firm-risk-surveys-underway-us.html>

K&I conference details

Janders Dean has announced more details on the company's *5th Annual Legal Knowledge & Innovation Conference* in Sydney on 20th & 21st September this year. They include **Chris Bull**, Director, Edge Consulting; **Sam Dimond**, Global Head of Knowledge Management, Norton Rose; **David Jabbari**, COO, Clyde & Co and former global head of KM at Allen & Overy; **Katharine Ward**, Head of Knowledge Management, Vodafone Inhouse Legal; and Legal Technology Insider newsletter editor **Charles Christian** who are all flying in from the UK to attend the event.

➡ Commenting on the programme, Janders Dean director Justin North said "We are proud to again be bringing an unrivalled faculty of speakers to this leading legal industry event. Our long standing association with ILTA, our sponsors and our loyal delegates, continues to attract speakers of the highest international calibre. The demand we have experienced in previous years, combined with the number of speakers we have, has also meant we will be extending the conference format across two days this year."

Now in its fifth year, the Janders Dean annual conference is considered to be one of the leading events in the APAC legal calendar, attracting over 150 senior knowledge and information professionals, management teams and lawyers from private practice and inhouse legal. Further details of the agenda and registration information will be released in the coming weeks.

www.jandersdean.com

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