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US & Global Legal IT News

No halt to the acquisitions

The land grab by Elite and Aderant continues with both companies announcing fresh acquisitions over the past couple of weeks.

Elite were first off the mark with the acquisition of UK-based FWBS. The company, which is best known in the UK/EMEA and Australian/APAC markets, has developed two core products (MatterCenter and MatterSphere) that allow attorneys to manage their practice workflows, contacts and related materials in a matter-centric view. In essence, the FWBS software can serve as the front-office of an Elite 3E or Enterprise financial and practice management system but with users able to access the application from within Microsoft Outlook, Office or a web browser.

Although FWBS now becomes part of Thomson Reuters, it will retain its identity (and senior management team) as well as its policy of being vendor-agnostic, which in this instance means it will not only integrate with Elite but will continue to support Aderant sites, where it is widely used as a front-end to Aderant Expert implementations.

Talking of Aderant, their latest acquisition is RainMaker Software whose financial and practice management systems are currently used by nearly 300 mid-sized law firms across the United States, Canada and Latin America.

As well as helping Aderant increase its footprint and confirm its position as one of the few global players in the global legal tech space, there are clear synergies with the CompuLaw and Client

➡ Profiles businesses Aderant acquired in August. As for RainMaker, the benefits of the deal are best summed up by James Hammond, the VP of Aderant RainMaker Solutions (formerly president of RainMaker Software) "This is an exciting time for RainMaker customers and staff. By becoming part of the Aderant family, our customers will gain access to new products, innovative technology and the highest levels of service and support."

Norm Thomas joins Litéra

Norm Thomas, who until earlier this summer was (as director of industry market development for legal & professional services) the public face of Microsoft within the legal industry (that is until Microsoft decided the legal industry was too small to worry about) has joined Litéra as ...continued page 3 ➡

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October's wins & deals

Bryan Cave LLP has selected **IntApp** Integration Builder to synchronize and centrally manage information across the firm's diverse software portfolio. The firm initially looked at Integration Builder because of its pre-built integration templates for **Recommind Decisiv** but is now using it in conjunction with **Elite Enterprise**, **Open Text LegalKEY**, **Microsoft Active Directory** and **Exchange 2007**. In other **IntApp** news, **Dykema Gossett PLLC** has rolled out the company's **Time Builder** system and reports its 250 lawyers are already 'each capturing an additional hour or more of billable every week without additional effort or overhead.'

Jackson (Miss) based **Butler Snow O'Mara Stevens & Cannada PLLC** has selected **Aderant Expert** as its new business intelligence, alternative fee, finance and practice management system.

Elite has won three orders for its **Elite 3E** system from law firms based in Australia. **Mallesons Stephen Jaques** with 1000 legal staff and 9 offices is replacing **Aderant**, as is **Minter Ellison East Coast**, while **Minter Ellison Adelaide** is swapping out a **LexisNexis Axxia** system. The **Minter Ellison Legal Group**, with 850 timekeepers, is now ranked #1 in Australia for revenues.

Lapointe Rosenstein Marchand Melancon LLP, one of the largest firms in Quebec, has completed its rollout of a **Bighand** digital dictation implementation, including the mobility application for **Blackberry smartphones** and a French-Canadian language version of the software.

Philadelphia-based boutique IP law firm **Condo Roccia** is utilizing **CPA Global's** **FoundationIP** software and paralegal outsourcing service to support its patent portfolio and management practice.

Electronic invoicing and legal spend management systems specialist **doeLEGAL LLC** has signed up the inhouse legal department of fund managers **Angelo Gordon & Co** to use its **Ascent** system to process and manage bills from law firms.

➔ IP law specialist **Fish & Richardson** has installed the **kCura** **Relativity** ediscovery review platform on a firm-wide basis. The system was supplied by kCura reseller **Complete Discovery Source**.

Happy Birthday Christy

Congratulations to legal IT PR specialists **Burke & Company** which has just celebrated its 7th birthday. The agency's founder **Christy Burke** says the last seven years have been "totally awesome" though she admits there is still some way to go before her company is the same size as **Google**, just turned 13, which shares the same birthday.

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Independent vendors: where next ?

Thomson Reuters and Aderant’s acquisitions this month – FWBS and Rainmaker Software – are just the latest buys in a

corporate spending spree that has been going on since the spring. While this is undoubtedly good news for the companies immediately involved, where does it leave the rest of the market?

In North America (and also in Europe) the trend for consolidation in the legal IT space seems unstoppable, with the consolidators expanding their corporate footprint, product set and global reach with each new deal. But does this really mean the end of the line for smaller, independent vendors?

Undoubtedly there are some legacy vendors, with aging technology and equally aging management, that lack the resources and inclination to embark on widescale new product development projects. For them, the light at the end of the tunnel probably is a train coming to run them down. However these are the exceptions.

Despite the economic climate, there are always new entrants willing to invest in the market. Start-ups unencumbered with having to humor an entrenched user-base, for who the words ‘end-of-life’ means a rush to the door, and who can take advantage of new technologies, such as the cloud. There are also those smaller, nimbler, innovative vendors whose boards are still prepared to take risks and are not hindered by the need to meet quarterly targets to keep their investors happy.

And, we should never overlook the fact that some attempts by consolidators to integrate different businesses within one group and create a cohesive product roadmap have been distinctly less than successful. So yes the market is getting harder but there is still a place for the independents.

Norm Thomas joins Litéra

↳ continued from front page... vice president of business development. Thomas was with Microsoft for nearly 15 years. Commenting on the appointment, Litéra CEO Deepak Massand said “Norm’s expertise will help build strategic relationships to strengthen the Litéra brand.”

• In other Litéra news, following last month’s win at DLA Piper, two more major US law firms – Skadden and Weil Gotshal & Manges – have signed up for the company’s software. Both firms have ordered Litéra’s flagship Change-Pro TDC (Total Document Comparison) redlining and Metadact metadata cleansing software. Weil Gotshal has also selected Change-Pro for Excel and PowerPoint as well as the Litéra Innova application.



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Document automation on the radar

Although document assembly and automation software has been available in the legal market for almost 20 years, it has never gained the traction it deserves. But is the mood now changing?

The **HotDocs Corporation** has just closed a software licensing deal with the Executive Office for US Attorneys, a liaison organization between the US Department of Justice and the 94 individual US Attorneys Offices. The deal, which sees all US Attorneys standardizing on HotDocs – in the past it was only used in some offices, includes developer licenses for the 94 offices, 15,000 HotDocs user licenses and technical integration services. The software will be used primarily in litigation matters.

Elsewhere, **Exari** has announced the availability of Exari Contract Management, a new system that combines document assembly software with contact management capabilities including approvals workflow and document management.

Over on the West Coast, **Business Integrity**, best known for its ContractExpress system, has followed last year's New York office opening with a new sales and support facility in San Mateo, California. Company CTO Andy Wishart says the move was prompted by the growing demand from tech companies to use document assembly in not just legal departments but also sales operations. As part of this expansion, BI has recruited Gabrielle Walker, a former AGC at a US tech corporation, as VP & General Counsel and to provide high-level consultancy to customers. Walker says there is a big push to cut outside counsel spend and document automation is seen as one way to do more with less without jeopardizing the corporate risk profile.

There's an app for it

IntApp now has an app-version of its Time Builder software for the Apple iOS iPad and iPhone platform. **Comment:** As Amazon might say 'if you like IntApp Time Builder on the desktop, then you'll love it on the iPad'. Actually there is an interesting emerging technology trend here as we are encountering a growing number of attorneys who use their iPads as their permanent time capture device, leaving it open on the desktop even when they are back in the office.

Still in the time recording sector, **Bellefield Systems** has launched its iTimeKeep app for the iPad and iPhone. The app, which can be downloaded free from the App Store, uses the Bellefield Connect cloud platform to synchronize data with a law firm's back office PMS.

www.bellefield.com

Content Pilot LLC has announced its Velocity 'sales driven' app for the iPad, iPhone and Blackberry. The company says the app can access data held on a firm's back office system to help lawyers out of the office, in meetings or at conferences, immediately deal with marketing and business development related questions, such as 'do we have anyone with experience of this type of case?' Lisa M. Simon, the CMP of Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck LLP (and a past president of the Legal Marketing Association) is beta testing the system.

www.contentpilot.net

Finally, **Litigator Technology** has launched JuryStar, an iPad-based jury assessment system for trial lawyers handling *voir dire*. The app was developed in conjunction with Chattanooga Assistant DA Boyd Patterson and is available from the Apple App Store for \$39.99.

www.jurystar.com



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IT budgets down, interest in tablets up

InsideLegal, in association with ILTA, has published its latest *Technology Purchasing Survey* on buying trends in firms with 50+ attorneys. As the full report can be downloaded free of charge, we're just going to look at some of the headline figures and two of the trends: for tablets and cloud computing.

In terms of budgets, for the third year in a row some firms cut their spend on IT. This year 15% made cuts (of on average 19%), 35% froze budgets and 50% increased budgets (by on average 20%). But let's not get too excited as in terms of firms total revenues, 57% of firms spend between 2%-to-4% on IT and 24% spend less than 2%.

This leaves just 19% spending 5% or more, a figure that in pre-economic downturn days was the industry average. Incidentally, the 'sweet spot' for per-attorney technology spend is \$8k-\$17k per head, reported by 46% of firms. (Although this is the same as last year, it is still down from 58% in 2009.) This leaves 31% of firms with an IT spend of less than \$8k a year per attorney and just 23% spending more than 17%.

As to what they are spending (or planning) to spend their budgets on, cloud computing is now firmly on the IT roadmap, with 33% implementing a cloud strategy (compared with 17% in 2010 and 9% in 2009) and 32% saying it was on the radar. Similarly, in 2009, 56% of respondents said the

cloud was not on their roadmap whereas this year (2011) the figure had fallen to 32% and only 3% expressed any reservations about a cloud strategy.

Turning to tablets, which for most firms means the Apple iPad, the survey reveals growing support for the BYOD (buy/bring your own device) trend. InsideLegal found that while only 2% of firms provide tablets on a firm-wide basis with corresponding IT support, 9% were providing supported tablets on a case-by-case basis and a massive 55% had a policy of allowing staff to buy their own tablets which would then be supported by the IT department. Only 31% of firms provided no support for tablets 'as of now'.

- For the survey results visit www.insidelegal.com

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