

CHARLES CHRISTIAN'S

# LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

THE SOURCE FOR INDEPENDENT LEGAL TECHNOLOGY NEWS, COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

## TFB JOINS THE WEB PORTAL SET

Technology for Business Plc has become the latest legal IT supplier to launch a "corporate portal" product capable of supporting intranet-style facilities for law firms and extranet-style direct access to matter records and progress reports for clients, as well as any other approved third parties, logging in via a web browser across the Internet.

Called the TFB Web Server, it is designed to provide access to data from a wide range of sources, not just other TFB legal systems, on a 24/7 basis.

TFB technical director Mark Garnish says the system addresses security concerns by offering three levels of control: The Web Server database is discrete and separate from the main office system, thus precluding the possibility of information "leaking". Each "client" has their own individual password to control access to the database. And each case on the system is electronically "locked" and can only be accessed by people holding an appropriate "key".

### ■ COMMENT

The first generation of legal intranets did little to set the world alight, in many instances becoming merely the place where unwanted information, such as office procedure manuals, went to die. But all the indications are corporate portals, combining the best of intranets and extranets, are set to become the next big thing in legal software. In the last Insider we looked at AIM's e-Solution portal and elsewhere in this issue we look at similar products from The Data Base (see page 3) and LegalKEY (see page 2).

■ TFB is holding a Web Server seminar at The Law Society in London on Tuesday 20th July at 2.30 pm. Ring Gareth Thomas on 01932 781120 for details.

<http://www.tfbplc.co.uk>

## TWO NEW LEGAL IT EVENTS LAUNCHED

Two new legal IT events have been launched for vendors and users within the UK solicitors' systems market.

The first of these, in chronological order, is the Legal IT Forum, which is being staged by *Legal Week* magazine at Gleneagles in Scotland on the 13th-to-15th October. This invitation only event is intended to provide a mixture of formal conference sessions and networking opportunities for IT suppliers and the IT directors of larger law firms.

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## RESOLUTION BACK ON FOCUS

According to managing director Ken Symons, Resolution Software, the company behind the FirmWare practice management system, is back on track and set to re-establish its reputation as the UK's only home-grown world class legal systems supplier.

Symons' admits there was a period when Resolution was in danger of losing the plot, because it was simultaneously involved in three major implementation and bespoke development projects, but says these problems are long resolved and that, thanks to recent corporate restructuring and management changes, the company is now fully focussed.

Under the new structure, Resolution Systems will concentrate on systems integration work, leaving Resolution Software to focus on its portfolio of legal market applications which, along with FirmWare, also include the InControl case management system.

<http://www.ressoft.co.uk>

## STOP PRESS

■ After months of rumour BLAKE DAWSON WALDRON, widely rated to be Australia's most technologically advanced and IT friendly law firm, has formally placed an order for the KEYSTONE practice management system.

## INSIDER WEB TRAFFIC UP BY 40 PERCENT

Latest web traffic statistics show a 40 percent increase in the number of people accessing the Insider web site over the last quarter. The site is now averaging 6000 page views per month and this figure is expected to increase with the launch of further editorial features during the coming three months.

<http://www.legaltechnology.co.uk>

## CHANGING ADDRESS

Three of the UK market's better known IT suppliers have moved to new addresses this month.

■ Case management specialist DPS SOFTWARE is now at Herewood House, 288 Southbury Road, Enfield EN1 1TR. The phone number remains the same on 020 8882 8811. The new email address is [sales@dps-net.co.uk](mailto:sales@dps-net.co.uk) and a web site is under development.

<http://www.dps-net.co.uk>

■ Law Society recognised accounts systems supplier PRACCTICE Ltd has moved to Pracctice House, 216 Straight Mile Road, Rotherwas, Hereford HR2 6JP. The new phone number is 01432 372100.

■ Legal forms to accounts and case management supplier LASERFORM LAW has moved its headquarters to a purpose built office block in Cheshire. The new premises will also house some of the technical and support operations currently handled out of London. The address is LFM House, Higher Lane, Lymm, Cheshire WA13 0RZ. The main switchboard number is 01925 750000.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

■ DOCUMENTUM has announced that its new Documentum 4i web-enabled document and knowledge management system will support Microsoft Office 2000. The company says 4i is designed for organisations wanting to manage content across e-business extranets, intranets and, what is rapidly becoming the buzzword du jour "corporate portals".

<http://www.documentum.com>

■ COREL, the company behind the WordPerfect wordprocessing system, has just returned to profit and reported its best trading results for four years.

■ IRWIN ASSOCIATES (020 7237 6356) has released Version 2.8 of its ultra low cost Virgo accounts software. The new version includes enhancements for firms with Legal Aid franchises, as well as a routine to handle the new phone codes.

## US TRENDS - iMANAGE AND INTERFACE AHEAD

Latest statistics on software trends in the US legal systems market reveal that InterAction's Interface relationship management application and the iManage document management system are still the biggest selling products.

According to the most recent *AmLaw Tech* survey, among firms buying 100 or more licences during the past three months, 25 purchased iManage whereas the previous document management market leader DOCs Open only managed 13 sales. During the same period 15 firms bought the InterAction system.

On the practice management front, CMS Open and Elite continue to battle it out, with CMS taking 12 sites while Elite could only muster five wins. Interestingly, the ProLaw case management system, which made its UK debut at SOLEX last month, went into 16 law offices.

The latest figures also reveal two new suppliers to watch: METZ Software has a relationship management package called Phones Pro that was bought by two firms in the last quarter, including Sullivan & Cromwell in New York. And LegalKEY Technologies sold its new corporate portal/intranet systems into 12 firms, including blue chip practices Sidley & Austin, White & Case and Brobeck. The LegalKEY system is compatible with DOCS and iManage.

<http://www.metz.com>

<http://www.legalkey.com>

## NEW TO SCOTTISH MARKET

Solicitors Own Software has produced a new version of its practice management software that is compatible with the Law Society of Scotland's accounts rules. The system is being distributed by Solicitec Scotland Ltd (01506 418548).

■ Solicitec will be showing its software at the Scottish Law Society's annual conference in Edinburgh this week. Other IT exhibitors include: AIM, Gavel & Gown, Axiom Business Computers, Axxia Systems, Eclipse Computers, Kommunicate, Lexis-Nexis and OyezStraker.

## AXXIA IN THIRD-PARTY LINK

Following the success of its deal with debt recovery software specialist BCL/Beaver, Axxia Systems has signed up as a distributor for another third-party product - this time with Canadian software company Whitehill Technologies. The new deal means Axxia will be able to offer Whitehill's bill formatting software Wordflow Professional as an integrated option to go with its Arista and Eion accounts systems.

Whitehill's software can transform text or numerical output from any system into fully customised spreadsheet, wordprocessing or web documents. Axxia say the option meets the demand from law firms for consistent corporate standards and styles, and their clients' need for bills to be presented in specific ways for analysis and auditing.

## DATA BASE TO OFFER THE KNOWLEDGE

Nottingham systems house The Data Base (0115 971 2000) has entered the "corporate portal" market with the launch of an intranet-in-a-box solution called the Legal Intranet.

According to business development director Ed Hodgson, the concept behind the project is to provide law firms with a comprehensive but modular library of web publishing and administration tools. This means not only can a firm commence developing an intranet relatively quickly but it also can be confident that if at some later stage it does need to add more sophisticated features (such as bulletin board discussion areas, external news feeds or a know-how management module called The Knowledge) the underlying IT infrastructure is already in place to support them.

Hodgson says it is essential that know-how intranets do not become merely stale repositories for information but instead contain a dynamic element, such as using "push" technology to notify users of the latest developments and ensuring authors review the "shelf life" of their material.

■ The Data Base has chosen a Microsoft Back Office plus SQL Server 7.0 and Exchange Server 5.5 platform for the Legal Intranet's technology platform. Pricing, including SQL Server, starts at £6000 plus between £10 and £20 per user. As a guide, Hodgson suggests the licensing side of a 150 user intranet would cost around £8000 however on top of this would be implementation charges of between £650 and £800 a day for any bespoke development work and consultancy. The Knowledge know-how management system has a similar price structure.

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

■ Legal systems supplier VIDESS is looking for a sales manager to work from its head office in Bradford. For details contact Sonja Sanderson on 01274 851577.

■ LASERFORM LAW reports that, thanks to the new Woolf civil justice procedural rules, in an eight week period from mid-April to mid-June it has taken over £1 million of new legal forms and case management software business.

■ The ASSOCIATION OF PERSONAL INJURY LAWYERS (APIL) is currently compiling a directory of IT suppliers that can be used as a source of reference by personal injury lawyers looking for new case and practice management systems. APIL is also trying to build up a database of recommendations and comment from the users of these systems to provide further guidance to APIL members who do not yet have computer systems.

For details of the directory - or the option of taking exhibition space at APIL's autumn conference in Stratford-upon-Avon on 23rd September, contact membership services manager Marlene Lord on 0115 958 0585.

## DEALS AND TENDERS

■ TOWNSENDS in Swindon is in the process of implementing a 120-user Galaxy case and practice management system from SANDERSON SYSTEMS. The firm, which will run the software across three offices, previously used an ADMIRAL LegalMind accounts package in conjunction with InControl case management software, supplied by now defunct MERCURY COMPUTING. Admiral subsequently sold its LegalMind business to Sanderson, while the rights to the InControl software were acquired by RESOLUTION SOFTWARE. SIMPSON MILLAR has also bought a Galaxy case management system and will be integrating it with a PILGRIM LawSoft practice management system.

■ STEPHENSON HARWOOD is currently evaluating a SAGE Carpe Diem system as a fee earner front end for its KEYSTONE practice management system.

■ LINDON WOOD CONSULTANTS has just been awarded a contract by LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL to convert 128 separate DATA-EASE databases into a Y2K-compliant format.

■ GIRLINGS in Kent, which is headed by former Law Society president Tony Girling, has ordered FirmWare practice management and InControl case management systems from RESOLUTION SOFTWARE. CLARKE WILLMOTT CLARKE, which has offices throughout the South-West, is to continue running InControl in conjunction with SANDERSON LegalMind PMS software.

■ BEACHCROFT WANSBROUGHS, which formally completed the merger between WANSBROUGHS WILLEY HARGRAVE and BEACHCROFT STANLEYS at the beginning of May, has now established a wide area network between the firm's various offices and is scheduled to complete the integration of the two sides' existing ELITE accounts systems by early 2000.

SHOOSMITHS & HARRISON has completed the unusual step of migrating from Elite running on Windows NT/SQL Server to Elite on SCO Unix/INFORMIX.

## CONTEXT PUT LAW ON THE NET

Last Monday saw the launch of Context's new JUSTIS.com subscription-based web site. This contains the full text of 134 years of *The Law Reports*, 46 years of the *Weekly Law Reports* and almost a decade of *The Times Law Reports*. Users wanting the latest legal decisions will also be able to access transcripts of Court of Appeal judgments that will be updated daily.

At present JUSTIS.com contains four titles from the JUSTIS range however development is underway to expand the service to incorporate other titles.

Commenting on the launch, Context commercial director Michelle Green said: "We produce 17 legal CD-Rom titles and our publishing decisions are always based on end-user requirements. We actively encourage feedback and deciding what to add to JUSTIS.com is also likely to be shaped by our customers".

Green also believes the new service has a "cost-effective" pricing structure that will "make core legal material more widely accessible" and that even "novice web users will be able to find what they are looking for quickly and easily".

■ For prices and further information contact Francis Ofili on 020 7267 8989.

<http://www.justis.com>

## MIGRATE TO LTi-NET

An increasing number of subscribers are migrating to LTi-Net, the digital version of Legal Technology Insider. Available in an HTML file format, it can be delivered as an e-mail attachment or accessed via a secure subscriber-only web site.

LTi-NET comes complete with live hypertext links and is designed for firms wanting to access the newsletter across corporate portals, intranets and Lotus Notes databases or people who just want to be able to read and print it from the desktop, rather than wait for the paper version to make its way to them down the distribution list. All LTi-NET subscribers also get access to a web archive of back-copies of the newsletter.

Subscription rates start at £135 (inc VAT) for a single user, rising to £270 (inc VAT) for a site licence. For a free sample copy e-mail: [info@legaltechnology.co.uk](mailto:info@legaltechnology.co.uk)

## WHY LAW LIBRARIANS ARE IN REVOLT

One of the clearer messages to come out of the recent Library + Information Show at the Birmingham NEC was that law librarians are an unhappy breed.

Many are finding their resources swallowed-up in the pursuit of what they privately believe are ill-conceived know-how management projects at the same as they are having to fight for budgets, and in some instances their very survival, as practice managers begin wondering whether the greater use of electronic legal resources means they can "downsize" their library establishments.

This downsizing trend has already taken off in the USA where, for example, Pillsbury Madison & Sutro in San Francisco has laid off its entire library staff and outsourced the work to an agency. But US reports also suggest some of these developments have hit problems because managers had not appreciated the cost of online services or that not all legal research work can be conducted electronically.

A further problem is a growing unhappiness with the sales and pricing policies of law publishers - Context seems to be the only publisher widely liked by librarians. In particular the City Law Librarians Group believes the move towards electronic publishing has changed the traditional library-publisher relationship and what is now needed are software industry-type user groups at which both technical and pricing/licensing issues can be resolved. Or, as one librarian put it: "We need to throw off the 'bun and spectacles' image and become more militant".

## CD-ROM VERSUS ONLINE

In a recent interview with the Insider, Tolley's head of Internet publishing Steve Savory said he believed online legal information services have an advantage over CD-Rom publications for reasons of both time and logistics.

"Publishing on the Internet enables us to make new content available to subscribers faster than ever before. If the Revenue publishes a new concession today, the practitioner would have to wait at least one week to get the information on CD and perhaps a year for a paper based copy. With online services we can e-mail subscribers immediately and have the full text on the web in minutes."

Turning to logistics, Savory said a problem encountered in larger law firms and professional practices is because they subscribe to so many CD titles, in many instances taking multiple copies of disks for different servers and branch offices, it is not unusual to find stacks of update disks waiting in a corner for someone to find the time to replace them. This is in contrast to the Internet where all updating is handled centrally by the publisher.

Savory also points out the Internet, unlike CD-Rom, imposes no extra strains on internal network traffic and does not require state of the art PCs but merely anything capable of running a Version 3.0 (or higher) browser.

## R/KYV SYSTEM GETS MAJOR OVERHAUL

Valid Information's R/KYV system, one of the pioneering products in the UK litigation support market, has been given a new look with the introduction of R/KYV Optimum.

Valid managing director Bill Cannings describes the new system as a "complete suite" covering everything from the actual production of documents at source, through to the use of the system in a courtroom and ongoing use as a law firm's "war-chest" of information.

Optimum makes extensive use of the latest drag-and-drop features within Windows and incorporates workflow techniques so documents can be linked and associated in ways that previously were not possible. In addition, the workflow element allows teams of lawyers to work on and share, including via the Internet thanks to server software that can handle a mixture of Windows and HTML users.

The system also incorporates Valid's courtroom software, which was estimated to have saved £40,000 a week during one tax fraud trial at Southwark Crown Court and also saw action during the 531 days of the Heathrow Airport Terminal 5 enquiry.

Optimum includes the facility to capture data at source, with any "digital object", including wordprocessing files, spreadsheet data, accounting information, micrographics and scanned paper, being treated as "documents".

As scanning still forms an essential part of most litigation support work, the Optimum workflow element controls the whole process, checking documents are not in an un-used evidence list, have valid numbers and accepted nomenclature and that all scanning (using Valid's own OCR engine) and indexing is fully integrated.

Canning believes the system will help sort the cowboys from the professionals in the litigation support industry: "Most bureaux are content to buy off the peg scanning software and tinker around with it. Perhaps that is why so many of them produce such diabolical work and go bust!"

## XML - IT'S ALL ABOUT DATA

According to HotDocs distributor and Capsoft UK managing director Russell Shepherd, the correct way to look at the PDF versus XML file format debate (**see Insider passim**) is to consider not what they are but what they do.

Shepherd says XML is not a standard that will challenge PDF but is instead a new way of reusing published data. It would typically be used in the dynamic production of documents or other reformatted data and, as such, lends itself to electronic commerce applications on the Internet.

"XML is all about data" whereas PDF is about images and "represents a sensible choice for storing and reusing graphical representations of paper documents". Shepherd adds that even in the USA many courts and government agencies are still struggling with issues surrounding PDF files and the submission of data and electronic signatures.

## LITIGATION SUPPORT NEWS IN BRIEF

■ IGL LEGAL DOCUMENT SERVICES (020 7363 4400) has introduced a PDF (portable document file) format "e-bible" service for firms wanting to create electronic versions of their transaction bibles. IGL's Paul Mankoo says that along with providing both clients and fee earners with a full version of the bible on CD-Rom rather than paper, the service can also ensure the material can be linked with a law firm's document and knowledge management systems.

■ Xerox subsidiary SCAN SOFT Inc (01344 407718) has unveiled a new version of its TextBridge OCR (optical character recognition) software. Called the TextBridge Pro 9.0 Business Edition, it has been designed for organisations producing high volume OCR, scan-to-web and paper-to-PDF output. Pro 9.0 generates true PDF output (in Normal, Image and Image+Text formats) for a one-off cost that can be published and distributed by e-mail. Pricing starts at £350 (+VAT) for a single-user licence both from ScanSoft and its distributors.

<http://www.scansoft.com>

■ 5D SOLUTIONS (01483 426421) has launched a cheap and easy to use PDF file creator called NikNak. Priced at £65 (+VAT), about half the price of comparable Adobe Acrobat products, although the software lacks some of the functionality of Adobe, it still outputs PDF 1.2 compliant files to provide a viable alternative to PDF creation.

The way NikNak works is to embed itself into the Microsoft Windows 95/NT printing system, so it appears to be just another PostScript printer physically attached to the computer. To produce a PDF file, the user selects the PDF driver from an application's print dialogue, chooses the output quality and the program then automatically converts the document into a PDF file. NikNak, which can handle most mainstream office software applications including Word and Excel, also supports drag-and-drop conversions of EPS files to PDF.

<http://www.five-d.com>

## E-MAIL MONITORS - DO THEY WORK ?

Purely by coincidence, at about the same time as a gas distribution firm was agreeing to pay £100,000 in damages to settle an e-mail libel action, two new e-mail monitoring systems were launched in the UK. Business Systems Group is acting as the distributor for SRA's Assentor real-time e-mail monitoring system and MessageNet has launched a bureau service called E:)SCAN that filters the content of inbound and outbound e-mail traffic via its own servers.

Both systems were developed to meet the growing problem of "inappropriately" worded e-mail messages that cause offence or result in legal action. But, do they really work?

Neither product claims 100 percent accuracy but BSG does say its system is "intelligent" in that it monitors not only keywords but also the context in which they are used. For example, to call someone a "Chink" is clearly offensive but the word could be used legitimately in the context of "We think we have spotted a chink in their armour".

■ Bloomberg, the financial information group, introduced e-mail monitoring for its own staff earlier this year and last month extended it to cover the average of three million messages its customers send between its 120,000 screens each day. The result has been a mixed success, apparently one broker at Flemings Investments in London has been unable to conduct any e-mail correspondence about the German manufacturing group FAG Kugelfischer Georg Schaefer AG because the system thinks he is making derogatory remarks about homosexuals.

<http://www.bsg.co.uk>

<http://www.message.net.co.uk>

### ■ INSIDER FREE-ZINES

Legal Technology Insider publishes a series of free current awareness e-mail newsletters (free-zines) providing news and comment on legal practice. The titles are: *E-Business + Law*, *Watching Brief Online* (local government law) and the *Litigation Support Digital Newsletter*. To subscribe send a note of your e-mail address to: [info@legaltechnology.co.uk](mailto:info@legaltechnology.co.uk)

## THE LAWYER AWARDS - NEW MEDIA WINS

The Internet and related "new media" technologies enjoyed considerable success at *The Lawyer* magazine's recent annual awards ceremony.

The winner of the "Best use of IT" award was Hammond Suddards with its *Hammonds Direct* service for handling high volumes of conveyancing transactions - the service currently handles over 4000 transactions a month.

The runner-up was Linklaters with *Confirms*, another part of its *Blue Flag* service. (The service also won a third place in the "Innovation Award" category.) And third place went to Briffa & Co for its "Internet shop". The category was sponsored by IT services provider Tikit.

In the "Best use of Multimedia" category, the first prize went to the Birmingham firm Cartwright & Lewis for their CD-Rom based interactive guides to various areas of business law. The runner-up was Briffa & Co again.

■ The Briffa site, some parts of which are still under development, provides visitors with an opportunity to buy from a range of relatively low-cost, standard documents relating to various areas of intellectual property law - such as copyright agreements for web site developers. However this is not a true automated e-commerce site as users can only order the documents online. Orders still have to be processed manually and are then despatched by post or e-mail, along with an invoice, within two working days.

<http://www.briffa.com>

## WEB SITE REPORTS

### ■ PANNONE BALONEY

It may be new but the Pannone web site already looks set to get into the guide books as a classic example of how not to design a web site. Our first visit, using the latest version of Internet Explorer, threw up an error message saying we lacked the requisite multimedia plug-ins with which to view the site. Another screen prompt helpfully suggested we download the appropriate software from the web and that it should only "take a couple of minutes". Well excuse me but just who is paying for this phone call?

Our alternative browser (Netscape Communicator 4.5) proved more useful. We could actually see the site although frankly it was not worth the effort. Despite ISDN access, the home page and subsequent links were painfully slow to load, the whole thing being delayed by huge blocks of colour sliding backwards and forwards in a way some misguided law firm marketer thinks is artistic. It isn't.

Still, at least there were no portrait galleries of pictures of men in suits. There again there was not much content of any kind. The "click here for latest news" option produced a story that was seven weeks old and the "contact" menu link - presumably intended to provide access to telephone

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## TWO NEW LEGAL IT EVENTS

Continued from front page

The second new show - Legal IT 2000 - is being organised by Cordial Events (020 7221 1155) at the Business Design Centre in London on the 2nd and 3rd February 2000. This event, which is sponsored by *Legal Week* in association with *Legal Technology Insider*, will combine conventional exhibition space with a series of keynote seminars.

Although Cordial has only been selling the event since mid-June, nearly two-thirds of the space has now been sold or reserved by a supplier list that includes almost all the major players within the UK legal IT market. Contracts have already been signed by Axxia, Butterworths, Equitrac, Linetime, Peapod, Pilgrim and Pracctice, while suppliers who have reserved stands include AIM, Avenue, CMS, Cognito, Grant Thornton, Laserform, Lexology, PC Docs, Quill, Sanderson, Solicitec, Sweet & Maxwell, TFB and Tikit. A number of suppliers have told the Insider this is the only major exhibition they will attend in London next year.

■ Robert Ewin, the managing director of Nationwide which runs the Solicitors National Legal Office Exhibition at the Birmingham NEC, has confirmed rumours that a rival event organiser did try but failed to have them ousted from the venue. The show will take place at the NEC again next year. The dates are 14th-to-16th March and the *Law Society Gazette* has confirmed that this will continue to be the only major legal exhibition it sponsors.

See next issue for full list of the autumn's legal IT events.

## WEB SITE REPORTS

Continued from page 6

numbers and similar useful items of information - did not work. (There did not appear to be any hypertext code behind it.) It was also surprising to see the English Law Society described as the professional body for "UK lawyers", we hope someone told the Bar and Scottish practitioners.

So what is the point of this site? The flashy elements will probably impress less web-savvy competitors within the profession and students looking for jobs. But anyone else, assuming they have the correct browser and can see anything at all, is likely to be left distinctly underwhelmed.

<http://www.pannone.com>

### ■ THE BIZ LACKS LEGAL FIZZ

According to the news announcement: "The Biz is the only portal web site where people working in legal services can access accurate legal information fast via a focussed search directory, and includes the World's first Office Vertical Portal (which) is dedicated solely to finding services that any busy office needs - whether users are looking for a new legal legislation details or an actuary." (Sic)

Forget the grammar and forget this site. The Biz is not a legal portal but just another general business services and office products site wanting to attract law firm advertising.

<http://www.thebiz.co.uk>

## LEGAL TECHNOLOGY DIARY DATES

■ A VISION FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM - The Law Society of Scotland's 50th Anniversary Conference opens at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre on Thursday 8th July and runs through until Saturday 10th. IT speakers include Richard Susskind, Neil Cameron and Chris Gough of Grant Thornton. There will also be a small exhibition on the Thursday and Friday and an Internet cafe running for all three days. Prices start at £35 (+ VAT) for one-day student fees through to £300 (+ VAT) for a full three day ticket. Call the organisers Meeting Makers on 0141 434 1500 for more details.

■ AVENUE SEMINARS - A series of free seminars around England and Wales to promote Avenue Legal Systems' new software, including its Woolf-compliant case management system. For details call Linda Moore on 01489 609010.

■ IT SOLUTIONS '99 - A product promotional seminar organised by Sanderson Systems in London on 13th July. Admission is free, call Lisa Quinn on 0121 359 4861 for more details.

■ YEAR 2000 COMPLIANCE - Two one day conferences on assessing and managing the legal risks on 27th July (London) and 29th July (Dublin). Organised by IQPC Events (020 7430 7300). Full details are on the web.

<http://www.iqpc.co.uk>

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# COMPUTER LORE

■ **DIRTY WORK BUT SOMEONE HAS TO DO IT**  
Although the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) has plenty of heavy duty sessions scheduled for its autumn conference in September (**see next issue for details**), including seminars on the McDonald's "scalding cases" and whether "fibromyalgia is the new RSI", they are also clearly determined to party the night away. On the first evening a drinks reception is followed by pre-dinner drinks, then dinner, and then a bar and disco that does not close until one in the morning. The next day even starts with a seminar called "A visit to the Bar" but, disappointingly, this actually proves to be about using barristers.

■ **SOMEBODY BET ON THE BAY**  
Litigation support specialist Elliott Slone has ventured into the corporate promotion and entertainment field with the purchase of a two year old racehorse, a filly christened Hoxton Square after the location of the company's head office. She had her first outing at Southwell at the end of last month, where she came in a good second in a race for maiden fillies, beating the third-place runner by about seven lengths. If her form continues to hold up, Elliott Slone plan to invite clients along to see her run.

■ **HELLO JOHN, IS THAT A NEW MONDEO ?**  
Reports have been received of irate squeaks emanating from Axxia Systems after a leading IT consultant described them as the "Ford Mondeo of the legal software world". Apparently this is because their systems are "unexciting but reliable" and there is at least one in every High Street.

■ **WEIRD, WONDERFUL AND ON THE WEB**  
The story in the last issue about Sandwiches Online has prompted one of our readers to point out that a Pies Online service will shortly be going live in the North of England. It is currently under construction however we did manage to find another food connection on the HM Prison Service site.

There, among the grim news about Wormwood Scrubs and a glossary of prison argot (apparently "jam roll" is not something you have with custard but slang for parole) is a report that HMP Garth in Lancashire has just won an award for serving up the healthiest prison food in the UK.

Finally, those of our readers who plan to spend some of the Long Vacation playing golf might like to note that the French Language Office in Quebec now has a web site providing a guide to golfing terminology in French. A birdie is an "oiselet", an eagle is an "aigle" and a double eagle is an "albatros". And if you hit a "trou d'un coup" (hole in one) mind you don't throw up a "motte de gazon" (divot) on any of the "vertes" (greens).

<http://www.piesonline.co.uk>

<http://www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk>

<http://www.olf.gouv.qc.ca>