

Charles Christian's

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

INDEPENDENT NEWS & COMMENT ON LEGAL TECHNOLOGY

LSC LOOKING TO HELP SMALL FIRMS WITH IT

The Legal Services Commission (LSC) is investigating a number of options, ranging from education courses through to assistance with IT procurement, to help smaller law firms undertaking civil and criminal legal aid work take maximum advantage of modern technology.

Sharon Penfold, who is heading the project, told the Insider that the LSC is concerned that many smaller firms either lack the appropriate technology to support LSC initiatives, such as the online filing of claims forms, or else are wasting money on inappropriate IT projects.

The LSC, which is currently conducting a survey of firms to help identify their concerns and needs, hopes to announce details of its assistance schemes by the spring.

LEFT SPEECHLESS - LERNOUT & HAUSPIE MADE BANKRUPT

The Ieper Commercial Court in Belgium last week declared speech recognition company Lernout & Hauspie bankrupt. The judge rejected L&H's recovery plan as "nothing more than a liquidation plan that kept the company artificially alive without restoring its fiscal health".

The court has appointed five administrators to take over management of the firm and oversee the disposal of its assets, now estimated to be worth just \$20 million. It is unclear what the effects of the Belgian decision will have on the Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection L&H has in the United States, where its second headquarters are located. At its peak 18 months ago the L&H group, which includes the Dragon Dictate and Dictaphone businesses, was Europe's second largest software company.

THE INSIDER ARCHIVE ON CD

This issue includes a free CD containing a PDF archive of the first five years of the Insider (1995 to 2000). The CD includes user instructions and a copy of Adobe Acrobat. Subscribers to the Insider digital edition will be sent their CDs by post. For extra copies of the CD call the Insider on 01379 687518 or email news@legalnewsmedia.com

OYEZ GOES UP FOR SALE FOR £90M

One of the oldest and best known names in the UK legal market - Oyez - is up for sale following the decision by the private equity group Bridgepoint Capital (previously NatWest Ventures) to sell its 75 percent stake in the Oyez Straker legal stationery and office supplies group for between £80-£90 million. Oyez has a projected turnover of £138 million and a projected operating profit of £10 million for the 12 months to August next year.

Along with the stationery operations, which now include the rival Stat Plus business it bought for £17.7 million last year, the group's best known subsidiary is probably the Oyez Legal Technologies litigation support services division.

Bridgepoint's deadline for offers is the end of November but the sale is unlikely to be concluded until early next year.

BAKER ROBBINS IN INFOGRAPHICS DEAL

In a move that sees Baker Robbins move further into the systems integration market, the IT consultancy has signed a global partnership agreement with case and workflow management software developer Infographics. Under the deal Baker Robbins will provide business process management consultancy services to its UK and overseas clients based around Infographics' new Teamflow system, which receives its public launch next week in London.

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ELITE RESULTS RECORD

The Elite Information Group has reported record revenues for its third quarter ended 30 September 2001 of \$18.5 million, an increase of 44 percent on the third quarter of 2000. Revenues for the first nine months of 2001 totalled \$50.2 million, 26 percent above the same period last year.

Elite's net income for the third quarter was \$1.9 million, compared with an income for the same quarter last year of \$850,000, before the write off of R&D associated with the Law Manager acquisition. For the first nine months of this year the company's net profit was \$2.9 million, more than double the \$1.4 million profit for the same period of 2000.

QUILL AND OPSIS WORK TOGETHER ON CASE SYSTEM

Long established UK legal IT supplier Quill Systems has announced a collaboration deal with the Irish legal systems vendor Opsis that will see Quill offering the Opsis Solicitor case management package to users of its Quillennium accounts and practice management system.

Quill chairman Tony Landes said that along with close integration between the Quill and Opsis software, users would also benefit from the fact both companies shared a similar philosophy in terms of quality of service.

Hastings firm Butters David Grey is the first Quill site to order the Opsis system. Opsis, which has nearly 200 sites in the North and South of Ireland, will support UK customers from its Stamford offices, which it acquired last year when it bought the old Stukeley/Solace business.

WESTLAW TURNS NEXT PAGE

West Group in the US and Sweet & Maxwell in the UK have announced a link up with NextPage Inc, a supplier of peer-to-peer networking management systems used by a number of US firms. The alliance will integrate Westlaw legal resources more closely with firms' own intranet and knowledge management systems so that, for example, lawyers can research Westlaw along with files from their own internal systems and view the results simultaneously.

Although NextPage is little known in the UK, the deal is intended to help international practices, such as Baker & McKenzie, and US firms with London offices who already use NextPage and want to run it in conjunction with the Westlaw UK service. NextPage supports most document formats including Microsoft Office, PDF and Lotus Notes as well as third party content from outside publishers.

DONNS IT SHORTLISTED

The online case management extranet used by Manchester firm Donns has been shortlisted for two categories in this year's Computer Weekly E-Business Excellence Awards. The winners will be announced at the end of November.

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ INTERFACE CITRIX DEAL

Interface Software, the company behind the InterAction system, has formed a strategic alliance with Citrix. Ultimately the deal will enable Interface users to access CRM type information from anywhere, via the web, using the Citrix XPS portal system.

■ FIRM DOESN'T LOSE THE PLOT

Professional Computer Solutions (01675 470774) has delivered a bespoke plot conveyancing system to Gloucester law firm Davies & Partners. The package, built around a stripped down version of the DPS case management application, replaces an old WordPerfect system that could no longer cope with the firm's volumes of business. Implementation was carried out by independent IT consultant Jill Bazalgette of Project Champions. The firm also upgraded its private client conveyancing department systems with the installation of standard DPS conveyancing software.

www.procos.co.uk

■ IMANAGE 3Q RESULTS

iManage's latest results, for the nine months to 30 September, show turnover up 25 percent to \$27.6 million compared with \$22 million for the same period last year. However the company also reported a net loss of \$17.1 million, compared to a net loss of \$4.6 million in the comparable period last year.

■ EDWARDS DUTHIE VOCAL SUPPORT

East London law firm Edwards Duthie (created by the recent merger of Duthie Hart and E Edwards Son & Noice) has installed a voice activated directory for the telephone operators manning its centralised switchboard. With 240 staff in eight offices contending with 40,000 calls a month, the firm installed the new system to avoid leaving clients hanging on the phone and cut down the time operators spent connecting internal calls to the correct extensions. Since installing the new Datapulse system, the firm reckons it has slashed the number of lost calls and increased operator productivity by 40 percent.

www.datapulse.com

SURVEY SHOWS LAW FIRM DIGITAL DIVIDE

A MORI survey of just over 170 solicitors in private and inhouse legal practice, carried out for LexisNexis Butterworths earlier this autumn, has highlighted the profession's ambiguous attitude towards technology.

For example, while the majority of respondents were pro technology - 87 percent felt IT could save time, 81 percent saw IT as a way of offering a better service to their clients and 67 percent believed IT could boost fee earner productivity, the survey also revealed that 58 percent of all solicitors (65 percent for partners and 68 percent among small firm lawyers) would like to learn more about IT but currently do not have the time. Interestingly, 48 percent said they would be interested in technology training if they could earn CPD points for attending such courses.

Furthermore, despite this apparent interest in legal IT, it was noticeable that the most widely used (90 percent) piece of technology was still the handheld dictation machine, a relic of the pre-computing days of the early 1970s, followed by email (88 percent) and PCs/laptops (86 percent). The least used technologies were PDA/organisers (16 percent) and speech recognition software (8 percent).

Turning to the web, although now used by 85 percent of lawyers in the sample, visitor traffic is still relatively infrequent with only 62 percent of this group currently accessing the web on a daily basis and nearly 30 percent only visiting on a weekly basis. There again as over 70 percent of respondents said they still relied on paper based, rather than online, services to keep them up to date with the latest legal developments, this low usage rate should not come as a surprise.

The survey also revealed an apparent digital divide opening up among lawyers when it comes to online legal research with lawyers under 40 (66 percent) and women (65 percent) making greater use of the web than both older lawyers and men. And, lawyers in larger firms (71 percent) are making much more use of online facilities than lawyers in smaller firms (26 percent).

ELITE NUMBER ONE SUPPLIER AMONG TOP 100 LAW FIRMS ?

New figures supplied to the Insider suggest that Elite Information Systems is now the market leader in terms of having its practice management system installed in more top 100 firms than any other legal systems supplier.

Using the Legalease/ICC Law top 100 (with rankings based on the number of fee earners worldwide) Elite is in first place with 26 sites, followed by Axxia with 22 and CMS with 10. Next come ResSoft (8), Norwel (7), Keystone and Miles, each with 4 sites, Pilgrim (3) and Timeslice (2).

■ Axxia is still the number one supplier for top 100 firms buying integrated, rather than best of breed, solutions.

PEOPLE & PLACES

After 10 years with **Equitrac** in the UK, **Rupert Murray** is moving to **Perceptive Technology** as sales director to focus on the company's flagship Mentor product suite. Commenting on the move Murray said: "it has been an excellent 10 years with Equitrac, but it is now time for a new challenge. Perceptive's reputation provides an exciting opportunity to be at the cutting edge of technology, whilst working with leading law firms."

John Pitman, the publisher for online learning and CPD at **Butterworths Tolley**, is to join the legal e-learning company **Semple Piggot Rochez** as publishing director with effect from January 2002.

Legal IT recruitment consultant **Craig Coverman**, last heard of a couple of years ago when he quit **Longbridge**, is back in the market with his own staffing company **Eutopia Solutions** (020 8387 4060). Coverman plans to roll out the new service over the next few months.

Steve Reed, previously the publishing director at **Law Society Publishing**, has joined **Sweet & Maxwell**. The Law Society is recruiting a replacement and expects to announce an appointment soon.

Along with **Geoff Hornsby** who, as reported in the last issue, has joined **iManage** as UK business development manager for the legal sector, the company has also hired **Patrick Kiely** as its new UK business development manager for the corporate sector, plus **Umesh Anand** and **Avron Welgemoed** as pre-sales consultants.

The well known IT industry trends analyst **Richard Holway** has joined **Berwin Leighton Paisner** as a part time technology strategist. Holway will be providing both the firm and its corporate clients with consultancy services and advice on IT strategy.

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY JOBS BOARD

If you are a law firm or systems supplier looking for IT staff, including positions in management, development, support, sales and training, post your vacancies free on the Insider web site. Email the details to news@legalnewsmedia.com

BAILII HAVE A DREAM

At its meeting last month to report on the progress of the "free the law" initiative, the trustees of the British & Irish Legal Information Institute (BAILII) reported that after a relatively slow start two years ago, the last six months had seen a "big leap forward" in terms of both the organisation of BAILII and its operations.

Thanks to work done by Professor Andrew Mowbray's team with AustLII in Sydney and the appointment of BAILII's first full time employee - Joe Ury, who is based at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies in London - the BAILII service can now offer users access to 25 databases covering five jurisdictions. This amounts to over 250,000 searchable pages of law reports and, thanks to the system's automatic hypertext linking, 10 million hyperlinks.

One result of all this has been a huge increase in BAILII's usage - Insider figures suggest that since June BAILII has gone from nowhere to becoming one of the top 20 busiest legal web sites in the UK. Not bad as BAILII has relied almost exclusively on word-of-mouth marketing.

Inevitably there are still problems, not least obtaining law reports in an electronic format - at the moment most English case reports are only available "out of the kind heartedness" of law reporters Smith Bernal. But as Lord Justice Brooke, the chairman of the BAILII board of trustees, pointed out "the project was inspired by people who dream dreams, we have only just started".

BAILII is now preparing the next phase of its product and business development plans. Details have still to be finalised but the trustees made it quite clear that "BAILII is not meant to be a free alternative to the sophisticated pay-to-use sites from the legal publishers". Although the trustees are optimistic about raising some funding from academic research sources, they do anticipate requiring further support from sponsors to help cover running and development costs over the next three years.

www.bailii.org

LCD PICK IPSWICH TO TRIAL NEW CROWN COURT WEB SITE

The Lord Chancellor's Department has selected Ipswich Crown Court as a pilot site for a 'virtual court' facility that allows witnesses to 'visit' the court and familiarise themselves with its layout and proceedings prior to actually having to attend to give evidence. The virtual tour is narrated by radio DJ and Suffolk resident John Peel.

Along with the tour, which cost £20,000 to develop, the Ipswich web site also contains general information about the court and which cases are coming up. The Court Service says it hopes the site will not only make the court more accessible but also generate valuable experiences that will contribute towards the development of web sites for all 78 crown court centres in England & Wales.

www.courtservice.gov.uk/ipswich/index.htm

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ BIG ROI FROM MENTOR ?

Perceptive Technology (020 7556 3400) which recently announced the "modularisation" of its Mentor workflow plus CRM and knowledge management system, is claiming a big return on investment for users of the software. Based on the experiences of its flagship site Wright Hassall, Perceptive reckon a firm could save one hour per week, per fee earner, on matter opening and conflict of interest searching alone.

■ OVER THE MOON WITH OLYMPUS

Moon Beaver (one of the firm's earlier senior partners - Willie Moon - was also captain of the England soccer team in the 1890s) is reporting major benefits in fee earner efficiency since switching to Olympus digital voice recorders. In particular the ability to save dictation as voice files and email them to the office for transcription has proved valuable for fee earners working from home because of difficulties commuting into London.

■ EVERSHEDES NOTCH UP 200

Eversheds has notched up its 200th new debt collection client since launching its internet based debt recovery service. The service utilises Solicitec's SolCase Online web enabled case management system.

BUZZWORD CORNER

Its been a long time since we have had any good TLAs (three letter acronyms) to contemplate but after BPM (business process management) in the last issue, we now have CPT, which stands for culture, process and technology.

According to the consultant, who first introduced us to the term, it signifies the fact that instead of worrying about the implementation of new IT systems and the workflow processes to support them, a law firm should first concentrate on cultural issues, winning over the hearts and minds of the fee earners who will have to work with these systems. Given the problems some firms are currently having with their CRM and knowledge management projects, CPT is one of the sounder pieces of consultancy speak we have encountered in recent months.

BERRYS ASSEMBLES DIGITAL ALLIANCE

The office equipment supplier Berrys - still probably best known to lawyers as Berrys of Holborn - has assembled a network of digital solutions providers who from November (*see diary*) will be promoting a range of speech processing and document management systems to the legal market.

The various systems (being promoted under the Eureka - as in Eureka, I've found a speech processing system that actually works - brand name) includes digital dictation, speech recognition, document management and networked transcription management technologies from Grundig, Dragon Systems, Philips, Sanyo and WinScribe.

Berrys will also be the exclusive reseller for Dennis Corr's Docman document management system for smaller firms - Docman is the Microsoft Word successor to Corr's old DACS WordPerfect macro based system.

Paul Lockyer, previously with Philips, heads the Berrys Digital Solutions division (01206 845131) and the network includes Bernard Stebbings, previously with WordPerfect, ex-Avenue database wiz Kevin Macdonald, Charles Daborn, previously with Curat Lex, speech recognition systems developer AllVoice Computing and ex-Jeffrey Green Russell training and macros specialist Hazel Harbour.

BEAM ME UP BURTON

Lincoln firm Burton & Co has installed a high speed laser datalink to help provide an integrated voice and datacoms network to support its two main offices in the city.

Although the use of such bleeding edge technology by smaller firms is usually a sign that the partners have more money than sense, in this case there were sound reasons for adopting this approach. Burton's problem is their main offices are situated in a Grade 1 listed building adjacent to the arches of one of Lincoln's ancient city gates, thereby making conventional cabling impractical. By opting for a laser link all that was required were two discreet boxes installed on the rooves of the two buildings, with transmissions carried by a laser beam between the boxes.

Burton & Co installed a system supplied by Intercom Communications (0115 979 7000). This can be used to link buildings up to 800 metres apart with direct line of sight and is claimed to be capable of transmitting data up to 10 times faster than using cable or infrared alternatives.

www.intercom-uk.com

SCL AWARDS DEADLINE

The closing date for the Society for Computers & Law award for 'the most outstanding application of IT to the law' is only a fortnight away. Nominations close at 6:00pm on Monday 12 November. The winner will be announced on 21 January 2002. There is an online nomination form on the SCL web site: www.scl.org/award

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY EVENTS DIARY

■ NOVEMBER 6 LONDON. Knowledge Management. Half day seminar (starts 9:15am) organised by Tikit at their Africa House offices looking at trends in KMS. Speakers include KM consultant Tim Travers. There will be a similar seminar on 4 December. For more details call Eliza Hedegaard on 020 7400 3754 or email Eliza.Hedegaard@tikit.com

■ NOVEMBER 7 HIGH WYCOMBE. Linetime is holding a one day seminar at Citrix UK on making IT earn its keep. Topics covered include: getting the basics right, future proofing IT and the role of IT in marketing. Insider editor Charles Christian will give the keynote presentation. For details call 0113 250 0020 or email info@linetime.co.uk

■ NOVEMBER 7 LONDON. Infographics is holding a half day presentation at the London Stock Exchange looking at business process and case management systems and featuring the launch of its new Teamflo product. For details and to register visit www.teamflo.com

■ NOVEMBER 7 SOUTHAMPTON. Digital Speech Processing & Document Management seminar, organised by Berrys Digital Solutions. There is another seminar in Portsmouth on 8 November. For details call Paul Lockyer on 01206 845131 or email plockyer@berrys-direct.co.uk

■ NOVEMBER 7, BIRMINGHAM. Laserform is demonstrating its latest forms, accounts, case management & criminal billing software. There are also seminars in Southampton (14 November) and Manchester (21 November). For details call 01925 750025 or email andrea.priestley@laserform.co.uk

■ NOVEMBER 14, LONDON. APIL (Association of Personal Injury Lawyers) Autumn Conference plus mini exhibition at the Chiswell Street Brewery. For delegate details call 0115 958 0585.

■ See page 7 for more events news

BUSINESS INTEGRITY TO FILL ASSEMBLY GAP?

Business Integrity, the document assembly software developer in which Tarlo Lyons has a share holding, claims its new IntellX system can overcome the inherent weaknesses of conventional 'procedural' document assembly products like HotDocs.

According to Business Integrity co-founder Richard Newton, the difficulty with procedural document assembly is you cannot test the different permutations, so you do not know until you have the finished document whether it is legally, logically or stylistically correct. This is a big enough problem for firms running the software themselves and potentially disastrous if they are giving their clients access to it via an extranet or online legal service.

By contrast IntellX, which has its routes in artificial intelligence, generates 'a metadata matrix' (the company calls it a spreadsheet for words) so each component in a document knows how it relates to others. In other words it effectively incorporates legal know how so firms can be confident their templates will automatically generate valid documents. The Insider understands one large firm has already agreed to buy IntellX and that the software is now being evaluated by at least four other major UK firms.

www.business-integrity.com

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE STATUTE LAW DATABASE

The fate of the official UK Statute Law Database raised its head during the Q&A session at the recent BAILII meeting (*see page 4*). Government, Parliament and HMSO have been talking about this project since the 1980s and in 1997 it was apparently only 12 to 18 months away from completion. However according to speakers at the BAILII meeting, as of the summer of 2001, the database is still 12 to 18 months away from completion - and apparently the version currently under development does not yet feature any hypertext linking between statutes and sections.

LAW REPORTS WE HAVE LOVED

To celebrate 135 years of law reporting, from 1865 to 2000, the Incorporated Council of Law Reporting for England & Wales has published a special issue of *The Law Reports* and *Weekly Law Reports* featuring ten of the most historic cases reported during this period. They include the snail in the ginger beer case Donoghue -v- Stevenson that almost single-handedly created the modern negligence litigation market and R -v- Dudley & Stephens (Oh no, they've eaten Kenny the cabin boy) which showed that worse things really do happen at sea. And of course for more contemporary law reports you can visit:

www.lawreports.co.uk

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ CONSULTANT REVAMPS WEB SITE

Lawrence McNulty, head of the Client Appeal law firm marketing and practice development consultancy, has launched a revamped version of his company's web site. It has a clean look, good navigation and says all you need to know about the consultancy and its activities.

www.clientappeal.co.uk

■ FIREWALL IN AT THE SHARPE END

Litigation and parliamentary agency practice Sharpe Prichard has installed a new internet and email security system. The system is based on the Efinity firewall server, which the firm reckons has not only improved network security and performance but also eased fee earner and client fears about viruses. The implementation was carried out by SMT Network Solutions (0800 3588100).

www.smtnet.co.uk

■ RIGHTFAX 8 OUT RIGHT NOW

This week sees the launch of RightFAX version 8.0 in the UK. New features include a SecureDocs module supporting digital encryption and certified document delivery. There is also a new web delivery option that allows faxed documents to be viewed on a web browser plus support for Windows XP and Office XP and simplified administration for users running Lotus Notes/Domino and Microsoft Exchange platforms. RightFAX is distributed in the UK by Kommunicate (01962 835000).

www.kommunicate.co.uk

■ LAW FIRM AGENT SPAMS FOR BUYER

Finally, an unusual legal first. We are used to hearing lawyers warn about the legal perils of email junk mail - or spam - but last week the Insider, as well as several other organisations including Masons' Out-Law.com service, encountered a law firm spamming the internet to find a buyer for its practice. To be fair, the culprit was actually a consultancy called Bottom Line acting as agents for a Kent firm who, we suspect, had no idea its details were being spammed. Ironically, Bottom Line claims its skills include helping firms develop a "web site and internet presence".

ENLISTING MORE HELP FOR NLIS

Although attempts to create an electronic conveyancing market through the various 'channels' associated with the NLIS (National Land Information Service) initiative currently look like being as organisationally rational and commercially successful as replacing British Rail by Railtrack, the last few weeks have seem some progress.

Three channel licences have so far been issued to: TM NLIS Search, Transaction Online and NLIS Searchflow. Mark Riddick, the CEO of Searchflow, says a recent field test run by his organisation indicated the time it takes to prepare search requests on a commercial portfolio of 700 properties could be reduced from 175 hours (five people working for a week) using traditional methods to just 30 hours using an online search service.

In another NLIS related development, TM NLIS Search (previously called the Teramedia National Online Property Service) has formed a partnership with the OyezStraker Group that will see Oyez act as the exclusive distributor of TM services. Law firms will be able to order electronic searches for residential and commercial conveyancing via the group's Oyez Professional and Stat Plus divisions.

Finally, with a further piece of the electronic conveyancing jigsaw - the Land Registration Bill - now in Parliament, readers might like to check out a series of half day seminars led by Charles Harpum of Falcon Chambers. Harpum is a former Law Commissioner who worked on a number of electronic conveyancing related measures.

The first seminar is in Leeds on 14 November, with further sessions in Birmingham on 26 November and London on 7 February. The event qualifies for CPD points, fee £125.00. For further details contact Rachel Hiscox at Quadrilect Conferences & Training on 020 7242 4141.

MANAGING CONTENT EVENT

Although most document management implementations currently tend to focus on filing and archiving issues, new research conducted on behalf of the organisers of next month's info@ information and content management forum suggests future big issues will include intranet based workflow and content delivery, information security and XML standards. The info@ event, which includes conference and exhibition sessions takes place at the Hammersmith International Centre on 20 & 21 November.

www.info2001.org

SPRINGTIME IN PARIS

The Ark Group, the organisers of the recent Legal Solutions Europe event at The Hague, will hold next year's event in Paris. The show will take place at the end of May - exact dates still to be confirmed - at the Sofitel Paris Forum Rive Gauche, the largest convention hotel in Paris.

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Privacy policy: We do not sell or disclose the names, addresses or contact details of our subscribers. We are registered under the Data Protection Act 1998.

STEALTH MARKETING PUTS ISOKON ON TOP

In one of the lowest profile marketing campaigns we have seen in recent times, Isokon Systems (020 7482 6555) has spent the last three years working on the development, rollout and implementation of a new trust and probate application that looks set to become the market leader without ever a press release being fired in anger.

Firms and organisations already running the software include Macfarlanes (a conversion from Norwel), Withy King, the Official Solicitor's Department, Addleshaws, Osborne Clarke, DMH, Lester Aldridge, Penningtons, Walker Smith & Way and two AIM conversions: Wright Hassall and Hewitson Becke + Shaw. The conversion process, incidentally, includes the transfer of full narrative histories, not just balances.

Isokon's managing director Gregory van Dyk Watson said the key selling point is that along with the accounts, workflow and tax form sides of trust and probate practice, the system can also handle CGT issues such as indexing, rebasing, taper relief and share sales rules. One user firm told the Insider rather more bluntly that it was the only product they had found that handled all aspects of modern trust and probate work properly.

www.isokon.com

ANNIVERSARIES OF THINGS WE NOW TAKE FOR GRANTED

If you believe the hype, last week's launch of the Microsoft Windows XP operating system was one of the most momentous occasions in the computing calendar. It was certainly the most expensive ever - over \$1 billion is being spent on marketing support for the launch. And it is probably the most important launch from Microsoft in the six years since the debut of its Windows 95 system.

But before you commit to memory where you were on 25 October 2001 - or XP Day as it will no doubt be known to future generations - we have been going through the archives to uncover two other noteworthy autumnal anniversaries, dating back 30 and 50 years respectively.

What about Email Day to celebrate the dispatch on 10 October 1971 of what is now recognised as the first email message to have been sent from one computer to another through a network. The message was sent to demonstrate what ARPAnet - the precursor of the internet could do.

And then there is LEO Day, when the 6000 vacuum tubes of the Lyons Electronic Office mainframe earned a footnote in IT history. This occurred on 17 November 1951 when LEO performed the first real live computing job for a real live business - in its case calculating the unit costs of all the cakes and bread loaves that J Lyons bakeries shipped across the UK that day. Prior to this electronic computers had only been used for military applications.

MORE CHANGES AT KEYSTONE

Keystone Solutions director of product development & services Mike Clements is leaving the company and believed to be going into consultancy. Keystone say they appreciate the work he has done for the company although Insider sources suggest he left "for philosophical reasons" - whatever that may mean.

Meanwhile Keystone has adopted a new international management model, giving increased autonomy to newly appointed managing directors for its UK/Europe and Australia/New Zealand divisions so as to move "decision making closer to the customer and the market."

Former director of marketing Kaye Sycamore has been appointed managing director responsible for Keystone's subsidiaries in Australia and New Zealand. Sycamore will also have overall responsibility for product development and delivery from the company's application development centre in New Zealand. Peter Smales, the former international sales director for Keystone, has been appointed managing director responsible for Keystone's operations in UK and Europe. The company is still recruiting a managing director for its North American operations.

■ One of New Zealand's five largest law firms, Chapman Tripp, has signed a \$NZ 1.3 million contract with Keystone for the implementation of a new IT system.

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

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