New face hopes to break into KM market

Recession, what recession, as yet another new face prepares to enter the legal IT market. The company is New York based TripleHop Technologies (020 8364 3286 + 07736 779004) and the product is the MatchPoint knowledge management system.

TripleHop has been operating in the US and mainland Europe for three years but is now in the process of launching MatchPoint into the UK legal sector. According to director Daniel Scott, MatchPoint's flexibility and functionality "makes it an ideal solution for the UK market, while our aggressive pricing policy makes it an attractive option for both large and small firms."

MatchPoint features include: support for concept as well as keyword searches, an integral web 'crawler' and customisable search taxonomy, support for Lotus Notes/Domino databases and the ability to handle realtime enquiries on external information services such as Lexis.

A white paper on MatchPoint is available for downloading from the Insider web site and further details are available at

www.triplehop.com

The Insider web site

For the top legal technology news, jobs, links and information resources - visit the award winning Legal Technology Insider web site.

www.legaltechnology.com

Software solutions - 15 listed in new guide

A total of 15 legal systems suppliers have made it into the 2003 edition of the English Law Society's annual *Software Solutions Guide*. The list includes all 10 of the suppliers featured in last year's guide plus five new entries.

The five newcomers are AIM Professional, Eclipse Legal Systems, Laserform/LFM, Opsis Practice Management Solutions and Pericom plc. They join Axxia Systems, DPS, Edgebyte, Gavel & Gown, JCS, Mountain, MSS, Quill, SOS and Videss from last year's guide.

John Miller, the director of membership services at the Law Society - the department responsible for the guide, said that although the new (5th) edition remained primarily focussed on suppliers of integrated practice and matter management systems, as a result of feedback received from users of last year's guide, the content had been extended to provide information about the broader range of services offered by suppliers.

Miller is also keen to stress that while the selection criteria was tightened up this year to include an examination of the suppliers' financial stability by auditor, the guide remains a purely voluntary scheme with some suppliers still choosing not to apply for inclusion.

The guide, which is officially supported by the Legal Software Suppliers Association (LSSA), will be formally launched at the Legal IT exhibition in London today (12th February). It will subsequently be mailed out free of charge within the next month to all partners in firms with 10 partners or less plus the senior partners in larger firms. It will also be available through the Law Society Shop and via the web at:

www.it.lawsociety.org.uk

Legal Tech in New York - market heading for good times again ?

With this week seeing the UK's leading legal technology trade show - Legal IT 2003 - opening its doors for business in London, it will be interesting to see if it mirrors the success of its US counterpart, the annual LegalTech New York conference and exhibition, which took place at the end of last month.

There, record numbers of delegates met up with record numbers of exhibitors to produce the busiest LegalTech since the Y2K goldrush days of the late 1990s. We spoke to a wide range of vendors and commentators, such as Monica Bay of *Law Technology News*, and their unanimous view was that lawyers are very definitely back in the market to buy IT systems. Why? The most popular explanation is with so many firms running legacy Windows systems brought prior to Y2K, which are now reaching the end of their lives, they are taking the opportunity to combine their replacement with a review of their entire IT infrastructure, sparking off in the process what looks like becoming the Y2K03 boom. *For more Legal Tech NY news see page 5*

News in brief

■ **THINKING VIRTUAL AT CLYDE & CO**
Thinking Virtual (01428 661255) has won the contract to develop a series of electronic transaction bibles for Clyde & Co. The move follows a successful pilot of ETBs by the firm's business law group in Guildford.

■ **GO DIRECT TO BACS VIA SOS**
Solicitors Own Software (01225 787700) has released a direct BACS link for users of its practice management software. It is based on the Albany ALBACS system and, along with removing the need for firms to make payments indirectly via their own banks, complements the SOS fully automatic bank reconciliation module.

■ **KENNEDYS AT SPEED OF LIGHT**
Kennedys has installed Lightspeed Systems' network traffic management software. The system is being used for a number of comms applications including managing WAN load balancing on dual leased lines, web access, firewall controls and bandwidth management to support Citrix sessions. The system was supplied by Kramer Lee & Associates (01268 494500), the distributors of Lightspeed in the UK.

■ **CIVICA RESELLING WORKSHARE**
Civica Services (part of what used to be called Sanderson Legal Systems) has added Workshare Technology's DeltaView redliner document comparison and Synergy document collaboration systems to the range of software products it now resells into the UK legal market. For more details contact Tara Creegan at Civica's Fulham offices (020 7731 9201/7200).   **www.civica.co.uk**

■ **STILL SUPPORTING HUMMINGBIRD**
Production problems meant an item about Tikit in the last edition became mangled. Although the company has secured an order to implement the iManage MailSite and DeskSite DMS applications at Dickinson Dees, Tikit also remains a Hummingbird 'platinum partner' and will happily sell the rival DM5 document management system to anyone who wants it. In addition, Tikit is committed to continuing to develop, support and implement the full Hummingbird product set and has just been involved with a major DM5 project at a 'magic circle' firm.

Nabarro Nathanson is first to go with MetaWall

Nabarro Nathanson has become the first law firm to order the Workshare Technology's (020 7426 0000) new MetaWall application, which is designed to cleanse electronic documents of all hidden - and potentially sensitive - metadata information that could unintentionally be disclosed to the wrong people. Nabarros have bought 1000 seats of MetaWall and will be integrating the system with their Hummingbird DMS.

■ An alternative enterprise-wide metadata tool law firms might consider is Payne Consulting's Metadata Assistant. The Word version is currently in use on about half a million desktops, primarily in the US but there are a growing number of UK users. Payne last month also launched an Excel edition (compatible with Excel versions 97-2002, including Office XP and the current beta for Office 11) and expects to release a PowerPoint version later this month.   **www.payneconsulting.com**

Spratt Endicott rejects best of breed for single source solution

Spratt Endicott, the 100+ user firm created in May 2002 after the demerger of the Banbury branch of Shoosmiths, is spending £500,000 on an integrated case and practice management system from Videss. The deal includes a new hardware and network infrastructure and will be supported by the Videss CFM facilities management service and a disaster recovery package. Although when still part of Shoosmiths the office had access to the Elite PMS and case management software from DPS and Beaver, the new firm rejected a number of best of breed solutions in favour of the 'full service' integrated approach offered by Videss.

New legal budget software launched - at a budget price

Legal Budgets Ltd (01242 235996) this week launched its new Legal Budgets application. As the name implies, it is designed to help solicitors quantify budgets for case work, including counsel and expert witness fees, within minutes. The software's author Jim Diamond says the system can handle everything "from the smallest personal injury case to a multi-million pound commercial case" and has been designed to be used out of the box "so no formal training is required".

The system costs £575 pa (or £49.99 a month) and is being promoted at a series of roadshows around the country over the coming months. Given the price plus the fact the High Court has in recent months handed down a series of judgments in which firms failed to recover their full fees because they omitted to inform clients that costs were escalating above their original Rule 15 estimates, this application looks like a handy addition to any firm's software portfolio.   **www.legalbudgets.com**

E-conveyancing - Stars moving into next phase

One year after the February 2002 launch of its STARS II conveyancing extranet hub - this links the major mortgage lenders, including Abbey National, to a panel of 350 firms of solicitors - Legal Marketing Services has being talking about its plans for the future.

After a slow start - in the early days all data had to be keyed in by hand - the system is now integrated with 15 of the most widely used case management systems, with the result that over 50% of cases coming in from the mortgage lenders are now input electronically, as are around 33% of matter updates from solicitors. In fact LMS identified 42 different case management products before embarking upon its integration programme. STARS II currently holds files on over one million matters and LMS now handles one in five of all remortgages in the UK.

Systems manager Matt Brown, who was responsible for developing STARS II, says that although data is currently moved using CSV files - as information in this format is more readily available from LMS lender clients - future developments will be based on XML. LMS is also involved with the PISCES conveyancing standards XML project.

Major win for Pilgrim Systems

Fast growing Scottish practice Harper MacLeod, the firm is part of the 500 lawyer-strong European Legal Alliance which also includes Field Fisher Waterhouse, has chosen Pilgrim Systems to supply its new integrated practice and client relationship management system. The firm's financial director Martin Darroch said the Pilgrim LawSoft product was the only one that could demonstrate a fully integrated PMS and CRM solution.

Previously a CB Systems site, the Harper MacLeod deal came down to a two horse race between Pilgrim and Elite.

First sightings...

We've received reports of a couple of new systems that some firms have been investigating in recent weeks.

The first is the **Prism** document formatting system from Synertec (01823 335396). This allows users greater control over the formatting of accounts generated documents such as invoices and is being considered as a possible alternative to the Whitehill Technologies' billing system. **www.synertec.co.uk**

The second newcomer is the **Docdolittle** (think about it) document automation and assembly system from Owlcentral in New Zealand. This is based on Microsoft .NET technology and the buzz is the company is interested in doing business in the UK. The software has also been used to create a Desktop Lawyer style online legal document production service called Owl Documents. **www.owlcentral.com** + **www.owldocuments.com**

News in brief

■ **DICKINSON DEES GO WITH SRC**
Dickinson Dees has awarded SRC (020 7471 0127) the contract to supply its new digital dictation and workflow management system. The system is based on WinScribe technology and, after an initial deployment to 100 staff, will be rolled out to a total of 420 users across the firm's two offices in Newcastle and the Tees Valley by the end of 2004.

■ **FIRST WIN MAKES RED LETTER DAY**
Dechert has become the first law firm to buy the new Red Letter secure email system from Meticulus Solutions (01249 700050). Offering 128-bit security, Red Letter uses poste restante architecture to provide a secure and auditable system that does not require special software to be installed by recipients. Dechert has been running Red Letter since late December and the system is currently being trialled by a number of other firms.

■ **NEW M@ILMETER OUTLET**
Romford-based ClaimBase (01708 736660 - the company was previously called UKNet Select) has become an accredited reseller for Watford Technologies' M@ilMeter email management system. M@ilMeter was recently installed by Osborne Clarke to enforce the firm's email usage policy. David Copper of ClaimBase said it was "as a result of reading an Insider story about M@ilMeter that we are now a reseller. We owe you a beer at least!"   **www.claimbase.com**

Looking for IT staff ?

Looking for legal IT staff, including positions in sales, development, web services, know-how, support and training? Then post your vacancies free of charge to the Jobs Board on the Insider web site by emailing the details to *jobs@legaltechnology.com*

■ This week's top job: Howard Kennedy in central London is looking for a database administrator to help the firm migrate from a Unix/Informix platform to Windows 2000 + SQL Server 7/2000. The candidate should ideally have experience of the Elite PMS and Solicitec SolCase case management systems. For details of this and other vacancies visit the Jobs Board at **www.legaltechnology.com**

People & Places

- **BEECHAM MOVES TO LEXIS**

In the last issue of the Insider we reported that Sweet & Maxwell division had been hit by the sudden departure of its managing director Wendy Beecham, a woman who can also take a lot of the credit for helping establish Westlaw in the US. Now we know where she has gone. With effect from earlier this month, she has relocated back to the United States to join LexisNexis as senior vice president for the group's Enterprise & Library unit.

- **NEW FINANCE DIRECTOR AT AIM**

AIM Group Holdings, the parent of legal systems supplier AIM Professional, has appointed Craig Fairey as finance director. The move follows the retirement of Mike Booth after more than 25 years with AIM. Fairey, a chartered accountant, was previously finance director at Convergent Systems and before that with Azlan.

- **SMITH QUITS WORDWAVE**

Graham Smith, the man behind the Smith Bernal court reporting agency and the LiveNote realtime transcription system, has resigned from WordWave International, the company that acquired Smith Bernal some years ago. Smith will now focus his energies on expanding his own business Livenote Technologies. The company retains the IP rights to the LiveNote software, which is currently licensed back and distributed as a service by WordWave. **www.livenote.com**

- **LDM APPOINTS NON-EXEC**

Document management services company LDM has apppointed Brian Fuller, previously with Leyland, Rover and Hays, to the position of non-executive director.

Keep up with the news

Keep up with the latest news between issues of the Insider by subscribing to our free ezine the *Legal Technology Insider Newswire.* It is delivered direct to your desktop as a plain text email. To be added to the distribution list, send a note of your email address, including the word 'News' in the header, to

news@legaltechnology.com

TFB reports strong results

Technology for Business has just announced the results of its first financial audit since acquiring the Scottish supplier CB Systems Legal and English competitor Avenue Legal Systems in 2001. The company's financial year-end on 30 September 2002 saw TFB achieve total sales of £7 million and an operating profit of approximately £1 million.

Commenting on the results, TFB's managing director Simon Hill said "Our 2001/2002 results have placed TFB at the top end of the market in terms of performance ratios. An operating profit of approximately 14% of sales is a significant achievement. In 2003 we will continue to focus on the development of new and the enhancement of existing solutions and services. In addition, we plan to increase our aggressive new business initiatives and continue monitoring further acquisition opportunities, that will enable us to increase our market share."

Insider research suggests most suppliers in the UK legal IT market are making an operating profit of only around 5-to-6%.

Company news round up

- **RECORD QUARTER FOR SOLICITEC**

Solicitec has published details of its second quarter results ending 31 December 2002. These show a 33% increase in turnover and a 225% increase in profits compared with the same period last year. Although the quarter included two high profile orders - the Treasury Solicitor's Department and a 250 user Elite/Solicitec win from Axxia at Keoghs - Solicitec chairman Neil Ewin said a key factor contributing to the results was the growing number of firms looking for a simple to use office wide matter management system.

- **QUILL - 25 YEARS IN LEGAL TECHNOLOGY**

Quill Computer Systems (0161 236 2910) has just clocked up 25 years in legal technology. The company, which was formed in January 1978, still retains a number of customers from those early days, who are now users of Quill's Quillennium fourth generation system. These include Bendall Roberts in Ely and Barratt & Co of Reading who are both currently installing web enabled systems. Quill founder Tony Landes it was "sobering to calculate that between the four directors and our key managers we have clocked up over 130 years of experience in legal IT."

- **FIRST CLASS YEAR FOR FIRST STOP**

The legal division at the First Stop Computer Group (020 8974 3545) has reported a successful trading year for 2002 with new customers, including Nabarro Nathanson, SJ Berwin, Denton Wilde Sapte and Ince & Co, purchasing the Enterprise Vault email archiving product. Shadbolts has purchased an iManage document management system and First Stop is also working with Freshfields on its DMS replacement project. First Stop's legal division head Paul Hoffbrand also reports growing interest in the company's Totalflex outsourced IT support service.

LegalTech New York - the systems & suppliers

With a total of 42 conference sessions and nearly 300 exhibitors, this year's LegalTech New York tradeshow was enormous however the surprise was not just what products were on display but also those that were absent.

For example, there were over 70 suppliers in New York showing products and services that could be broadly categorised as litigation support systems whereas at Legal IT in London last year (and it looks like being the same this year) there were none. On the otherhand, while in the UK digital dictation systems are probably currently the hottest technology, at LegalTech there was just one DDS supplier - and that was New Zealand-based Winscribe which was there primarily to try to set up a dealer network to replicate the success it is currently enjoying in the UK.

It was also interesting to learn that what many delegates said they were looking for this year (in addition to general IT upgrades) were knowledge management systems. Indeed much admiration was expressed at the way "English firms do KM so much better than Americans" - a comment that may come as a surprise to all those firms in the UK currently struggling to see a decent return on their investments in KM.

One product that did catch our eye, and which could have a useful role to play in the UK, was the **OpenSource** system from OpenSource Inc in Silicon Valley. This is a web based analysis and collaboration tool designed specifically for lawyers working on lengthy contracts. According to OpenSource vice president Eva Mineva it has the edge on its nearest competitor Workshare Synergy because, along with all the benefits managing document changes in a collaborative environment, its automatic analysis and hyperlinking facilities create what is in effect a knowledge management system for contract precedents.

www.opensourceinc.com

We were also impressed with AdLib Publishing Systems' **AdLib eXpress** product range, which provide a very simple way to convert documents in a wide variety of file types and formats into PDF, TXT and TIFF files. There is also an OCR add on that allows you to convert non-searchable legacy PDFs into full text searchable documents and a new server solution that enables lawyers using PDAs to access any attachments they receive by email. AdLib has also entered the litigation support sector with its inSight metadata extraction system for email, so the content of messages can be analysed for forensic purposes.

www.adlibsys.com

Congratulations also to **Westlaw**, who had the best promotional gimmick of the show, namely a virtual reality ride. In fact it proved so popular that there was a long queue of delegates, tailing way past the stand and beyond even that of Westlaw's arch-rival LexisNexis, waiting to go on the ride from first thing in the morning until closing time on the final day.

■ Next year LegalTech New York moves forward one week and will take place on 2nd to 4th February 2004.

What's hot ?
...Carpe Diem

Best Software's Carpe Diem time and expenses tracking system has been around for so long that it is now widely regarded as part of the best of breed furniture. However since the release of the latest version (4.01) the product has been enjoying something of a renaissance, particularly as users (which in the UK include seven out of the top 10 largest firms) realise that Carpe Diem really does do what it says on the box.

Karen Fate, who heads up legal sales for Carpe Diem, reckons one of the big attractions is the way it can easily - and quickly - be rolled out to support different technologies, including traditional Windows thick client, Palm/Blackberry PDA and web browser platforms. This flexibility recently helped the product win a 300 user order from Neal Gerber Eisenberg in Chicago. After being quoted six months by its practice management systems supplier to provide a web interface, the firm turned to Carpe Diem who were able to deliver, implement and roll out their own comparable CDWeb product in just 10 days. Carpe Diem is sold and supported in the UK by Tikit (020 7400 3737).

www.timetracking.com

And what's not !
...PFI Libra

According to Edward Leigh, the chairman of the House of Commons public accounts committee: "The LIBRA project (Lord Chancellor's Department's national IT system for magistrates courts) is one of the worst IT projects I have ever seen. It may also be the shoddiest PFI (private finance initiative) project ever." The remarks were made in the wake of a report published by the National Audit Office last month which revealed that, despite spending £390 million with Fujitsu on a project which in the summer of 1998 was only meant to cost £146 million, the magistrates courts network still did not have a working IT system and the LCD was now negotiating with two other companies to deliver the core software and integration. In the early-to-mid 1990s the LCD also wasted £12 million on two earlier attempts to computerise magistrates courts.

Legal technology events diary

■ MARCH 10 & 11 AMSTERDAM. Lex Connect at the Amsterdam Hilton, the Ark Group's new management forum for managing partners and senior executives from Europe's leading commercial law firms. For details contact Caroline Searle on 020 8785 5930. **www.lexconnect.com**

■ MARCH 11, SCOTLAND. The Scottish Society of Computers & Law's IT conference.

■ MARCH 12, LONDON. ResSoft and Jaffe Associates host an breakfast briefing (8:00am to 10:30am) - Is your firm really benefiting from its CRM systems investment? The seminar is aimed at firms that currently have a CRM system that has not gained full acceptance. The seminar will focus on the cultural issues associated with CRM as well as looking at some of the ways the InterAction 5 addresses these issues. There is a similar event on 29 April. Contact 020 7421 4140 or *marketing@ressoft.co.uk* for details.

■ MARCH 17, LONDON. E-Conveyancing Opportunities for Lawyers Conference at the Cavendish Conference Centre. Organised by CLT Conferences, prices start at £315 + VAT, for more details call 0121 355 0900.

■ MARCH 24 & 25, WEST MIDLANDS. The AIM Computer Users Association annual conference at the Marriott Forest of Arden Hotel. Speakers this year include consultant Neil Cameron and John Miller from the Law Society. The event qualifies for 10.5 CPD hours and the full delegate rate, including accommodation & entertainment, is £395 + VAT. For details contact Roger Hancock of the ACUA on 01789 296096.

■ MARCH 25-27, LONDON. 4th Annual Knowledge Management for the Legal Profession, chaired by Melissa Hardee of CMS Cameron McKenna, followed by a one day conference on the Role of Professional Support Lawyers. The event takes place at the Kensington Hilton and is organised by the Ark Group. Prices start at £1095 + VAT. For more details call 020 8785 2700.

■ APRIL 3-5, CHICAGO. ABA Tech Show.

Web site of the month... Woolley & Co

When Andrew Woolley, the principal of Woolley & Co, opened his firm for business in 2000, he saw the internet as a way to help him not only escape from the traditional confines of being a sole practitioner but also to provide a more client friendly service. In effect Woolley & Co, as its e-lawfirm.co.uk web site URL indicates, is a virtual law firm with no bricks and mortar offices but a network of solicitors located across the Midlands who will liaise with clients by phone, post, email or even visit them at their homes or offices.

The firm's current web site, which went live in November 2002, has a clean, striking design that combines excellent navigation - we particularly like the way the menu keeps pace with the user as you scroll down the pages - with a strong corporate image.

It is also a relief to see that despite being a virtual law firm, Woolley & Co have not lost sight of the fact that the primary function of the site is, in the words of Andrew Woolley, "marketing, marketing and then marketing." Although there are some interactive features - such as the ability to register for a monthly ezine, a 'law shop' that allows you to order a DIY divorce CD for £99 and secure extranet facilities for authorised users - there is nothing on the site that falls into the category of unnecessary gimmickry or that would frighten off the less technologically sophisticated casual visitor.

Woolley said the site was "was professionally prepared but on a shoestring budget" aided by a DTI/EU grant covering 50% of the cost. The text was drafted by Woolley "and then translated into plain English" by Teresa Harris of Second Opinion Marketing of Stratford upon Avon, with the design handled by Zarr Internet Services of Rugby. Future plans include a facility to accept payments online, including bills for conventional off-line legal work.   **www.e-lawfirm.co.uk**

New guide + web site from ILCA

The Institute of Legal Cashiers & Administrators, which is this year celebrating its 25th anniversary, this week launches its new *How to Select a System* guide to legal IT. The guide, which has been written by Insider editor Charles Christian, replaces the ILCA's previous *Software Suppliers Pocket Guide* and provides practical advice and a source of reference.

The Guide will be supplied free of charge to all ILCA members and is available to non-members for £25.00. For more information or to purchase a copy phone 020 8294 2887.

The ILCA's new web site has also gone live this week. The site has been completely revamped to give it a fresher look, the navigation has been simplified and it now includes a secure interactive section for ILCA members. The redevelopment was headed by Regan Maloney of WPB Creative (020 7251 8686).
www.ilca.org.uk

Linklaters pushing the envelope with new Microsoft technology

Last Friday Linklaters announced that following a successful pilot with 350 users in its New York and Sao Paulo offices, it is installing the beta version of the yet to be released Microsoft Systems Management Server 2003 and Microsoft Operations Manager (MOM) 2000. The move is part of an infrastructure refresh project - Platform 2000 - designed to enhance system performance and reduce downtime. The roll out to 6500 users across 31 offices in 22 countries is due to be completed by May.

Commenting on the project, Linklaters strategic consultant Tim Warburton said "The Microsoft management solutions provide us with a complete set of tools to effectively administer our Windows servers and clients. In particular, the combination of MOM and the HP Insight Manager Agent will help us proactively manage our systems to achieve high levels of reliability and availability across all our data centres."

News in brief

■ **THREE MORE ORDER TIMESLICE LAWMAN**
Three more firms have placed orders with Timeslice (020 7231 0073) to implement the company's Lawman case and practice management system. The three are Loosemores in Newport, Bromiley Holcroft in Southport, and Ipswich-based online conveyancing specialists CBA Law.

■ **WORKSHARE MOVES & APPOINTS NEW V-P**
Workshare Technology has moved into new premises at 20 Fashion Street, London E1 6PX (020 7426 0000). The company has also recruited Andrew Pearson to the role of executive vice president with responsibility for sales, marketing and business development in Europe/EMEA and the Asia Pacific region.

■ **NEW FLAT RATE WEB DESIGN SERVICE**
Bite IT, developers of January's web site of the month, are now offering a flat rate service that includes consultancy, web design and 12 months' web and database hosting for £ 2900 + VAT. The package also includes an easy-to-use instant update facility, search engine registration and an online enquiry form and links to any web-enabled case management systems the firm may be running. For details contact Declan Cosgrove on 0800 9757112 or 01706 525220.   **www.biteit.net/legal.htm**

■ **PORTALS - LAWPORT CONFIRM FIRST UK WIN**
SV Technology has confirmed reports that it has secured its first order from a UK firm for its LawPort knowledge management portal. There is an NDA covering this project however we can say it is a top 10 London practice. The implementation is being carried out by LawPort's UK reseller Tikit and will involve integration with the Tikit Taxonomy (aka Granite & Comfrey) product suite. In the US, Cadwalader Wickersham & Taft has become the latest firm to order the LawPort system.

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DealBuilder clocks up a trio of major projects

Over the past couple of years we have seen a steady stream of new arrivals lay out their wares and set out their plans to steal HotDocs' crown as the market leader in the legal document assembly and automation sector but to date the only one to have provided a serious and sustained threat is Business Integrity (020 7814 6886) with its DealBuilder system.

Firms already using the system include Baker & McKenzie and Linklaters however last week saw three more major users emerge. The largest is Clifford Chance, which has spent the past 18 months investigating the benefits of document automation and evaluating the different technologies capable of delivering those benefits, including HotDocs and GhostFill.

Richard Newton of Business Integrity said the tests Clifford Chance set were more stringent and demanding than he had encountered at any other firm, so he was more than happy to hear the firm's chief information officer Paul Greenwood report that "DealBuilder emerged as the only technology capable of meeting our exacting standards. It will add a significant new dimension to the service we offer our clients."

Next up is Nabarro Nathanson, which has announced plans to launch a document assembly pilot using DealBuilder in three practice areas, namely corporate, property and construction.

The third and final firm is Ashurst Morris Crisp and while a formal announcement has yet to be made, an item in last week's law section in *The Times* disclosed that AMC was using it and, according to the firm's legal development partner Jeremy Thomas, already enjoying an "80 to 90 percent" reduction in document drafting times.   **www.business-integrity.com**

The Loties awards - they're back and they are bigger for 2003

In Brief magazine has announced its plans for its 2003 Loties legal office technology innovation awards. These include revised categories and the introduction of a separate event - the e-Loties - for online, e-commerce, portal and knowledge management projects. Once again the Loties are being run in association with Legal Technology Insider.

Nominations for the mainstream Loties awards, which now include separate categories for best of breed and integrated products, close on 31 May, with the winners announced on 13 November. The closing date for the new e-Loties is 18 April, with the winners being announced on 18 September.

As in previous years, the awards will be a two-stage event with users first nominating the companies, firms, products, services and people they want to see on the shortlist before going on to vote on who they want to win. An online voting form will be available on the In Brief web site within the next 10 days. In the meantime you can obtain more details by emailing *In Brief* publisher Karen Jones at ***kjones@inbrief.co.uk***

Baker Robbins win Norton Rose IT review

Norton Rose has used Baker Robbins & Co (020 7224 2030) to assist with a strategic review of its information systems, to help the firm's partners create a plan for the next three to five years that will enhance client service by both exploiting new technologies and taking advantage of existing investments in IT. The consultancy team was headed by Andrew Levison.

According to the firm's chief operating officer Kevin Mortell "Baker Robbins' understanding of law firm business priorities and issues, and their knowledge of legal technology, were critical factors in helping us develop our plans."

London Bridge profits fall down

London Bridge Software, the one time darling of the Stock Exchange tech sector that grew out of the old Charterhouse legal IT business, has just reported pre-tax losses of £51.4 million for its year ended 31 December 2002, compared with profits of £4.7 million in 2001. The company attributes this to a £12 million decline in revenues to £62 million combined with £52 million of write-offs and one off charges. Chairman Gordon Crawford said the coming year would "continue to be challenging".