



## Are legal IT trade shows finished ?

With the recent LegalTech Europe Solicitors event in central Birmingham attracting one of the smallest audiences we have seen at a major IT exhibition in recent years and last week's Law Management Section Legal IT Forum at the Birmingham NEC seeing delegate numbers down by around 50% on last year, a growing number of legal systems vendors are wondering whether legal IT trade shows are finished in the UK?

Axxia Systems, whose stands have been a major feature at exhibitions in recent years, have already announced that they are pulling out of all future trade shows including the market leading Legal IT Leeds and Islington events. ...*continued page 2*

### Pracctice makes .Net case manager perfect

Pracctice (01432 372100) has launched a Microsoft .Net version of its Osprey case management software. This is a full re-write of the application in the .Net environment but with the same features of the original Windows version. Pracctice say the software has been designed in keeping with Microsoft's goal of making information available "any time, any place and on any device." This means that, for example, users will be able to access matter information remotely from anywhere via a PDA.

### Avoiding filthy lucre

Mountain Software (01476 573718) is introducing an anti-money laundering module to help firms comply with the requirements of an EU directive due to come into force in the UK this September. The module, which will incorporate a further set of regulations being published later this week, can run either as an integrated part of the Mountain PMS or as a stand-alone system. *See also training story on page 7*

### The Insider web site

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

[www.legaltechnology.com](http://www.legaltechnology.com)

### nFlow demos prototype for new approach to speech recognition

One of the interesting items to come out of the panel debate on digital dictation at the recent LegalTech Solicitors event was the unanimous view from all the DDS developers present (BigHand, G2, nFlow and Winscribe) that speech recognition technology (SRT) was set to make a come back over the next couple of years.

In fact it could take even less time as nFlow Software (01245 463377) - a company better known for its DictaFlow digital dictation workflow software - also used the event to preview a prototype of what it believes could be a new and more effective approach to speech recognition.

Based around the Dragon SRT engine, the user dictates into a digital dictation-style interface and the voice file can then either be forwarded to a secretary for transcription in the normal way or else on to Dragon for automatic speech-to-text transcription. As with all SRT systems, the software first needs to be trained to recognise the user's voice but with nFlow it uses a combination of spoken phrases and the analysis of existing text files - such as email messages - to learn a user's dictation style.

nFlow's system does not involve any command and control macros and nor does it use the 'online' approach, in which the user sees the words appear on screen as they are being dictated. Rob Lancashire of nFlow believes this is a distraction as it merely encourages users to edit as they go, rather than dictate the whole passage and then edit it - as they would with either analogue or digital dictation. Instead, the underlying design philosophy, says Lancashire, is to deliver speech recognition in a way that is fully integrated with both existing office applications, such as Word and Outlook, and the way people currently work.

■ Berwin Leighton Paisner has ordered nFlow's DictaFlow digital dictation system. The software will initially be piloted by the real estate team and then be rolled out to 650 users at BLP's new London Bridge site later this year. The first phase will also see the integration of DictaFlow with document and financial management systems to provide a streamlined workflow process from dictation to completed document.

## GPRS at Shoosmiths

Shoosmiths is to work with the Derbyshire based Interchange Group (08700 716716) to develop and deploy a remote access solution for partners and fee earners using wireless push technology. The deal, which was only announced at the recent LegalTech Solicitors event, will see Interchange provide Shoosmiths with a way of extending its corporate network by allowing partners and fee-earners to access key applications, such as email, calendar and time recording, from any location, via a range of devices including laptops, PDAs and Blackberrys.

Interchange say one advantage of using GPRS 'always on' wireless technology, is it provides a cost effective solution by allowing unlimited numbers of emails to be received and sent for a one-off fee, in contrast to dial-up or SMS texting via traditional phone lines where users pay per message. In a presentation at last week's LMS IT Forum, Interchange's Dave Burrows also warned that the key to mobile working was to focus on the applications rather than on the devices. "Don't choose a toy, choose a tool," he said. [www.interchange.com](http://www.interchange.com)

## News in brief

### ■ HOW BAD ARE YOUR BACK-UPS?

So, you have a contingency plan for disaster recovery but have you ever tested it and will your backups work? Axxia Systems (0118 960 2602) sales & marketing director Bill Kirby says the company's data validation service has revealed that many firms are totally unprepared for a disaster, with over 30% of users of the service found to have inadequate backups - including one firm that had not performed a proper backup of its data for at least six years.

### ■ TWO MORE UPGRADES FOR AIM

Long-time AIM Professional (01482 326971) users - Bright & Sons in Essex and Watson Esam in Sheffield - have upgraded to the latest version of AIM's Evolution case and practice management software. Watson Esam will use the system to manage the firm's Civil Block contracting work, which includes personal injury and family law practices. At Brights it will primarily be used to support conveyancing work.

## Next generation CMS system ready to ship

The undoubted main event at the Solution 6 Group's Momentum 2003 user conference in Florida last month was the launch of CMS.Net 5 - the next generation of the company's CMS practice management system.

CMS.Net 5 is based around the Microsoft .NET platform, with the objective of being able to deliver financial and practice management information to users anywhere, at anytime via a range of interfaces and devices, including wireless, networked, PDA and web browser technologies.

CMS.Net, currently scheduled for availability from 30th June, is the fifth major release for CMS and builds on the functionality of CMS Open, as well as featuring a number of enhancements. These include: a fully customisable web-based inquiry module; expanded multi-currency capabilities to enable global firms to balance numerous offices in multiple currency formats; new electronic banking, bank reconciliation and billing capabilities; and new APIs for greater integration capabilities.

## Legal trade shows ...continued from front page

Axxia's sales & marketing director Bill Kirby feels "exhibitions have had their day" and says his company's marketing budget would now be better spent on more tightly focused conferences, such as those run by APIL for personal injury lawyers, and on organising the company's own events for users and prospects.

This is a viewpoint apparently shared by a growing number of vendors - and even those still committed to trade shows are considering cutting back on stand sizes. Or, as the sales director of a leasing company that pulled out of legal exhibitions last year put it "Essentially it boils down to the fact that not enough people attend! The cost of the shows are so high that it is now better to target the promotion you do in other channels."

So why are fewer delegates attending events? On paper LMS and Solicitors should both have been a roaring success, offering an attractive combination of exhibitor stands and what proved to be some of the best seminar presentations we have seen this year. Both fell foul of external factors, timing in the case Solicitors and as yet unresolved database problems with LMS, but these do not fully explain why, as even the organisers admit, their turnouts were so disappointingly low.

The best explanation we have heard is that an increasingly sophisticated audience no longer needs - nor can afford - to spend time trailing around trade shows when they can now find the same information through more convenient channels. This possibly explains why not just legal but trade shows generally are suffering falling attendance figures in the UK. However we are also aware of the criticism that too many events now have the same old speakers giving the same old - in some cases verbatim - presentations that they never bother to tailor to the particular concerns of the audiences they are addressing.

## Workshare repositions products in new release

Workshare Limited (020 7426 0000 - the company has dropped the 'Technology' part of its name) this week launched Workshare 3.0, the latest version of its document production software. The most significant change is that instead of offering three discrete products - the DeltaView redliner plus the Synergy and Metawall applications - they are all now combined within one unified system, that is itself fully integrated with the Microsoft Word interface.

Workshare executive V-P & general manager Andrew Pearson said that although the functionality remained the same, allowing users to compare, collaborate and protect documents during the drafting stage, the product had been repositioned to make it a "task rather than a roles oriented application".

Workshare 3.0 runs on a Windows 2000/XP platform and offers integration with iManage and Hummingbird DM systems. Users also have the option of buying the modules separately if they do not want the full three product unified version.

■ As part of the company's new management structure, this month Samia Rauf - previously with portal supplier Plumtree and CRM software specialist Onyx - joined Workshare as head of marketing for the EMEA and Asia-Pacific regions.

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## Record year for Axxia

Axxia Systems has just announced details of its financial results for the year 2002/03. Despite what are generally agreed to be sluggish market conditions, Axxia recorded its eighth successive gross profit increase since the MBO from Digital in 1995. Profits before tax reached record levels, with a 60% rise on last year to £802K. Axxia also reported a small increase in revenue and a 25% uplift in R&D spend to almost £1 million. At the end of the year, Axxia had over £2.6 million in cash with no borrowings.

Commenting on the results, Axxia managing director Stuart Holden said "Improved cost management and efficiency gains have made a dramatic contribution to the bottom line but not at the expense of R&D and the user base. On the contrary, we have spent heavily to enlarge and accelerate the product pipeline to better align our software offering with evolving client needs."

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## New XML schema from LSSA

The Legal Software Suppliers Association (LSSA) has published a revised proposal for an XML Schema for the legal profession. The full white paper - illustrating the updated schema - is available in Word file format (600KB) and can be downloaded via the Insider home page. LSSA XML working party chairman Neil Ewin said the original schema had been revised and improved over the past year in light of the PISCES and LEDES XML standards, as well as UK government XML guidelines.

## News in brief

### ■ FOUR COUNCILS GO WITH NORWEL

Within the last two months, four local authorities - Surrey County Council, Leeds City Council, Telford & Wrekin Borough Council and Salford City Council - have awarded contracts to Norwel Computer Services (0161 945 3511) for the supply of time recording and case management systems. All four authorities will be using the Norwel software in their legal departments to deliver 'Best Value' and e-commerce services.

### ■ AWARD FOR CLARKE WILLMOTT

Congratulations to the business recovery unit at Clarke Willmott & Clarke for being named Commercial Credit Team of the Year in the recent Credit Today awards. The firm is a major user of the Linetime (0113 250 0020) Debttime SQL debt recovery system.

### ■ NEW CRM AT BROWNE JACOBSON

Nottingham-based Browne Jacobson has selected Interface Software's InterAction 5 client relationship management system to provide a new platform for managing client and prospect data. Commenting on the decision to go for a full blown CRM system, marketing manager Katherine Wilson said the firm "had been relying on a patchwork of systems including marketing databases, Microsoft Outlook and spreadsheets. However, as the firm grew and expanded geographically, maintaining multiple silos of data became unnecessarily costly and inefficient. Some of these systems could communicate with each other and some couldn't. The lack of a centralised system hampered our client development activities."

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## 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 new look Insider web site by emailing the details to [jobs@legaltechnology.com](mailto:jobs@legaltechnology.com)

For full details of the latest vacancies, which currently include openings in marketing, consultancy and development at Videss, Tikit and nFlow, visit the Insider Jobs Board at [www.legaltechnology.com](http://www.legaltechnology.com)

## People & Places

### ■ DEBBIE HUNT JOINS AXXIA

Axxia Systems has appointed Debbie Hunt as a new business account manager. The appointment follows a restructuring of the sales team in which account management and development has been separated from new business identification and sales. Axxia sales & marketing director Bill Kirby said the move "will provide a clear, dedicated focus on the differing needs of both existing users - where our account managers will help firms to develop their IT strategies - and prospective clients."

Hunt - Axxia's first external hire for the new business team - has over a decade of experience of the legal IT market, primarily with Equitrac and latterly with Pilgrim Systems, and will concentrate on the middle market, top 500-to-1500 firms sector. Axxia is planning to make three similar appointments within the next few months.

### ■ INTERFACE GETS NEW UK MD

Fraser Herrick has joined Interface Software, the company behind the InterAction CRM system, to serve as the managing director for the company's UK office. Herrick comes to Interface with 17 years' experience in the software industry, including setting up the European operations for another US software company.

### ■ POCOCK NOW AT ONESOURCE

OneSource Information Services (020 7367 5700) - which specialises in systems to integrate content and information sources with business applications software - has appointed Stuart Pocock as relationship manager for the legal sector. Pocock has worked in sales positions with a number of companies in the legal and professional services sector, including Perfect Information and, most recently, Vrisko.

[www.onesource.com](http://www.onesource.com)

### ■ CONSULTANCY MOVES HOUSE

Declan Cosgrove's web design consultancy Bite IT has moved to new offices at Atrium House, 574 Manchester Road, Bury BL9 9SW. The new phone number is 0161 796 9479. Cosgrove also provides more general legal IT consultancy services through the Ridley Partnership, which was recently acquired by the Alexander Forbes group.

## DDS creates virtual office

Following a successful pilot in its employment law department, Cobbetts is rolling out digital dictation to 300 staff in its Leeds and Manchester offices over the next 12 months. Because the firm has teams split between the offices, managing partner Michael Shaw believes the system will help create a single, trans-Pennine "virtual office," supporting Cobbetts' "one office - one service" approach. "We view digital dictation as a way of dramatically improving our document production process with very little change in working practice required from solicitors," he added.

The Cobbetts' system was designed and implemented by SRC (020 7471 0100) and is based on the WinScribe digital dictation workflow system. Fee earners will record dictation via Philips SpeechMikes in the office and Olympus DS330 handheld recorders or the phone when out of the office.

## Voice technology news in brief

### ■ SUCCESSFUL PILOT LEADS TO FIRM-WIDE ROLLOUT

Following a 120-user pilot in the property group, SJ Berwin is rolling out the BigHand (020 7793 8200) TotalSpeech digital dictation system on a firm-wide basis to 560 staff. The project should be completed by the end of July this year. Following the pilot, SJ Berwin conducted an opinion survey among users. This found that 98% of fee earners were in favour of DDS and 97% of secretarial staff thought TotalSpeech system was better than working with analogue tapes.

### ■ YOU WANT IT - SPEAK-IT HAVE GOT IT

Last month's LegalTech Solicitors event in Birmingham provided an introduction to a useful source of voice technology systems in the West Midlands area. Speak-IT Solutions (0121 689 9080) have been involved in the dictation market since the days of the Grundig SL machines but more recently have become a reseller of both digital dictation systems and speech recognition software, including the IBM ViaVoice and Dragon ranges.

[www.speakit.info](http://www.speakit.info)

### ■ DAVIS RETURNS TO VOICEPATH

Voicepath (01926 821900) - the UK provider of integrated digital dictation and transcription services - has appointed Francis Davis as head of sales. Davis is well known within the voice business having previously worked with Dictaphone for 10 years before moving to Philips Speech Processing in 2000. Davis was also the founder of the Dictaphone Online Transcription Service, or DOTS, which provided the platform for current Voicepath services, prior to its purchase by Voicepath in 1998.

### ■ STAT PLUS ADDS DDS TO POCKET PC

Stat Plus (020 8254 5105) has launched SPS-@nywhere, a new system combining the SPS digital dictation system with any Microsoft Pocket PC compatible device, such as the Compaq iPAQ. Software prices start at £129 per user.

## LegalTech Solicitors & LMS IT Forum round-up

### ■ NEW OUTLOOK FOR PMS FROM SKYSOFT

At a time when so much legal software looks the same - hardly surprising since so much of it is all based on the same Microsoft development tools and client/server architecture - it was a pleasant surprise at LegalTech Solicitors to find a new system that had been designed from an entirely fresh outlook. Microsoft Outlook to be precise. Called Easy Fee-Earner, the application has been developed by Philip Fei Hou's Skysoft (0845 053 1594) software business in Liverpool with the objective of providing a full case and matter management system entirely based around the standard Microsoft Outlook diary and scheduling system.

The design logic is that instead of trying to add an Outlook front end to traditional legal applications, because so many lawyers are already familiar with the Outlook interface, why not build everything around Outlook from the outset. That way they can run everything - including time recording, billing, case management, email management, document assembly, document management and the client/matter database - from within Outlook rather than requiring them to jump between Outlook and other applications. In fact just about the only thing the Skysoft system cannot handle directly is back office legal accounts work but this can be addressed by integration with third party products.

Easy Fee-Earner is built around Delphi and prices start at £1200 for a single user version, falling to around £600 per seat on a 20 user network - Skysoft reckon the system is best suited for the smaller 20-to-30 fee earner network. More information, including an animated demo, a free trial software download and details of the reseller scheme can be found on the web - and watch the triple 'e' in the URL. [www.easyfeearner.com](http://www.easyfeearner.com)

### ■ MOVING INTO MOBILE COMPUTING

In addition to the Interchange Group (*see page 2*) who had a presence at both events, two other suppliers of mobile computing solutions made their public debuts at these exhibitions. Esteem Systems (01937 841111) who have a number of legal market clients - including Hammonds, Hill Dickinson and Walker Morris - were showing their wireless/GPRS and Citrix applications at LegalTech Solicitors. And, at the LMS IT Forum it was the turn of Cetus Solutions (0161 848 4315) to show their 'workplace independence' systems. Both companies can offer bespoke integration services, with the emphasis on delivering mobile data to end users at the lowest telecoms cost. [www.esteem.co.uk](http://www.esteem.co.uk) [www.cetus-solutions.com](http://www.cetus-solutions.com)

### ■ SOLICITORS TRANSCRIPTS AVAILABLE

If you missed the LegalTech Solicitors event, you can obtain online access to a full transcript of all the seminar sessions, complete with copies of any PowerPoint presentations, from Wordwave International for just £50. For details contact Jamie Pearce on 020 7421 4006 or email [jamie.pearce@wordwave.co.uk](mailto:jamie.pearce@wordwave.co.uk)

## Fresh on the radar - new product sightings

■ **DOCUMENT COMPARISON FOR ALL**  
Softinterface Inc in California is now shipping a range of wordprocessing utilities that could fill the gap for firms looking for a replacement for the old CompareRite document comparison application but not wanting all the functionality of the Workshare (*see also page 3*) 3.0/DeltaView redliner system.

The two main products here are DiffDoc and Word DocDiff, which allow users to compare both different iterations of the same document and different versions across different wordprocessing platforms and file formats, including Word, WordPerfect, RFT and DOC. Prices start at US\$ 399.50 for a single user version but with extensive volume discounts for multi-user sites.

[www.softinterface.com](http://www.softinterface.com)

### ■ WEB ANALYTICS IN KM ARENA

We are also hearing some good things about a company called WebAbacus (020 7269 9990). These are web analytics specialists who can provide a range of software and services to give web site managers a clearer picture of their web traffic trends and visitor behaviour. Although this aspect of the company's activities is of greater relevance to corporate and consumer online marketing and e-commerce operations, rather than law firms, WebAbacus does also offer some knowledge management solutions. These are designed for organisations providing information to their users - whether externally via the internet or internally via an intranet or KM portal - who need to understand which areas of content are proving popular and which are not.

[www.webabacus.com](http://www.webabacus.com)

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## Legal technology events diary

■ JUNE 16, LONDON. Business Development & Marketing Master Class. CRM software supplier e1 Business is holding a free morning seminar at the Law Society in Chancery Lane on how firms can grow profitable client relationships. For details call Emma Austen on 01962 831496 or email [emma.austen@e1business.com](mailto:emma.austen@e1business.com)

■ JUNE 18, WEST MIDLANDS. National SOS user group conference at The Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon, Warwickshire. The event includes presentations and workshops to help firms using SOS software get the most from their system. For details or to register a place, phone Ken Gaines on 01225 787700 or email [k.gaines@sosbath.co.uk](mailto:k.gaines@sosbath.co.uk)

■ JUNE 18-to-20, LONDON. Developing a portal for your law firm - two day Ark Group conference plus one day workshop at the Hilton Olympia. The event is chaired by Janet Day of Berwin Leighton Paisner and includes presentations by speakers from Herbert Smith, Lovells, Eversheds, Bevan Ashford and Wragge & Co plus consultants Andrew Levison and Neil Cameron. The whole three day event qualifies for up to 24 CPD hours and fees start at £1095 + VAT. For more details call +44 (0)20 8785 2700 or email [hanson@ark-group.com](mailto:hanson@ark-group.com)

■ JUNE 24, MANCHESTER. Kramer Lee & Associates, in association with iManage are running a series of half-day seminars which will focus on iManage's WorkSite content and collaborative software and today's hot topic of email management. There are further sessions in London (26 June) and Glasgow (1 July). For details phone KLA on 01268 494500 or visit [www.kramerlee.com](http://www.kramerlee.com)

■ JULY 3, LONDON. Central Law Training's second annual IT conference at the Cafe Royal. Topics include: what makes an effective web site, IT upgrade strategies, email use policies, digital dictation and case management. The speakers include Charles Christian, Neil Cameron and Rupert Kendrick. Fees are from £199 + VAT and the event qualifies for 6 CPD hours. For details call CLT on 0121 355 0900.

## Billing rate transparency at Grindeys

Grindeys in Stoke on Trent now has a new look web site. Along with the catchy colour-coding, which makes navigation very straightforward, one of the features that makes the site stand out from the crowd is the firm's openness on billing rates.

We are used to firms offering quick quotes on their sites for easy to commoditise private client work, such as conveyancing and wills, but Grindeys take matters further than most firms by also quoting fee rates for various types of corporate work. In addition to the transparency, we were also impressed by the seamlessness of the site, such as the facility to order brochures or be added to mailing lists, from any of the content pages rather than have to keep returning to the home page.

Another new site belongs to Slater Ellison in Bury, who have a substantial housing repair practice. This is a stripped down site concentrating on just the facts and no marketing glitz however it does have an easy to use extranet facility for authorised clients to access matter progress reports. The site, including the extranet link, was developed by Datacare Solutions (0870 7578 100) whose track record includes working on web enablement projects in conjunction with Laserform case management applications.

Finally - and staying in the North-West - Liverpool based Hill Dickinson has had a web site makeover courtesy of the Mando Group (0151 281 4040). Along with a new look, also using colour as a navigation aid to distinguish between different parts of the site and a design that manages to be classy - in keeping with the firm's commercial practice - but not stuffy, the project involved a lot of under the bonnet stuff, including the development of a content management system that lets the firm do its own updates.

[www.grindeys.co.uk](http://www.grindeys.co.uk)  
[www.slaterellison.co.uk](http://www.slaterellison.co.uk)  
[www.hilldickinson.com](http://www.hilldickinson.com)

## Book review - e-business basics for law firms

The Law Society this month published a new book *E-business Basics for Law Firms* (ISBN 1 85328 7520, paperback, price £29.95) on the ever popular topic of e-commerce and the provision of legal services. Its author is Christina Archbold, who has been involved with various legal IT projects for the Law Society, including the annual *Software Solutions Guide*, since 1994 and, as a consequence, has an extensive knowledge of the needs and limitations of the average solicitors practice.

The book has the attraction of being packed to the gunnels with information, practical advice, check lists, case studies and data about all aspects of e-business, including the technical, commercial and management issues. The book is also relatively compact - less than 200 pages - so there is no excuse for not reading it from cover to cover. If your firm has internet access and you are wondering where next to go with it, read this book.

# Anti-money laundering - go online for training

On this issue's front page we mentioned Mountain Software's new anti-money laundering system however technology alone will not make the problem of dirty money go away. As the EU directives and proposed UK legislation currently stand, law firm partners could be guilty of a criminal offence merely for failing to adequately train client-facing staff in anti-money laundering techniques. However, for smaller firms the logistics of training is itself another problem as few have adequate inhouse resources and the training has to be renewed every three years.

One person who thinks he has a solution is the Insider's favourite solicitor/IT innovator Michael Kaye of Kaye Tesler & Co. He has teamed up with Jonathon Fisher QC to produce a web-based training course. This uses a series of multiple choice questions and answers, plus explanatory texts, to take users through the issues and takes about 75 minutes to complete although this need not all be in one sitting. The course costs £35 + VAT per person and there is a useful free, try before you buy, demonstration module. [www.moneylaundering.uklaw.net](http://www.moneylaundering.uklaw.net)

## Email management news in brief

### ■ ZAP THOSE SUMMERTIME EMAIL BLUES

Lovells has become the first UK firm to buy the new XAPA (XeroxAdvanced Print Automation - pronounced 'zapper') system as a way of dealing with the backlog of emails you find sitting in your in-box on return from a holiday or a business trip where you did not have email access. XAPA automatically opens all email messages, along with any attached files, and sends them to be printed off in chronological order. Once printed, a log is produced and the files automatically closed. Xerox say the benefit of XAPA is instead of users sorting emails individually and deciding which to print, they are printed off in bulk so they can be read in a more digestible format. For details call David Millican of Xerox UK on 01895 843196.

### ■ NOW PST FOLDER MANAGEMENT IS AVAILABLE

PST files (or personal storage folders and their contents) may be a common way to manage mailbox size in Microsoft Exchange but are also widely recognized as creating difficulties for administrators. For example, PSTs have a reputation for corrupting data at a 2Gb level and the PST decentralised format also makes it difficult to track and control email content in accordance with email retention and deletion policies.

C2C Systems (0118 951 1211) has now introduced a centralised control facility for PST files in the latest release - Version 4.0 - of its Active Folders Content Manager system. C2C say v 4.0 can find PSTs whether they are on network accessible drive locations or concealed in a local file store. For more information, including a free 30 day evaluation version, visit [www.c2c.com/products/PST/default.htm](http://www.c2c.com/products/PST/default.htm)

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## New research suggests major gaps in IT usage

The Law Society's Strategic Research Unit has published a report (Research Study 46) on the use of IT by small to medium sized law firms in England & Wales in 2002.

The findings suggest that while most firms now have IT, its use and deployment is very patchy. For example, 34% of firms in the 600 practice sample do not have a network and are using stand-alone PCs. Only 49% of firms provide all fee earners with a PC - and 16% still have no fee earners using PCs. Even more worrying is the finding that the most widely used fee earner application is wordprocessing, with 87% of firms apparently happy to let their lawyers spend their time typing. Plenty of food for thought here but much of it unpalatable. Copies of the report are available from the Law Society on 020 7320 5640, price £10.00 or free online. [www.research.lawsociety.org.uk](http://www.research.lawsociety.org.uk)

■ Three other surveys are out this month. According to **Inter-Tel Europe** (0116 290 3000), 30% of firms are losing between 30 minutes a day and four and a half days a month of billable fees because they cannot accurately record how much time is spent on phone calls to clients. **Robson Rhodes**, in conjunction with In Brief, has carried out a survey of larger UK firms which suggests that last year they spent an average of £5000 per head on IT. And, **PA Consulting** and **CCH** have completed a study of the Australian market. This found that firms spent between 1.5% and 7.0% of their annual turnover on IT - with an average of 4.5% - however only 23% of firms felt IT had measurably reduced their costs. [www.cch.com.au/lawsurvey](http://www.cch.com.au/lawsurvey)

## Norton Rose confirms switch from Hummingbird to iManage

Norton Rose has ended several months of industry speculation by confirming that it is switching over from Hummingbird Docs Open to an iManage WorkSite document and email management systems platform. The new iManage system will eventually be rolled out to over 3000 lawyers and staff working in 19 offices worldwide.

Other firms making the switch from Docs to iManage in recent weeks include Bristows, Bedell Cristin and the London office of Mayer Brown Rowe & Maw. The deals were handled by iManage partner Kramer Lee & Associates (01268 494500). Other recent KLA iManage wins include BP Collins, Brodies, TLT and Sacker & Co.

■ Amid the rumours surrounding the state of the legal DMS market, the Insider has learned that OpenText - best known for its DMS at Simmons & Simmons - currently has no plans to re-enter the fray. According to an OpenText spokesman "We are not looking to focus on the legal sector for the foreseeable future. We do not believe this is a sector to focus our energies on for now, as it is very much dominated by one of our competitors."

## Computacenter wins £1.5m Scottish FM deal

Dundas & Wilson, one Scotland's largest commercial practices, has outsourced the management of its new IT infrastructure to Computacenter. In a £1.5 million deal, IT services company Computacenter (0800 617000) take over responsibility this month for delivering key information services to Dundas & Wilson's 500 staff, whatever their location. A full life cycle of support will be provided across desktops/laptops, servers and networks, and will encompass hardware and software maintenance, planned infrastructure changes and asset disposal. Computacenter will also provide the firm's help desk facility. [www.computacenter.com](http://www.computacenter.com)

## A doctor writes...

Still not visited the new look Insider web site? This is what Dr Richard Susskind had to say about it in his latest column in *The Times*: "Legal Technology Insider has relaunched its award-winning site. The result is cleaner and much easier to navigate. This remains the definitive online resource, in the UK at least, for the latest news about legal technology."

[www.legaltechnology.com](http://www.legaltechnology.com)

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■ **Coming soon:** The next newswire is scheduled for 18 June. The next issue of the Insider newsletter (No.150) will be published on Wednesday 2nd July 2003.