



Broadley goes after reorganisation at AIM

Following a strategic review of corporate management structure, Steve Broadley, the managing director of AIM Professional, has left the company "by mutual agreement". A replacement is not being sought for Broadley and instead Richard Bearpark, the chief executive of the AIM Group Holdings (AIM Professional's parent) will now take over day-to-day responsibility.

Bearpark said the review had found that the group had become "top heavy" with senior managers, whereas more junior staff needed "empowerment" and more career development opportunities. As part of the review AIM Professional's Jim Chase has been appointed to the AIM Group's main board as operations director.

In other developments at AIM, following the resolution of a number of "issues" the company inherited when it acquired the Teamflo workflow/BPM system last year, AIM is launching an enhanced version 2.0 of the product later this month. Although the initial target will be existing users of the system (primarily larger law firms including CMS Cameron McKenna and Nabarro Nathanson) AIM will also be making it available to existing AIM users who want an alternative to the standard Evolution case management system.

Intech claim email management first

Intech Solutions, a systems house best known for its work in the London insurance market (although a number of law firms now run its File-it! ScanStation system as an alternative to the eCopy and Omtool AccuRoute products) are claiming a legal market first with their new email management system.

Called File-it! for Outlook, this a filing and retrieval system that does not require users to radically change their current way of working with Outlook nor follow laborious practices, such as dragging and dropping messages into public folders, saving them against client/matter files or profiling them into a DMS.

In effect File-it! is a one-click solution flexible enough to cope with personal emails yet also ensure users comply with any corporate email retention policies, complete with full audit trails and no loss of attachments or metadata. Olswangs are currently piloting the system and Lewis Silkin have already ordered it and will be integrating the system with Hummingbird DM 5.0.

File-it! for Outlook can currently only be integrated with Hummingbird DMS products although it can also be integrated with the KVS Vault archiving system and Intech is talking to other legal systems developers. Intech say the system has also attracted a lot of interest from all the major independent legal IT consultancies. The entry level price is approximately £50 per seat for a minimum of a 100-user site. For more details call Andrew North on 020 7553 2500 or visit www.intechsolutions.co.uk

Start-up firm goes live with Aderant CMS in just three weeks

Maidstone-based, start-up corporate practice Vertex Law (the firm includes commercial lawyers previously with Cripps Harries Hall and Davies Lavery) has gone live with Aderant's CMS.Net practice management system in just three weeks.

Vertex Law launched at the beginning of November but the 20 lawyer firm, which has a total headcount of 30, decided at the outset they wanted a PMS that gave lawyers immediate total control over their time and billing management, without a large support function of secretarial and accounting staff, and could provide the advanced financial and operational management capabilities they needed for their planned growth in the future.

Aderant used their Simply CMS deployment at Vertex Law. This offers the same functionality as the CMS.Net systems larger firms run but with a standard implementation that makes it more affordable to smaller firms with less than 40 fee earners. Vertex is Aderant's sixth CMS.Net win in Europe since August.



Register now for Europe's largest legal IT exhibition at www.legalitshow.com

NEWS IN BRIEF**► AXXIA SENT TO COVENTRY**

Townshends, one of Coventry's largest firms, has completed a major upgrade to its IT systems in conjunction with Axxia, its preferred technology partner. During a two week implementation project, Axxia rolled out its Eion accounts software and fee earner desktop suite across the 20 user firm.

► VIRTUAL SERVERS FROM TRANSAM

VMWare's ESX range of 'virtual server' technology (for first report, see Addleshaw Goddard story in Insider issue 168, page 3) is now also available in the UK through Transam Microsystems (020 7837 4050).

www.transam.co.uk

► SOLICITORS FIRST IT SYSTEM

Solicitors First LLP, a new South-West London firm created out of the three-way merger by Fayers, Davies Brown and Laurie Moran Arthur, has selected the Osprey.TM system from Practice as its new case and practice management platform. Managing partner Graeme Wood said one of the main reasons for choosing Osprey.TM was the system – which is delivered as a hosted ASP service – would enable the new firm “to hit the ground running,” without having to wait for the delivery and configuration of any hardware.

In a related development, Practice has been appointed an accredited Microsoft ISV (independent software vendor) following an extensive audit of its .NET based practice management system and Groupware email and calendar system by Microsoft.

► MORE WINS FOR MSS

MSS continues to enjoy one of its busiest trading years on record, as more firms place orders for its AlphaLAW case and practice management software. The latest firms to sign up with MSS include Sproston, Abel Brown, Saunders Goodin Riddleston, James & Beckett and Mylles & Co.

THE INSIDER WEB SITE
www.legaltechnology.com

For the latest legal IT news, jobs, events and information, visit the Insider web site, described by *The Times* newspaper as “the definitive online resource for legal technology news”.

Visualfiles previews next generation system

At its annual user conference in London last week, Visualfiles took the opportunity to preview its forthcoming Visualfiles M2 matter management application. Introducing the system, M2 product evangelist Paul Wyatt explained “Having asked our customers what are the biggest issues they are facing, we were given a clear answer: risk management, compliance, quality and email management. M2 is designed not only to tackle all of these issues but is driven from a standard Microsoft Outlook interface, that should appeal to lawyers who would not use a traditional case or matter management system.”

Visualfiles has a consistent record of being first to market with new product concepts (their web-enabled Solcase Online system was launched as long ago as 1997 yet some of their competitors are still trying to catch up) and M2 looks like being another pioneering product – although the Insider is aware of at least one other supplier planning to launch a similar application in early 2005. Visualfiles M2 will be officially launched at the Legal IT exhibition in London in February.

Axxia restructures sales and development teams

In recognition of the fact that the needs of existing users can be quite different from the demands of prospective customers, Axxia has become one of the first UK legal systems suppliers to formally split both its sales and development teams to address these two discrete markets.

On the sales side there is a new business team focusing on start-ups and competitive tenders, while existing Axxia users will be served by a team of account managers whose priority is managing the relationship and ensuring customers enjoy the maximum return on investment from their existing systems.

As Axxia marketing director Doug McLachlan told the Insider “This is all about us investing time in our users to help them retain their competitive edge. It is a free service and is certainly not about trying to sell them new products through the back door. We have no intention of becoming another supplier whose users complain that they never see us except when we have something new we want to sell them.”

Sales activities are mirrored by a similar division of responsibilities on the product side. The new development team concentrates on market-driven projects – currently this includes Microsoft .NET and web-oriented work. Whereas on the client development side the emphasis is strictly customer driven, with the demand for enhancements to existing systems, including the Unix-based Arista system (see also page 6), taking priority. To manage these requirements, Axxia works through not only its user group but also a series of product committees and ‘product champions’ covering the company's main product areas of accounts, case management, desktop systems and marketing.

Tikit and FloSuite partner up on workflow and BPM

Systems integrator and consultancy Tikit (020 7400 3737) has signed a reseller agreement with FloSuite Ltd, that will see Tikit selling the .NET-based FloSuite business process (BPM) and workflow management system to its customer base. Under the agreement Tikit will continue to provide support services for customers' other BPM products (including Metastorm) but will only recommend and sell FloSuite for legal BPM applications.

In a related development, Mishcon de Reya is to deploy the FloSuite (01592 760601) system in a number of BPM applications. The initial roll-out will target administrative procedures that currently involve updating information held in multiple IT systems, such as new client/matter inception and new employee/leaver processing. The projects will all see FloSuite being integrated with the firm's Elite PMS, InterAction CRM and Interwoven DMS. www.flosuite.com

New MD for Linetime

Leeds-based Linetime has announced the appointment of Tony Klejnow as managing director. Klejnow formally took over from the company's founder John Burrill, who still retains his role as chairman and finance director, at the beginning of November.

Commenting on the change, Burrill said "After 20 years as managing director, I decided it was time for one of my younger colleagues to take over the primary management of the firm. Tony has been with Linetime since its inception and has been the director of customer services for over 12 years, so I am confident he is an excellent successor.

"I'm particularly proud of the fact that many of the users we had when we bought the business from Systime all those years ago are still customers today. This is in no small way due to our excellent software development team under Phil Snee and to Tony and the members of his customer services department."

DataCert and Aderant announce e-billing initiative

US e-billing software specialist DataCert and Aderant are now working together on an e-billing initiative. Aderant's new vice president for products Dave Weber told the Insider that instead of merely adding an e-billing module to the CMS practice management system, the focus would also be on addressing the handling and cost issues associated with processing e-billing. (Aderant's Dave Weber is no relation to Dave Webber, the UK developer of legal accounts software.)

► Aderant has added a new white paper on the benefits of business intelligence systems to its web site. The paper *Driving Profitability: transforming the business of law* can be downloaded from www.aderant.com

NEWS IN BRIEF

► MORE PROCLAIM WINS

Three more firms in the North have placed orders for Eclipse Legal Systems' ProClaim case management software. BBH Solicitors on the Wirral (previously Beckett Bemrose & Hagan) is rolling out a 25 user personal injury system in its RTA department. John Cunningham & Associates in Ormskirk has purchased a 20 user system – Eclipse is also supplying all the hardware plus implementation services. And Goldsmith Williams in Liverpool, which already has over 200 ProClaim users, has purchased an additional 50 licences for its conveyancing and personal injury departments.

► DPS ADDS TWO NEW MODULES

DPS Software has launched two optional document distribution modules for its case management software. The DPS Email Agent automatically attaches incoming emails to an appropriate matter file, while the new Post Room module offers similar functionality for faxes and scanned documents.

► HANDSHAKE SUPPORTS DOCS

Portal specialist Handshake Software has announced an integration suite for the DM5 and DOCS 3.9x document management systems. One of the benefits of the new system is it will allow users to search and select documents in a Hummingbird DMS to be uploaded into a Microsoft SharePoint Portal Services repository for extranet access by clients. Handshake's UK partner is Tikit.

www.handshakesoftware.com

► CARYDAN MOVES HOUSE

Legal software developer Carydan, now part of the Aonix group, this month moved to new offices at Cecil Court, Cecil Road, Hale, Altrincham WA15 9PB. The phone number is 08701 696696. www.carydan.co.uk

THE INSIDER JOBS BOARD

www.legaltechnology.com

Looking for legal IT staff, including positions in management, sales, development, support, KM, publishing, marketing, online services, accounts or training? The Insider Jobs Board has the best choice of legal IT jobs available in the UK and you can post your vacancies free of charge by emailing the details to jobs@legaltechnology.com

Speechly Bircham to roll out thin client DDS

Following a successful trial of the new Citrix Presentation Server 3.0 system, Speechly Bircham is set to become one of the first firms to roll out digital dictation on a true thin client platform. The firm, which has already been running Nflow DDS software (supplied by its partner Tikit) on PCs for over a year, recently upgraded to Nflow's new version 4.0 product and now plans to extend the use of the system to fee earners and secretaries who work out of the office.

Commenting on the project, Speechly Bircham IT manager Robert Cohen said "Using Citrix Presentation Server we are able to deliver digital dictation to remote users, along with all their other desktop applications, via our Citrix web portal.

"Installation is simply achieved by downloading and installing the dictation equipment hardware drivers and plugging in the hardware. It is as close to a thin client solution as can be achieved by a digital dictation supplier. We have tested this from home over a wireless link through to a 512k broadband connection and it performs as well as in the office," added Cohen.

www.nflow.com

DDS NEWS IN BRIEF

► WINSCRIBE ADDS SCRIPTING

WinScribe Europe has introduced a new 'scripting' toolkit intended to make it easier to link the WinScribe digital dictation system to other Windows applications, including accounts, document management and diary systems. The scripting system (which uses VBScript and JScript editors) allows developers to choose 'trigger points' – such as the start of a new dictation – and then associate actions with them, such as automatically profiling a document for storage in a DMS. www.winscribeeurope.com

► NEW VOICEPATH MANAGER

Voicepath (01926 821904) the provider of UK-based outsourced digital dictation services, has appointed Richard Bate as its general manager. Bate's previous experience includes senior financial and commercial management roles with ICI and De La Rue.

www.voicepath.com

Isokon claims first place in trust & probate sector

After signing up two more top 50 firms – Dickinson Dees and Charles Russell – Isokon Systems (020 7482 6555) reckons it is now the sector market leader with over 500 individual users and its software installed in more than 20% of the firms who handle trust and probate work in any significant volume.

Isokon managing director Gregory van Dyk Watson attributes "a good part" of the product's success to the fact it was designed from the outset as an integrated probate and case management system. Watson believes the needs of this market are too specialised to suit the alternative approach of merely adding a probate module to a generic case management system.

Watson is keen to stress that while Isokon does have some very large sites, its scalable design means it also suits the needs of smaller firms, such as Harold Bell & Co in Epsom, which Isokon recently won from Lawbase. Apart from Lawbase, Watson says Isokon's main competitor is MYOB/Solution 6.

Talking of Lawbase (0161 480 4420), since autumn last year the company has been supplying its probate software as a hosted ASP service at a standard rate of £80 per matter. Managing director Wyn Melville-Jones says this is a good example of technology as a leveller as firms only need Citrix and a broadband connection to run the Lawbase system.

Currently Lawbase has about 70 sites, varying from single users, with as few as 20 matters a year, to probate departments in firms such as Cripps Harries Hall, Rooks Rider and Charles Russell (the London office uses Lawbase, the Cheltenham offices runs Isokon). At the smaller end of the market, Lawbase's main competitor is the Probate Plus system from Sweet & Maxwell. (There is also an executory version of the system available for the Scottish legal market.)

Although Lawbase has now pulled out of the wider legal case management software market to concentrate on systems for the charities and not-for-profit sector, the company is developing a trusts system to complement its probate service. www.isokon.com + www.lawbase.co.uk

New change management consultancy launched

Brigitte Cobb, previously with Norton Rose, has launched a new consultancy focusing on change management projects, including document production processes. The consultancy's biggest project to-date has been working with Clifford Chance on the review of its document production processes. This resulted in the firm's recent decision to opt for a global rollout of the SoftWise Innova system (see Insider 168).

Cobb is also organising a UK user group for document production specialists and planning to hold an inaugural meeting next month. For details visit www.docprod.org or email bcobb@cobbjones.com

Mountain aims to ease Bar clerking load

Mountain Software, which through its Meridian Law arm, is now the leader in the barristers' software market, has launched a new online subscription service designed to remove some laborious tasks associated with clerking, while simultaneously offering counsel a new marketing medium.

Called LawwwDiary, the service has three elements: BarDiary – an online directory of barristers, their expertise and experience, and their availability. This can be used by solicitors and other professional bodies under the licenced access scheme. The second element is CourtDiary, which provides a listing of every court in England & Wales and which barristers are already attending those courts the following day. The final element is WhoisAvailable, which displays who is available to accept advocacy or advisory work for the next working day.

Mountain say the benefit of LawwwDiary is it avoids the phoning round clerks currently need to do, to secure counsel for court appointments. And, because 95% of chambers now use Mountain software, the system does not impose any additional administrative chores on clerks. Instead, diary and availability information is automatically uploaded on to the LawwwDiary web site five times a day, directly from chambers' own systems.

For details call 0845 055 1950 or visit www.lawwwdiary.co.uk

NEWS IN BRIEF

► LASERFORM IN OFFICE EQUIPMENT DEAL

Laserform has teamed up with Office Depot, one of the UK's largest office products suppliers, in a move which Laserform believes will save law firms as much as 30% on the prices charged for office supplies by competitors such as Oyez.

► JOHN LAING JOINS WORKSHARE BOARD

John Laing has joined the board of directors of Workshare. Laing was most recently the CEO of knowledge management systems specialist Inxight but his career includes a long stint as a vice president of Symantec at the time the company acquired the Norton Utilities group and diversified into the software security market. Laing will advise the board on a range of issues including the extension of its reseller and distribution channels.

► PANNONE INSTALL MITEL IP TELEPHONY

The communications consultancy 360 Solutions (0870 7634 360) has completed a project with Pannone & Partners that has seen the Manchester-based firm replace its old Centrex telephone system with a VoIP over LAN system based on the Mitel's 3300 Integrated Communications Platform and Your Assistant desktop utility. The firm's IT director David Griffiths says the benefits of the new system include greater resilience and more flexible network management, which will make it simpler for his team to manage relocating offices and for fee earners to manage their voicemail and conference calls. www.360-solutions.co.uk

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

► ELITE UNICODE NEAR COMPLETION

Thomson Elite and Hong Kong-based firm Deacons say they are nearing completion of a project – a legal market first – to develop a Unicode multi-language, multi-character set version of the Elite PMS. The immediate benefit for Deacons, which does business in mainland China and Hong Kong, is the same Elite system will be able to handle both Simplified Chinese characters, which are used throughout the PRC, and Traditional Chinese, more common in Hong Kong.

► METASTORM IN SCANDINAVIA

Metastorm, the developer of the e-Work business process management (BPM) software, has signed the Scandinavian IT consultancy Creuna as a distribution partner for Denmark and Norway. www.creuna.com

► WORDWAVE NEW DUBLIN OFFICE

WordWave International has opened a new office in Dublin to provide the Irish legal community with access to its court reporting and transcription services. The company, which has already handled projects for A&L Goodbody and McCann Fitzgerald, is located at 17-19 Sir John Rogerson Quay. Daily reporting rates start at €1250. For more details call Vicky Harries on 01 672 9136 or email irelandsales@wordwave.com

► FIRST NZ INTERACTION DEAL

KPMG New Zealand has selected Interface Software's InterAction system to provide the organisation with a platform for its CRM strategy. Previously KPMG had stored client and contact details in various repositories, including email, spreadsheets and database formats. Although InterAction has a number of Australian users, including one with a New Zealand office, this is the first direct sale into New Zealand. InterAction is sold in Australia and New Zealand through Inform Systems. www.informsys.com.au

► WONG ADOPTS WORKSHARE

As part of its document management strategy the Wong Partnership, one of the largest law firms in Singapore, will deploy the Workshare 3 system to the desktops of every member of staff. Workshare is being integrated with the firm's new Interwoven WorkSite 8 document management system.

Lawyers need to 'mind the technology gap'

A new study, conducted by ICM Research on behalf of LexisNexis UK, suggests that when it comes to technology, law firms need to 'mind the gap' between how they perceive themselves and how the general public still views them.

For example, although 96% of solicitors in the survey sample felt their firm either fully or partially embraces IT, only 50% of consumers said they would class lawyers as technology-savvy. Paradoxically, only 25% of solicitors believed that better use of IT would result in a better service to clients, through improved response times, access to up-to-date information and greater efficiency, compared with 90% of the public.

LEGAL IT EVENTS DIARY

► NOVEMBER 23, LONDON. Ikon is holding an exhibition of its latest documents solutions at Canon's EC4 offices. The event runs from 8:00am to 6:00pm. For details email aebrennan@ikon.com

► NOVEMBER 23, LONDON. Kommunicate is holding a 'lunch & learn' seminar at the Law Society on information delivery solutions. For details call Kate Dallison on 01962 835029.

► NOVEMBER 23, LEEDS. VoicePower is running a series of half day seminars on speech recognition and digital dictation technology. The Leeds event takes place at the Crowne Plaza and there are similar events in Manchester (25th) and Otley (30th). Sessions start at 10:00am and 2:00pm. For details email rachel@voicepower.co.uk

► NOVEMBER 25, LONDON. Tikit is holding a morning seminar (starts 9:00am) on digital filing and cost capture techniques in conjunction with nQueue. For details email matt.breen@tikit.com

► NOVEMBER 25, PETERBOROUGH. DPS Software is holding two seminars at the Orton Hall Hotel on e-conveyancing and digital dictation. Sessions begin at 10:00am and 2:00pm. For details email scheetham@dpssoftware.co.uk

► NOVEMBER 25, BIRMINGHAM. Stat Plus is holding a morning workshop on digital dictation. There are further events in Ipswich and Leicester. For details call Paul O'Connor on 020 8354 5113.

Is 'spyware' the next online horror story ?

The UK's Federation Against Software Theft (FAST) is warning that the next security risk to threaten the use of online services is the growth of 'spyware' technology.

These are web-based programs, frequently taking the form of pop-up windows, that either try to download viruses with web page content, or else conceal a keystrokes monitor that a third-party can use to gain access to such things as credit card numbers and security login details. A less malicious but equally annoying form of spyware is 'adware,' which captures data on your browsing and online shopping habits and then reports it back to sales and marketing agencies. Adware can be found lurking in some online end-user software licence agreements and be activated when you click the 'I agree' box.

Although a relatively new issue, solutions to the problem are already starting to appear. One of the first to cross our radar is the HTTP scanning system from Network Box. This scans the content coming in through a browser for viruses and other suspect attachments, as well as blocking any spyware programs. Network Box can also protect against more conventional risks, including spam and email-borne viruses. www.network-box.co.uk

Irwin Mitchell making a case for outsourcing

Although outsourcing and facilities management have always had a cyclical appeal, Irwin Mitchell's operations director Richard Hodkinson believes that when done on a selective basis, outsourcing can bring very tangible benefits. Irwin Mitchell recently outsourced Unix administration for the firm's accounts system to Axxia, Hodkinson explains why...

"The philosophy behind outsourcing is it allows you to focus on core activities while entrusting non-core business to an external provider. As a department we long ago rejected the original IT remit of being just there 'to keep the lights on'. As a cost-centre we want to utilise our resources to add genuine value to the firm rather than make a hefty contribution to the overhead.

"When we scrutinised systems management on this basis we identified Unix administration as one area that was big on cost, small on returns and therefore ripe for outsourcing." Since going with Axxia, Hodkinson estimates that outsourcing "has enabled us to halve the cost of Unix server administration, a substantial saving that allows us to invest that much more in added value services. Arguably we are getting a far better calibre of sys admin than we might have been able to acquire for ourselves... We can really just forget about the smooth running of the Unix box and concentrate on our core activities instead. Less expense, less hassle, a more proactive quality assured approach. These are precisely the advantages of outsourcing I want to tap into."

► More details about Irwin Mitchell's outsourcing are on the case studies page of the Insider website. www.legaltechnology.com

Intellego add new spin to concept of e-learning

For many law firms the biggest issue now surrounding the roll out of new applications, or even upgrades to existing systems, is how to handle the end-user training.

If classroom training is not viable then some form of desktop e-learning may be the only option. But if the firm is running a customised implementation with its own desktop or portal interface, then in the absence of standard e-learning tools, a firm has either to use an external consultancy to develop its training programme or acquire appropriate inhouse skills to develop its own e-learning courses.

One company offering an alternative approach is Intellego Systems, who are now the exclusive UK distributors for a range of e-learning 'content authoring' tools – such as Xstream Software's RapidBuilder, as well as learning management and performance analysis tools. Together these provide IT and HR departments with all the building blocks they need to create their own e-learning programmes from lesson creation through to monitoring the progress of courses and skills assessment.

One of the attractions of RapidBuilder is that it is designed for use by 'subject matter experts,' rather than people with specialist programming skills. The pricing is also attractive, for example RapidBuilder has a one-off cost of £2495 per developer licence. And most e-learning products are SCORM 1.2 compliant which means different systems can share data with each other.

Current law firm customers of Intellego (020 8614 2601) include Mills & Reeve, Hammonds and Howard Kennedy, while a growing number of legal IT suppliers now use the RapidBuilder system to develop training guides for users of their own applications. www.intellego-systems.com

FRESH ON THE RADAR

► **CORPRASOFT RELEASES LEGAL DESKTOP 8.0**
Corprasoft, the US-based developer of matter management software for inhouse legal departments, has released version 8.0 of its flagship Corprasoft Legal Desktop product. Although there over 50 enhancements to the functionality of the system, probably the most important new feature is a .NET based 'smart' (or rich) client interface that can now be used as an alternative to the standard web browser interface. Corprasoft systems are available in the UK and Europe through Ascertus (0870 760 555).
www.corprasoft.com + www.ascertus.com

► **RIGHTFAX 9.0 OUT RIGHT NOW**
Capartis has launched RightFax version 9.0, a major upgrade to its market-leading fax management system. Among the new features are a .NET-based web client interface, support for SMS text messaging and Lotus Notes 6.5, and fax-over-IP (FoIP), including support for the internet T.38 realtime faxing standard. The main UK legal market RightFax reseller is Avanquest Kommunicate (01962 835000).

INSIDER SUBSCRIPTIONS

Legal Technology Insider is published every three weeks and available only on subscription. UK rates: one year @ £130 for 15 issues or two years @ £220 for 30 issues. Rest of World £150 pa or £250 for two years. Payment in £Sterling - we accept credit cards.

► **To subscribe or apply for a FREE TRIAL subscription:** copy, complete & return this form to: Legal Technology Insider, Ferndale House, Harling Road, North Lopham, Diss, Norfolk IP22 2NQ, UK

✂-----
Name.....
Firm/Organisation.....
.....
Address.....
.....
.....
..... Post/Zip Code.....
Phone Number.....
Email.....

Tick boxes or complete as appropriate:
► Three free issues trial subscription
► I enclose my cheque for £
(payable to Legal Technology Insider) for one year or two years subscription.
Send receipt Please invoice me
Purchase Order No.....

► Please charge my:
Visa MasterCard Amex
Cardholder's Name:
.....
Card No:.....
Start Date: / / Expiry Date: / /
For security write the last 3 numbers on the reverse of your card. (If Amex the 4 numbers on the front of your card.)
Cardholder's Signature:.....

ISSN 1740-5033 (Print) Copyright © Legal Technology Insider 2004. All rights reserved. Published by Legal Technology Insider Limited. No part of this publication may be reproduced without consent. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this publication, no guarantee is expressed or implied and the Publisher does not accept liability for any loss or damage that may arise from any errors or omissions. Please note that web site addresses can change. All brand names and trademarks are acknowledged. **Privacy policy:** We do not sell or disclose the names, addresses or contact details of our subscribers.

Icon - the most intelligent conveyancing system yet?

You could be forgiven for thinking the last thing the legal world needs is yet another case management system however Swindon based Intelligent Conveyancing (01793 836730) now have in their Icon product what is arguably one of the most powerful conveyancing systems currently available on the market.

Icon, originally developed by the volume conveyancing department of BPE Solicitors in Cheltenham before being spun off as a separate company and based on the Visualfiles SolCase case management engine, is a process and diary-driven system. But whereas conveyancing software usually has a relatively open design, so firms can customise workflows and precedent libraries, Icon's designers believed this a mistake as most firms lack the skills, disciplines and consultancy budgets to do this properly. The Icon approach was therefore to develop a totally turnkey solution that is ready to run out of the box.

Not only does it cover all aspects of the conveyancing process for the sale and purchase of freehold and leasehold, registered and unregistered properties (a commonhold module is on its way) but it also offers the most extensive detail we have yet seen in a conveyancing system. For example, there are hundreds of different precedents to cover every eventuality, including 34 letters on adverse process alone.

Because this really is software designed by solicitors, for solicitors, Icon has a very strong focus on risk management in the context of modern conveyancing practice. Consequently, the underlying philosophy is that it is always better to spend a few extra minutes at the start of each matter resolving issues and inconsistencies, rather than risk major headaches as completion approaches or, worse still, subsequent indemnity claims.

Icon is aimed at mid-to-smaller firms and has a pay-as-you-convey pricing model based on £15 per completed transaction but users also need to install SolCase. Intelligent Conveyancing also offer a hosted extranet service providing online access to clients and providers from £4 per transaction. Fifteen firms, including BPE, TLT, a 50 partner firm and a three user practice, are now running Icon. For details visit www.iconveyancing.com

Civica moves into KM systems

As a result of an alliance with Azolve Technologies, Civica Systems (01709 786786) is now moving into the knowledge management market with a new product called Civica Refer. Civica's sales director for legal Tim Spriggs says a key feature of Refer is that it is flexible and scalable enough to meet the needs of law firms, so it can be rapidly deployed without the need for expensive consultancy or implementation services. Civica will also be marketing Refer to the local and public authorities markets, who from next year will require efficient information search and retrieval systems to comply with the demands of the Freedom of Information Act.

Elite loses first UK site in a decade

Thomson Elite has lost its first site in the UK, in the more than 10 years the supplier has been operating in this country, after a decision by Westminster-based law firm Sherwood Winckworth to swap out its Elite practice management system and replace it with a Pilgrim LawSoft PMS. Winckworths, who originally ordered Elite in the summer of 2000, completed the migration to Pilgrim last month.

Thomson Elite's European VP & general manager David Thorpe told the Insider "Law firms change their systems in line with changing business requirements. For the majority of firms, their business requirements are becoming more complex and they need more powerful software tools to address these requirements. If a firm's business requirements become less complex then simpler software systems may well be more appropriate than a best of breed application like Elite."

Scottish DDS alliance

BigHand and VisualFiles Scotland have formed a partnership that will see the two companies working together to sell and support the BigHand digital dictation workflow management system to Scottish law firms. For details contact Steve Falconer of Visualfiles Scotland on 01698 464610 or email sfalconer@visualfiles.co.uk

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER
www.legaltechnology.com

- ▶ Each issue of the Insider is now read by an average of over 6500 legal IT professionals.
- ▶ For editorial, subscription, reprint and any other enquiries contact: Legal Technology Insider, Ferndale House, Harling Road, North Lopham, Diss, Norfolk IP22 2NQ, UK
- ▶ Publisher & Editor: Charles Christian
Tel: 01379 687518 - Fax: 01379 687704
Email: news@legaltechnology.com
- ▶ The next Insider newsletter (No.170) will be published on Thursday 9th December 2004.