
CHARLES CHRISTIAN'S

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY

INSIDER

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO WHAT'S HOT (AND WHAT'S NOT) IN LAW OFFICE SYSTEMS

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LASERFORM CHANGE DIRECTION ON HIGH STREET

Laserform Law has signalled a change of direction in its plans to create a low cost accounts and office automation suite for High Street solicitors' practices in England and Wales.

Although still due to be called the Legal Millennium Suite, on the strength of further market research, Laserform managing director Barry Hawley-Green now feels most High Street firms are not interested in an all-in-one solution that attempts to be all things to all practices.

Instead, Laserform is now opting for a modular approach, so firms can buy different stand-alone elements as and when the need arises – or their budgets allow – knowing that each component is a compatible building block in an integrated system. (Because each element has been written to comply with Microsoft Windows standards, it will also be fully compatible with the Microsoft Office suite.)

The full Millennium Suite will be available from early 1997 and comprise: solicitors' accounts (the Kestrel package with a Schedule+ or Amicus Attorney front end); practice management and marketing database (based on Microsoft Access or SQL Server); the Laserform range of intelligent legal forms; and a series of case management applications.

The first of these – Property Case Control – has just been released and provides a low cost (£275 per PC pa) system to handle the sale, purchase and letting of residential and business

premises. This will be followed later this month by a new package to handle debt and personal injuries claims in the county court.

In December, Laserform will also release a trust and probate accounts system based on the Troika package from Jimmy Mackintosh's company FinApps. To cement this new relationship, Barry Hawley-Green has also purchased a shareholding in FinApps. □

UK'S BIGGEST EVER ORDER ?

Last week's announcement by the "national" law firm Eversheds that it is to invest over £2million in a new accounts and practice management system from Elite is being claimed as the biggest single order the UK legal market has ever seen.

Running under Unix on a Digital Alpha server (the hardware was chosen to leave open the option of a later move to Windows NT) the plan is that over a period of 30 months Elite will be rolled out to the firm's 12 offices and replace the seven older accounts systems Eversheds inherited from its constituent firms.

For Eversheds, consolidating its accounts and financial management operations is a key part of the group's strategy to become a single integrated national legal practice rather than a close association of firms. With this in mind, the Elite installation has been sized for 500 concurrent users.

But is it the biggest order ever? Although larger figures have been claimed, David Thorpe of Elite points out these usually refer to complete office automation projects whereas the £2million order from Eversheds is for just the Elite software and server hardware. □

LATIMER HINKS TAKE EQUITRAC LINKS

Latimer Hinks in Darlington has gone live with an Equitrac system to monitor and control photocopier usage. The system links directly into the firm's AIM Evolution accounts for automatic posting of billable transactions. Eaton Smith & Downey in Huddersfield has also installed an Equitrac (☎ 0171 831 7818) system.

SCL ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The Society for Computers & Law, which holds its AGM on 12 November, has published its accounts for 1995. These reveal a net income for the year of £31,324 compared with just £4,847 in 1994. Funds available now total over £130,000, which is one reason why the SCL was recently able to set up its new research fund.

PHILIPS' SPEECH PROCESSING TO ENTER NEXT PHASE

Moves by Philips Speech Processing to bring their digital dictation and speech recognition systems to the legal market, have moved up a gear with the completion of beta testing at three law firms.

Pictons in St Albans, Berrymans in the City of London and Davies Wallis Foyster in Manchester have been trialling the SpeechFlow and SpeechNote systems since the summer and from this month they are on open sale through Philips' specialist distributors Berry's of Holborn (☎ 0171 405 6231) and Coventry-based Harford Systems (☎ 01203 678016).

Although the current product range is primarily designed to provide digital dictation facilities across local area networks supporting high specification Windows PCs, Philips claim the attraction of their approach is these systems also provide the IT framework to support fully fledged voice to text speech recognition processing.

This remains dependent on the development of specialist language modules - known as *contexts* - but Philips are confident the first legal modules will be available in time for the 1997 SOLEX show at the Barbican.

➡ **Related Developments...** IBM last week formally launched its OS/2 Warp 4.0 operating system. Previously code-named Merlin, as well as being pitched as a direct competitor to Microsoft NT 4 Workstation and containing an OS/2 native version of Netscape's Navigator Web browser, the new system is "speech enabled", so a PC can be controlled by talking to it using *continuous* speech. IBM call this "speech navigation".

In addition, users with higher spec machines - a minimum of a Pentium 100 with 24 to 32Mb of RAM - can use VoiceType for OS/2 Warp. This is part of IBM's family of speech recognition ➡

➡ products and allows the user to create documents directly on screen using *discrete* dictation. This is also compatible with IBM's specialist legal dictionary. ☐

TEXT SYSTEMS IN US CASE MANAGEMENT DEAL

Following on from its recent agreement to act as the exclusive UK distributor for US based Advanced Productivity Software's DTE desktop time recording system (see *Issue 24 for first report*) Text Systems has now concluded a similar distribution deal with American case management systems specialist Synaptec Software.

The Colorado-based company first surfaced in the UK at the Barbican Exhibition in June and, on the strength of the reception its system received, has now decided to formalise its operations in this country with London-based Text Systems (☎ 0171 403 4033) acting as its distributor.

The software - which sells in the USA under the name Lawbase but which will be known in the UK as the Synaptec System to avoid confusion with Wyn Melville-Jones' Lawbase Legal Systems operation - is database independent and will run on DOS, Unix, Novell and Windows 3x, 95 or NT platforms. The software is also fully compatible with a number of popular third party legal products including Elite accounts, the Carpe Diem time tracking system and Docs Open document management.

In the US, users include corporate legal departments and private law firms ranging in size from the very small to Wall Street giant Morgan Lewis & Bockius.

Synaptec say one of the system's attractions is it is fully user definable. But, as this does require either in-house IT skills or the assistance of supplier consultancy services, Text System staff will receive extensive training so the product can be fully supported locally here in the UK. UK pricing will be in the region of £5000 for a server licence and £250 a seat per concurrent user. ☐

HATTON BLUE TAKING "GLOBAL" APPROACH

First it was "case management" then suppliers started talking about "workflow" systems and now Hatton Blue has coined the term "the global case concept". But is it really something new - or just an old technology given a new lick of paint?

When Hatton Blue first appeared on the scene in 1992, the company's "big idea" was to bring case management into the overall business process of law firms and legal departments. This was to reflect the fact such work was usually the responsibility of teams rather than isolated individuals and that while there may be critical dates that could not be ignored, there also had to be an element of flexibility to accommodate varying workloads, non-standard projects plus all the associated tasks staff have to handle.

This workflow approach to case management is now widely accepted as the most appropriate way of handling all but the most sausage machine-like forms of work, with a number of suppliers, including AIM and Mercury Computing, offering comparable systems. However it was at this point Hatton Blue effectively disappeared from sight.

Despite having strong roots in the legal world - one of the founders Craig Smith is a solicitor and Central Law Training is a major shareholder - over the next three years most of the company's major business deals came from projects for customers working in the insurance and financial services markets. (The system is also sold by ICL as Case Manager Desktop.)

Apart from being a steady source of revenue, it also provided Hatton Blue with an opportunity to see how other organisations approach case management. This led to the development of a new version of the system - called Vectus - which supports what Hatton Blue describe as the "global case concept". ➔

➔ This takes as its starting point the fact the traditional fee earner is only one part of the overall process and that for effective case management, a system must also encompass courts, external agents, expert witnesses and the client.

As Richard Dougherty of Hatton Blue puts it: "The global case concept addresses process in its totality, a holistic solution delivering an end to end service and managing it from start to finish."

Given that one of the pressing issues facing many larger law firms at the moment is how to accommodate client demands for greater access to their IT systems to exchange data and monitor progress, Hatton Blue's promise that Vectus permits users to be "restricted or empowered" according to their individual needs, sounds like the right technology turning up at exactly the right time.

As well as fortunate timing - and Hatton Blue (☎ 01789 470489) has recently received a second tranche of funding from venture capital group 3i - Dougherty believes the way Vectus has been designed will give it a substantial edge over the competition.

This is based on a form of *object oriented* programming Hatton Blue call "no code development" with specific applications being created by reusing or reorganising business rules (such as *issue a writ*) that are stored as data.

What this means is instead of having to reinvent the wheel with the assistance of IT staff, new applications, such as a remortgage system meeting the procedural requirements of a specific building society client, can be devised by lawyers and other fee earners. And, quickly - a recent system was developed in three weeks whereas by conventional programming methods it would have taken nearer ten months.

Hatton Blue see the target market for Vectus being larger firms wanting 20+ user systems. As a price guide a 50 user licence would cost around £100,000 however the company is also interested in creating a third party VAR channel. ☐

ROYAL BANK UPGRADES PC BANKING

In the last issue LTI reported on the NatWest's new PC based banking system. This time it is the turn of the Royal Bank of Scotland, which has upgraded its Royline service to a full Windows system. One major enhancement is the introduction of an IBOS facility, which allows business customers to transfer funds to overseas accounts on a real time basis. For details call ☎ 0800 343536.

**RECORD
YEAR FOR JM
Manchester-based JM Computing has reported a turnover of £2.5million for its Professional Services Division (☎ 0161 792 6020). The division specialises in the supply of networking and desktop systems to the legal market, recently winning a £500,000 contract from Pannone & Partners.**

DAZZLED BY WINDOWS ?

A number of readers have said they are becoming increasingly confused by the rival claims suppliers make for different approaches to developing Windows software. But does it really matter whether it is C++, Delphi or Visual Basic that has been used? In the next issue LTI will attempt to shed a little light on this subject.

☞ Following the recent announcement of Microsoft's new NetPC initiative and Sun's Java Station, in subsequent issues we will report on the latest moves in the PCs versus network computers debate. And, with Christmas around the corner, we will also be looking at the latest PDAs, organisers and pocket computers from Psion, Sharp, Pilot and Apple.

THE GREAT FAX TECHNOLOGY DEBATE

Over the last twelve months there has been growing rivalry between two companies selling fax management systems into the legal technology market. Each supplier claims that its system offers distinct advantages over the competition - but are these real differences or just so much hype?

In the blue corner sits Hexar Ltd (☎ 0181 563 9000) with its FaxSwitch system, while in the red corner, the competition is Kommunicate Ltd (☎ 01252 815514) - formerly Fontware - with its RightFax product.

Hexar has developed its own system whereas Kommunicate operates in the UK as the exclusive distributor for the US-developed RightFax system. Another difference is that whereas Kommunicate is active in several markets, including legal, Hexar has tended to concentrate on law firms and is only now diversifying into other sectors, such as insurance.

On the otherhand, with both companies now extending their product ranges, in particular through the development or introduction of *universal in-box* systems that can handle not just fax but all forms of electronic messaging, there are also a lot of similarities. So, what does differentiate them?

Hexar claim the FaxSwitch system is more suitable for big City of London law firms needing to deal with hundreds of thousands - in some cases millions - of fax pages every year, whereas RightFax "has proved most successful in the small to medium size law firm market".

However, while FaxSwitch can count the some of the biggest names in the land among its users, including Clifford Chance, Freshfields, Herbert Smith, Simmons & Simmons and Norton Rose, the RightFax client list, which includes Ashurst Morris Crisp, Dibb Lupton Alsop, Eversheds and Rowe & Maw, is certainly not to be sniffed at. ➔

➔ Kommunicate for its part reckons the key issue is the sophistication of the technology being used. "Switch systems," the company says, "are designed to run on proprietary hardware or 16-bit DOS platforms." Whereas network or "LAN" fax systems such as RightFax will run on the latest 32-bit server systems such as Windows NT and OS/2 Warp.

Needless to say, both companies can quote extensive reasons why their respective approaches are more efficient, robust and reliable than the other. Both companies can also point prospects in the direction of users who seem to be genuinely happy with their systems.

So what is the difference? In fact the answer seems to lie not so much in the technology but in the overall context of the systems' use.

In a nutshell, does your firm or organisation primarily send (and receive) faxes from the desktop, with individual fee earners and secretaries creating faxes on PCs and directly transmitting them, via the network? If the answer is "yes" then RightFax is probably right for you.

Or, do you have a centralised fax service, with specialist staff responsible for sending and receiving all faxes, as well as ensuring all documents are properly logged, archived, forwarded to the correct recipients and noted for billing purposes?

If this sounds more your cup-of-tea, then FaxSwitch is going to be more appropriate. (Although it should also be noted that the Hexar system can support desktop faxing while RightFax can be used in a fax room environment.)

Clearly neither system is "better" than the other - they are just different. Prospective users must weigh up their respective *pros* and *cons* and choose the one most appropriate to their needs and the way their organisations want to handle fax communications. One recent survey suggests that by 1998 some 50% of companies running PC networks will be using LAN fax systems. But that still leaves the other half using alternative approaches, including fax switches. ☐

REVIEW: HANDLING COSTS IN A CIVIL FASHION

Given that most law firms still handle some civil litigation – and all the ones who do seldom have a good word to say for costs draftsmen – it is perhaps a little odd that the need for taxation costing systems has been largely overlooked by the legal software industry. One company trying to fill this gap in the market is Wordwright Associates, which has developed the Costs Plus system...

Put together by the combination of a software programmer working in partnership with a law costs draftsman, Costs Plus is designed to handle all classes of private client and civil litigation costing work, including family and care proceedings. However, you do not need to commit yourself to the full suite but can instead opt to buy one or more of four incremental modules, taking you from basic time and costing through to full taxation billing.

Although a recently developed program (in fact there is an ongoing upgrade schedule with a number of enhancements planned for the New Year) it is only a DOS application, so it lacks some of the glitz of a lot of Windows software. On the otherhand because its primary role is to produce straightforward reports comprising columns of figures, there would actually be no intrinsic advantage in having Windows – nor any disadvantage in DOS.

Being DOS also means firms can run it on older, lower spec PCs – even a colour monitor is not essential. But, if you do have a graphical system, it is a simple enough task to add a Costs Plus icon in Windows 3.1 or set up a shortcut on the Windows 95 desktop. Containing many neat touches, including onscreen help and auto-save facilities, this is certainly not a crude product.

As with a lot of specialist software, the program is easy enough ➡

➡ to use providing you are familiar with the underlying business application – in this case taxation costing.

The only other qualification to be made is that it currently only handles two column (ie disbursement and profit costs) billing. Since the introduction of VAT this is sometimes also called three column billing.) However one of the major enhancements planned for 1997 is four column billing, so it can be used to recover costs against the other side and the Legal Aid Board.

As well producing taxation bills of costs and associated reports, it can also produce extensive cost summaries, incorporating totals to-date of profit costs, uplift, contingent taxation costs and contingent taxing fees. And, it applies the correct costs for the class of case, individual court and date etc.

Wordwright reckon that as well as dramatically cutting the time it takes to produce a bill, one big attraction for law firms using it in-house is files no longer need leave the office for days or weeks at a time while they are with a draftsman.

☞ **The Competition...** Wordwright's contention (and director Peter Brosnan has been a law costs draftsman for 36 years, so he should know what he is talking about) is that because *time costing* and *taxation costing* are entirely different concepts, you cannot use most conventional legal time recording systems to prepare taxation bills of costs. Not only is time just one small element of the overall calculation but taxation bills also need far greater narrative detail.

Accept this view and you are left with a two horse race, with Microcosts the only competition. This is another DOS application and is available from its developers Microcosts (☎ 01792 233313) and Professional Technology (☎ 01634 815517) who distribute it under the Lawcosts name. This can handle four column billing and there is a multiuser version but it is also more expensive, with prices starting at £2500. ☐

INSIDER VERDICT:

Costs Plus from Wordwright Associates Ltd (☎ 01473 212752)

Price: Comes in a series of four modules, running from £200 to £1200 for complete suite.

NB: No VAT and until 31/12/96 there is a £250 discount on cost of full suite (ie £950 instead of £1200). Demo disks are available for £10 (offsetable against a subsequent order).

Pros: Relatively low cost, no frills system that fills an important gap in the market and removes the need for files to leave the office.

Cons: Stand alone system only available as a DOS application.

Verdict: Good product set to get better when 4 column billing version is released.

INSIDER INFO SERVICE

Need a telephone number, a product name, a contact point or any other elusive item of information concerning legal technology? We can help. As a free service - and only available to subscribers - you can call **LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER** on ☎ 01379 687518 and we will provide you with the facts you require.

INSIDER RATES

Subscription rates for **LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER** in 1997 remain unchanged at £95 (overseas £125) for 24 issues. However in response to reader requests a new two year subscription rate of £170 for 48 issues (overseas £225) - a saving of 10% on the normal annual rate - is now available.

LEGAL PUBLISHERS IN DIGITAL TITLES INITIATIVE

This month six of the UK's major legal publishers and information providers will be mounting a series of one day exhibitions around England to promote their latest digital products.

Called *Electronic Legal Information Fair '96*, the event is being organised by the CTI Law Technology Centre at Warwick University (call Andrew Terrett on ☎ 01203 523294 for details) and will feature demonstrations of CD-Rom titles and online systems by Butterworths, CCH Editions, Context, FT Law & Tax, Sweet & Maxwell and Information for Lawyers.

The locations are Manchester (Monday 11th - Portland Thistle Hotel), Leeds (Tuesday 12th - Hotel Metropole), Newcastle (Wednesday 13th - Vermont Hotel), Bristol (Monday 18th - Jurys Hotel), Birmingham (Tuesday 19th - Britannia Hotel) and London (Wednesday 20th - Chartered Institute of Insurers).

Organiser Andrew Terrett said the objective behind the exhibitions is to provide a *one stop* showcase, with all the major legal publishers together under one roof at venues in the heart of the legal districts in each city, so as to minimise inconvenience to practitioners wanting to visit the event. Admission is free and the opening times are 12 noon until 7pm. □

NEW CD ON FOOD LAW

Chapman & Hall, in association with the European Advisory Service in Brussels, has published a new CD-Rom title providing an up to date analysis of all EU food legislation.

Called *Food Law in the European Union, the guide to putting EU legislation into practice*, the publishers say this is the first time analysis and legislation have been available side by side on a single, regularly updated CD-Rom. To obtain a free trial copy contact Jane Mills at Chapman & Hall on 0171 410 6990. □

DIARY DATES

☎ **Legal Admissibility of Electronic Documents** Seminars looking at legal issues surrounding electronic documents. Fee £195 + VAT. Venues: London 8 November, Edinburgh 29 November and Manchester 4 December. For details call BSI-DISC on ☎ 0181 996 7408.

☎ **AIM Evolution Seminars** Tomorrow (5th November) sees the start of AIM Professional's autumn series of half day seminars to promote the company's Evolution software. The series starts in Manchester and ends in Oxford on 11th December. Admission is free, with a choice of morning or afternoon sessions. Call Jo Hunter of AIM on ☎ 01482 228465 for details.

☎ **3 to 5 December - Online Information '96** Exhibition at Olympia in London features some 20 publishers with online and CD-Rom products of interest to law librarians, researchers and information managers. For free tickets call ☎ 01923 233442.

☎ **26 & 27 November - Software for Solicitors** Technology exhibition features major legal systems suppliers, at the Queens Hotel, Leeds. Admission free, call Truemist on ☎ 0181 742 3399 for details.

☎ **27 November - LITigate '96** One day conference plus workshop sessions on legal IT, law firm re-engineering, case management and networks. The event is co-sponsored by **LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER**. Venue: Café Royal, London WC2. Fee £380 +VAT, registration from 9.00am. Call Forum Conferences on ☎ 0181 445 8060 for details.

☎ **10 & 11 December - Advice & Information in the Community** Conference at Warwick University looking at the use of the Internet and *electronic kiosks* as a way for local councils etc to deliver advice services. Fee £145 + VAT, for details call Ferret on ☎ 01222 644660. □

COMMUNIC@TIONS

FUTURES

Web site operators are welcome to create hyperlink jumps to the **LTi** site at <http://www.cloudnine.co.uk/cloudnine/>

LINK UPGRADE READY AFTER SEVEN MONTH DELAY
After repeated delays caused by the choice of third-party Web browser software, Legalease managing director John Pritchard said he is confident the company will start shipping its long awaited Link 96 upgrade during the course of November.

Originally scheduled for release in May, Legalease first had to switch from Netscape Navigator to Microsoft Internet Explorer as its choice of browser. Further delays arose when it became apparent that Explorer 3.0 would initially only be available on the Windows 95 platform whereas the majority of Link users still run Windows 3.1.

Although the full release version of Explorer 3.0 is still not scheduled to be available for Windows 3.1 (or Unix and Macintosh) until late 1996/early 1997, Legalease has devised an interim solution using the recently released Explorer 2.1.

This will be the basis of the Link 96 upgrade going out to users this month and will be followed by a further upgrade (Link 97 ?) when Explorer 3.0 completes its beta testing.

The plan, once the upgrade disks have been issued, is to run the original Link system in parallel with Link 96 for about a month, before closing down the existing server and concentrating all resources on Link 96.

Pritchard says the migration will end all the crashes and down-times that have dogged Link over the last couple of months but he also warns that: "it should be appreciated there will be some further interruptions as we migrate across to Link 96 but we will keep these to a minimum to reduce disruption". □

COMPUSERVE FACING VAT THREAT

A request by the UK Government for a change in European Union value added tax laws could result in European users of the CompuServe online service (and similar US based systems) paying an extra 17.5% on their bills by January next year.

Under current rules, telecoms operators not registered in the EU can supply their services VAT free whereas EU registered services must charge the full rate. The Government wants to close this loophole - which it says leads to "distortions of competition and loss of revenue" - and has asked the European Commission to sanction temporary measures, which could result in VAT becoming chargeable within a matter of weeks.

☞ **Comment...** Although the service attracts a regular influx of new users through its policy of providing "free" trial membership with software bundled with modems or given away on the covers of magazines, there is currently widespread dissatisfaction with the quality of service provided by CompuServe. (For example, an ongoing debate on Link is discussing the most effective way of suing CompuServe.) Without the 17.5% price advantage it now enjoys, these irritations are likely to become far less tolerable. □

HANSARD NOW AVAILABLE

With effect from the start of the current Parliamentary session on 24 October, the full text of *Hansard* reports of proceedings in both Houses of Parliament are now accessible free of charge on the Internet at <http://www.parliament.uk>. Reports from select committee should be available by January. The site also contains useful links to pages explaining Government policy on copyright and licensing the reproduction of official Parliamentary documents, including one for librarians at <http://www.hmso.gov.uk/liblet.htm> □

NEW MEDIA DIRECTORY
Microinfo has launched a fully searchable electronic media directory on its new Web site at <http://www.microinfo.co.uk/> containing details on over 2000 electronic sources of "professional reference information" including CD-Rom titles and online services.

NEW COMPANY SERVICE
The PC Market-Eye real-time financial information service has launched a new Company Announcements Service, with a built in *Alert Manager* that will set off an audible alarm and flash up a screen message the second a new story breaks. Market-Eye delivers its services via broadcast rather than modem links, so there are no ongoing telecoms charges. Details are available from ICV Ltd on ☎ 0800 321321.

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For editorial & subscriptions...
 Ferndale House
 North Lopham
 Diss, Norfolk
 IP22 2NQ
 Dx: 42519, Diss
 ☎ 01379 687518
 Fax: 01379 687704
 Email: jcxian@cloudnine.co.uk

Editor:
 Charles Christian

Don't miss the next edition No 27 out: 18 November

Alexis Byter's
COMPUTER LORE

Falling off the bandwagon

What! Not yet hopped on the bandwagon with your own site on the World Wide Web or opened up an Internet law department within the firm?

No matter, for according to Roger Wallis, who heads the Multimedia Research Group at the City University Business School, interest in the Internet has passed the hype stage and is now on a downward path to what he calls the "anti hype backlash" phase.

Wallis reckons it will be a good ten years before the Internet becomes a fully fledged mainstream business medium. This view is echoed in the findings of a recent study conducted by the Institute of Communications Studies at Leeds University and advertising agency Ogilvy & Mather. It suggests the so-called Information Revolution is a myth, with over 60% of the population "not thinking about" getting computers or access to the Internet. Clearly time to put our modems back in the toy box.

Back to the drawing board

There again, if the Internet is no longer top of the agenda, perhaps some of the firms dabbling in this area of technology will take the opportunity to go back to the drawing board. ➔

➔ Yes, Nabarro Nathanson, we are talking about you and your recent feat of being voted one of the worst sites on the Web by *New Media Age* magazine (from the same group that publish *The Lawyer*).

The firm, at <http://www.nabarro.com> received a massive "0" out of 20 for content and personality. According to the reviewer it "exemplifies another type of problem altogether: an over-indulgence in corporate content. This site consists of a series of self-congratulatory excerpts under the guise of information".

Personally, I found the *find a lawyer* database particularly useful: you type in the name of one lawyer and you get the CV for an entirely different person.

The truth is out there

Good to see that Sheila Pratt, the best editor the *Law Society's Gazette* ever had, has taken on responsibility for producing a supplement to the Law Society's deeply flawed *Information Technology Directory*.

Probably we will never know the real reason why the names of so many leading IT suppliers were omitted from the first edition but we are grateful to the reader, who earns his living providing support services within a large firm in the north of England, for suggesting such mysteries can frequently be attributed to a phenomenon known as PEBCAK. Shorthand for "problem exists between chair and keyboard". ☐

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