

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY

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

In association with



In this edition

Kelvin McGregor moves on... 2

UK launch for two legal marketing programs... 2

Resolution, Miles and Sanderson all looking good... 3

Spin doctor system for litigators...3

US legal IT versus the UK - which is the better?... 4

A curate's egg of a conference?... 5

Ego at bay - 10 tips for good web site design... 5

Latest web sites & communications news... 6

Legal technology diary dates... 7

Top IT jobs... 8

Stop Press - SOS gets feisty... 8

LAW SOCIETY IT TO EMBRACE THIRD PARTIES

In the space of less than eighteen months the English Law Society has moved from a position of confrontation with IT suppliers to one in which collaboration is now the model. Currently four projects are being progressed or else the subject of feasibility studies. These are:

The negotiation of a "discount catalogue" with a major systems supplier that will allow Law Society members to buy PCs and generic software such as WP and spreadsheets at reduced rates.

The introduction of some form of "IT literacy scheme" to give solicitors a basic grounding in the use of computers.

The creation of a secure electronic document exchange network. The new Lawlink service is a possible runner here.

The low cost practice management system for smaller High Street practices. The Law Society estimates over 650 firms fall into this category.

Whereas previous projects, such as the *High Street Starter Kit*, envisaged Chancery Lane having hands-on control of the whole venture, the new approach anticipates working in "partnership" with third party suppliers. In fact Law Society membership services director John Miller has said, in a recent letter to the Legal Software Suppliers Association, that LSSA membership will be one of the Society's "criteria for selecting partners".

After three years in charge of the Law Society's frequently controversial IT services activities, Christina Archbold is leaving Chancery Lane to pursue a career in consultancy. Ms Archbold is expected to leave the Law Society later this spring when a number of projects she has

➔ been working on draw to a close. Her new business venture will be called the Practice Development Group. □

WHERE NEXT FOR ACE AND ADMIRAL ?

Confusion continues to surround the plans of both Applied Computer Expertise and Admiral to pull out of the solicitors IT systems market.

With ACE's 31st March deadline for withdrawing support rapidly approaching, the company has still to find a buyer for its law firms business. Meanwhile, its Infinity user base is eroding fast. Solicitors Own Software has signed up its second ACE user in as many weeks. The latest is Kershaws in Knightsbridge and SOS says a third deal is "imminent". And Axxia, which has won business from ACE in the past, is set to convert a number of other Infinity sites.

ACE has also paid undisclosed sums in compensation to two firms, including City practice Hardwick & Co, who had only ordered the Infinity system a few months before ACE announced it was leaving the market.

As a quoted company governed by Stock Exchange rules, Admiral is refusing to comment on rumours it has sold its legal systems business but the IT director of one of Admiral's largest law firm sites told **LTi** there was an interested party who subsequently made their excuses and backed out of further talks.

LTi has learned that both MSS and Miles 33 have looked at and rejected the opportunity of buying the LegalMind business from Admiral - one Miles manager described it as an "ugly looking system" - but Resolution Systems is now being mentioned as a possible suitor. □

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

LATEST NEWS COMMENT & ANALYSIS

Leicester firm take Solpak

Leicester solicitors Spearing Waite has installed a Solpak accounts and time recording system. The latest version of Solpak, which was developed by Meridian Legal Systems (☎ 01780 482795) runs on Windows 3.1, 95 and NT4 platforms.

New Copitrak email address

Copitrak Systems has a new email address. Keith Child is now on keithc@copitrak.com

My boomerang will come back

Chesterfield solicitors Philip Bowen & Co say the installation of a Dictaphone Boomerang digital dictation system has saved time and proved a more reliable method than using tapes and handheld machines. The system lets users dictate directly onto a PC and then send voice files for transcription via a LAN or WAN link. For details call ☎ 01926 821111 or visit <http://www.dictaphone.com>

LITIGATION SUPPORT PIONEER JOINS LTL

Kelvin McGregor-Alcorn, now widely recognised as one of the pioneers of computerised document management and litigation support methods in the UK, has joined Legal Technologies Ltd as the company's new director of strategic development.

Legal Technologies is already well-known in UK legal circles through its involvement in a number of high profile cases, including the Maxwell trial where it supplied the courtroom presentation systems. One of McGregor-Alcorn's responsibilities will be to build upon this reputation and to expand the company's presence in new markets, including government and in-house legal departments in the UK and law firms in the United States.

McGregor-Alcorn joins LTL from DPA-Egami plc, one of the finalists in this year's Society for Computers & Law Awards, where he headed the company's legal division. Prior to that he was the UK director of Quorum Litigation Services, the US-based document management and litigation support specialists. In the 1980s he was the director of strategic accounts at Wang UK, where he played a key role in establishing Wang's then predominant position among major City law firms. □

UK DEBUT FOR TWO LEGAL MARKETING PROGRAMS

This month has seen the UK launch of not one but two new software products specifically designed to tackle legal marketing applications.

First off the mark was Market Ease, which was originally developed in the United States by Cole Valley Software (where it sells as Legal Ease) and is now being distributed and supported in the UK by Elliott Slone (☎ 0171 729 2088). ➔

➔ Market Ease is an all Windows client/server application that has been specifically designed for law firms (over 150 firms use it in the US) as a "ready to run out of the box" marketing database.

The software comes complete with 30 to 40 standard user customisable reports, covering everything from contacts tracking to event planning and integrates with most major desktop applications, including: email, Word, Excel, Docs Open, WordPerfect and mapping information systems. It is also compatible with most ODBC compliant database products. Pricing will be based on the number of concurrent users in a firm with an entry level of around £2000.

The second product is Contact 2000 from Greystone Systems (☎ 01675 463880). Although this is based around the company's general business contact management system, Greystone (which was previewing the product at last week's *Solicitors Exhibition* at the NEC) intends to produce a bundled version specifically customised for the legal market.

Contact 2000 is also a Windows product, can be integrated with Microsoft desktop applications and is compatible with any ODBC or SQL compliant database. It can also be run in a batch processing (as opposed to real time) mode by firms using older Unix systems.

☞ **Comment...** Rather like London buses, there is never a marketing system around when you want one - and then along come two at once. Interestingly, both companies believe there is a gap in the market caused by the inadequacy of the "marketing modules" accompanying legal practice management systems and the inappropriateness of sales oriented contact management programs such as ACT!, Maximiser and Goldmine.

Elliott Slone see users of the Elite and Axxia Arista PMS systems as being prime prospects for Market Ease. LTi also understands that Gouldens is already using Market Ease and that Lovell White Durrant is currently evaluating it. □

RESOLUTION AND MILES REPORT HEALTHY PROFITS

Two legal systems suppliers – Miles 33 and the Resolution group – have both reported healthy results for their 1996/97 trading years.

Resolution reported operating profits of £831,000 on a turnover of £13.3 million, with its legal market arm Resolution Systems accounting for £11 million in turnover and pre-tax profits of £446,000.

Group managing director Ken Symons said the company (whose investors include 3i) was feeling “bullish” about its current trading year and that he believes Resolutions’ integrated PMS, workflow and document management approach was proving increasingly attractive in the legal market.

Resolution has recently entered into a “strategic alliance” with FileNet, the owners of the Saros document management system, as well as signing contracts worth over £1 million for front office and infrastructure systems at Rakisons’ new City offices and for the supply of the FirmWare practice management system to Nottingham-based Browne Jacobson.

Miles 33 has reported pre-tax profits of just over £1 million (£802k in 1996) on a turnover of £9 million (£8.5m in 1996) for the company’s combined publishing and legal systems business. Chairman Alex Yew said this was the fourth successive year of growth at Miles following its 1994 MBO and added that the group has in excess of £2.7 million in cash balances.

Miles 33 now has its “Smart Alternative” outsourcing approach to practice management systems running in six solicitors practices and is currently rolling it out to existing Miles users. Smart, which Miles has described as “a computer bureau for the 21st Century” will be formally launched at an event at the Institute of Directors in June. □

NEW QNIX ORDERS AND UPGRADES

Over the last couple of months the Sanderson group’s legal systems division has secured over £250,000-worth of new orders and upgrade business for its QNIX range of law office management software.

Three law firms – Staffordshire-based Grindeys, Cooper Whiteman in London and NHS trusts and health authority work specialists the Lewington Partnership – are ordering QNIX for the first time, as is Redditch Borough Council’s legal department. The largest single order was from Grindeys, who will be running QNIX in four offices across a Windows NT network.

On the upgrades front, existing users who are making an additional investment in QNIX software (comprising the whole law office management range: accounts, database, time recording, case management, debt recovery, as well as local authority specific applications such as possession actions and right to buy) include Atkinson Ritson Lightfoot in Carlisle, H Montlake & Co in Essex and Cobleys in Liverpool.

The Sanderson legal division is on ☎ 0121 359 4861 and the company’s web site is at <http://www.sanderson.com> □

BOVY TO WIELD EXCALIBUR

The Excalibur information retrieval system, which is widely credited with having helped Labour Party spin doctors run rings around the Tory Party during the 1997 UK general election campaign, is to be integrated with Bovy Technologies’ Apollo litigation support system.

Tim Bovy (see also story on page 5) says Excalibur will now give litigators the same edge as Peter Mandelson as they will be able to locate and challenge witness statements within minutes. Bovy says Apollo/Excalibur technology will be seen in action in a court case in 1999. □

Millennium Countdown

London Bridge Software, which has announced a 48% increase in pre-tax profits to £3.7 million, says its AS400 based Trial/400 system is Y2K compliant. But, its older Trial/Entry and Trial/36 products, which date back to when the company was still called Charterhouse, are not Y2K compliant and will not be supported after 1999.

LTi has heard from one practice manager who complains that his firm’s IT supplier has merely devised a “temporary” solution to the Y2K problem. The supplier has apparently changed the system’s registers so instead of its internal clock running from 01/01/1900 to 31/12/1999, it will now run from 01/01/1920 to 31/12/2019. “So,” says the manager, “we now face a year 2020 computing problem.”

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

LATEST NEWS COMMENT & ANALYSIS

Publishing news

The Thomson Corporation has confirmed that it has bought FT Law & Tax, publishers of the *Solicitors Journal*, from the Pearson Group for £70 million. FT Law & Tax will be integrated within Thomson's Legal & Professional Group, which in the UK comprises Sweet & Maxwell, Gee Publishing and Thomson Tax.

Context is to publish *The Times Law Reports* on CD-Rom in an electronic format that allows full text searching via Context's own JUSTIS interface. Orders placed before 30th April qualify for a £50 discount off the first year's subscription price of £450. For details call ☎ 0171 267 8989.

Carl Upsall, the Law Society's head of publications, is leaving Chancery Lane at the end of this month to take up a similar post at the Industrial Society.

US LEGAL IT VERSUS THE UK

One of the recurring debates within the legal technology market is whether US lawyers and the American approach to legal systems are inherently more advanced than their UK counterparts.

UK suppliers almost universally take the view the "US is best" argument is just hype, pointing out that in the US legal press you still see lawyers seeking spares for the old IBM Displaywriter WP system with its 8" disk drives.

As to why so many UK law firms are now buying US legal software, this is usually put down to snobbery. A case of lawyers would rather go to Tallahassee than Tadcaster to see a new system. And, of course, a user group conference held at Lake Tahoe does sound more attractive than a similar event at the Lakeside shopping centre at Thurrock in Essex.

It is not just law firms that are impressed with the US approach. For the last couple of years, Law Society politician Robert Sayer has been an advocate of Chancery Lane setting up an IT facility along the lines of the American Bar Association's technology centre in Chicago. The idea is this would provide a "neutral" setting for solicitors to see a wide selection of legal systems.

Leaving aside the logistical issues of how this would be run and financed (is the Law Society going to train up a dozen or so staff to be proficient in the use of 30 plus separate accounts and PMS systems) the Sayer idea ignores the fact the ABA centre has hardly been a success.

As John Meehan of UK legal systems supplier MSS points out: "There are over 960,000 lawyers in the USA yet the ABA centre only attracts between 35 and 45 visits a month. If we apply the same ratio to England & Wales then the monthly attendance would be about three. Mr Sayer seems to be unaware the majority of High Street solicitors are not prepared to travel any distance to see demonstrations of software products." ➔

➔ (☞ It is worth noting that a couple of years' ago Lloyd's of London tried and abandoned a similar "technology centre" approach intended to showcase the latest insurance IT systems. Again, the apathy of members was largely to blame.)

By way of an alternative view on the US versus UK debate, Neil Ewin, one of the directors of UK case management specialists Solicitec, visited LegalTech at the New York Hilton earlier this year...

"I had expected LegalTech to be a bigger and better version of the Barbican show (Solex) but in fact it was over double the number of exhibitors (334) packed into a floor space roughly equal to one floor of the Barbican – the majority of companies exhibited from small booths.

"Unlike Solex, it was packed! I joined the throngs waiting registration just ten minutes after the show opened. Attendance was undoubtedly boosted by the comprehensive legal IT conference held along side the exhibition. This had no less than four streams covering a whole range of topics and levels of IT.

"The most noticeable feature of attendees was they seemed to know their technology onions. It was obvious many were power users with an in-depth knowledge of hardware and software. They were also enthusiastic giving the impression that a day at LegalTech was a treat rather than the penance it so often appears to be for Solex visitors.

"The USA legal suppliers are as fragmented as in the UK, with a large number of suppliers none of which seem to have commanding market share. Most accounts systems provided a Windows interface (although a few lapsed into character mode) with SQL Server the favoured database.

"Case management software was generally slick but did not seem to offer the same levels of functionality as UK systems (perhaps that is my own bias). I saw nothing to make me want to go back to the drawing board. And, while the internet may have been on everyone's lips, there was little on show." ➔

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

LATEST NEWS COMMENT & ANALYSIS

➔ "Document management is an area where the US is undoubtedly ahead of the UK. In addition to the ubiquitous PC Docs, there were many specialist document management systems. Some of these are designated 'litigation support' systems and encompass elements of case management. Others carried out specialised roles, such as tracking the physical whereabouts of pieces of paper from creation to destruction.

"In the UK time recording and billing are still generally seen as part of the accounts system. From the exhibitors at LegalTech, this would seem to form part of the fee earner's role. These systems (such as Carpe Diem) are all highly interactive offering various methods to record time as you work. However it was comforting to overhear one visitor complaining to an exhibitor that he was still having trouble persuading his colleagues to use this method over paper!

"Although I found a number of products that could complement Solicitec's own software, I also think there is a potential US market for our web-enabled case management system.

"In fact in general UK products seem to fare very well in comparison with their US counterparts and certainly must not be regarded as poor relations." □

10 WEB DESIGN TIPS TO AVOID EGO TRIPS

Although a growing number of law firms are now launching their own web sites, many still leave the impression that the only thing they are promoting is the senior partner's ego. Here are some basic pointers on web site design:

Design for the real world. Most users do not have high speed ISDN links to the internet, the newest versions of browser software, large VDU screens or all the latest multimedia plug-ins, so adapt your designs accordingly.

Be sparing with graphics. Too many sites are cluttered with irrelevant ➔

➔ image files that merely slow download times. It may be hard to imagine but pictures of solicitors are seldom a selling point on a web site. The rule of thumb is that if a page takes longer than you can hold your breath to download, you should move on.

Is it relevant? So your site features Java and ActiveX, is accessed via an enormous "image map" and makes extensive use of "frames". Big deal but does it add anything to the greater sum of human knowledge or just make the site a dog to use? If you do need to structure page content, try tables instead of frames.

Don't alienate the punter. Never design a site that is optimised to just one browser – why alienate at least 50% of all prospective visitors. And don't provide links so visitors can download a copy of your browser of choice – they won't, they've better things to do with their lives.

Make it easy for visitors. It is only natural to want to get as much information as possible about site visitors as they may be prospective clients but don't slow things down by making them fill in endless CGI script "visitors books".

Content is king. Designers love fancy design elements but most visitors just want to find out what you have to say so focus on editorial content. Provide information to make a visit worthwhile. And make it easy to find by putting the material at the beginning rather than burying it behind fatuous welcome messages and confusing site menus.

Keep it fresh. If you want people to return to your site (and you should), update it on a regular basis so they have a reason to return – and tell them when the next update is scheduled.

Minimise outside links. Unless you are running a "directory" style site, keep hyperlinks to third party pages to a minimum. It is difficult enough to attract people to a site in the first place, so don't make it easy for them to go elsewhere.

DO provide email links so visitors can contact you. **DON'T** use visitor counters, that's just so very, very sad. □

Show news

To quote the words of one of the delegates, this year's *Information Systems for Lawyers* event at the Marriott "was a bit of a curate's egg of a conference. The good stuff was good, the other, well at one point it was so bad I went to Selfridges!"

Tuesday's lunch, hosted by Axxia but they didn't do the catering, revealed that the crust of a crème brûlée is now the hardest substance known to man, while the evening's cocktail party (hosted by headhunters Greythorn) proved to be the booziest reception seen for many years. The general verdict seems to have been that compared with previous years, the 1998 event was underwhelming.

Elite has so far produced the best sales gimmick: the "pocket lawyer" puppet it was distributing at Law Tech in New York. Squeeze it and it says "I'll see you in court".

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

LATEST NEWS COMMENT & ANALYSIS

Seen around the Web

Check out the Lord Chancellor's Department's new web site at <http://www.open.gov.uk/lcd/index.htm> You won't find any illustrations of the art collection or the new wallpaper but you will find Lord Irvine's latest legal aid proposals.

As part of a public relations campaign to win support for their proposed multi billion dollar settlement of all outstanding US legal claims, the major tobacco companies are placing a large archive of documentary evidence on the web at <http://www.tobaccoresolution.com> The archive excludes a further 39,000 pages of documents covered by client/attorney privilege.

On a lighter note, what is described as a "one stop shop for the internet gossip", including the latest hackings, can be found at <http://www.itgossip.net>

Internet & comms news...

NEW AWARD FOR NET AWARE FIRMS

Centaur Communications, the publisher of *The Lawyer* magazine, has extended the scope of its Lawyer/HIFAL annual awards to include a new category for the "best use of multimedia" by a law firm or set of chambers.

The category, which is sponsored by *Lawyer Online*, encompasses internet, CD-Rom and other interactive media and the judges will be looking for entries that demonstrate how this use of technology "assists in the delivery of legal services".

The closing date for entries is 27th April and the award winners will be announced on 25th June. For an entry form call Helen Mailler Scott on ☎ 0171 970 4362 or fax 0171 970 4394 – but expect to have to phone several times before anyone bothers to send a form. ☐

PSION AND LOTUS NOTES NOW COMPATIBLE

Lotus Development and Psion Computers have announced the first Psion Series 5 synchronisation solution for Lotus Notes databases. Called InSync for Lotus Notes, it will allow users to access Notes databases, Notes Mail and PIM data while away from the office via a handheld computer rather than a full-size laptop.

The first version of InSync, which will be available from April, requires Psion's PsiWin 2.1 PC "docking software" and will enable users to synchronise the Notes Calendar and Address Book to Psion applications. The next version of InSync, scheduled to ship in mid-1998, will offer two-way synchronisation of information from any Lotus 4.5/4.6 Notes database with the data application on the Series 5, including viewing, editing and data replication. Psion also say that by the end of this year there will be a full Series 5 client for Lotus Notes offering users similar levels of functionality to those found on PCs running Notes. ➔

➔ Psion has also announced that from now on all new Psion Series 5 handhelds will automatically include a copy of the PsiWin 2.1 software. (Owners of earlier releases of PsiWin will be able to download the new version free of charge from <http://www.pSION.com>

Along with messaging applications allowing email, send and receive faxing and web browsing, PsiWin 2.1 adds converters and synchronisers for Microsoft Office 97, Outlook, and Corel WordPerfect Suite 8 to its list of Series 5 compatible PC applications. ☐

LINK BENDS TO USERS

In a welcome example of a supplier actually listening to its users, Legalease, the operators of the LINK email and online discussion service, has bowed to protests from users about a proposal to automatically delete email messages after 15 days.

Faced with concerns that a 15 day time limit would make it difficult for users to have a fortnight's holiday, LINK business manager Nigel Armitage said "We hear you," and agreed the service would instead set an expiry date of 28 days on individual mailboxes. LINK plans to review the workings of this arrangement in two months' time. ☐

LUCENT WINS RICHARDS BUTLER MESSAGING DEAL

Lucent Technologies' Octel messaging products division has won an order to install a 400 user unified messaging system at the Aldgate offices of Richards Butler.

The firm, which has spent the last six months piloting the system among 80 staff, is optimistic that allowing lawyers to access and respond to voice and email messages from a single "personal communications centre" electronic in-box will lead to both better communications with clients and improvements in fee earner productivity. ➔

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

LATEST NEWS COMMENT & ANALYSIS

➔ The Octel product, which is based around a Microsoft BackOffice/Exchange computing environment, provides users with the option of accessing all messages via phone or PC – a text-to-speech facility converting emails into messages that can be played over a phone.

Users can in return reply to messages using the medium most convenient to them at any particular time and location. For example, a lawyer checking his messages from a phone at home could send a voice message as a reply to an email or in the office send an email as a response to a voice message.

For more information visit <http://www.lucent.com/octel>

SPECIAL OFFER ON REAL TIME FINANCIAL DATA

Datastream/ICV is running a special offer on its Market-Eye for PCs real time stock market information system. Subscribers signing up before 30th April for the company's London Stock Exchange module can save £600 off the normal annual rate of £1700, with similar savings on Datastream's LIFFE service.

The price includes the Market-Eye for Windows and Chartist technical analysis software, unlimited helpdesk access, all relevant Stock Exchange fees, free access to the Market-Eye internet service and the "datacard" hardware to be fitted to the user's PC. (➔ Market-Eye is a broadcast service so there are no online connection charges.)

For details write to: Market-Eye Sales, Datastream/ICV, Skandia House, 23 College Hill, Cannon Street, London EC4R 2RA.

THREE IN ONE NET SEARCH

Confused by the rival approaches to finding information on the internet?

If you are not certain whether you prefer the Boolean logic of search engines such as AltaVista over directory services such as Yahoo! or even automated ➔

➔ agents such as Netbot, you can have the best of all worlds.

Well, at least that is the theory being put forward by OneSeek at <http://www.oneseek.com> with a new service that simultaneously submits the same reference terms to three different search systems, namely AltaVista, Yahoo! and Netbot.

OneSeek is also offering a new service called Webchain, which will allow users to select a category of information, such as legal technology, and then scan up to a dozen web sites in this particular field for the latest information.

LEGAL IT DIARY DATES

March 18 to 27 Document Management Roadshow. Conference and exhibition taking place at seven venues around the UK. Admission free, for tickets call ☎ 01905 727606 or visit <http://www.itx.co.uk>

March 19, Kaye Tesler Lecture, Birmingham Holiday Inn. Solicitor Michael Kaye resumes his popular lecture series with an expanded all-day format that includes sessions on speech recognition, video conferencing, the use of interactive internet sites, email, Y2K computing problems and strategies for raising finance to fund the acquisition of IT. The fee is £100 + VAT and the event qualifies for 8.45 CPD hours. Call ☎ 0181 809 6756 or visit <http://www.kt.uklaw.net>

March 24, Intranets & Beyond for Law Firms, Law Society, London.

One day conference including seminars and multi-stream workgroup sessions looking at the practical, technical, legal and business aspects of developing intranets within solicitors practices. Speakers include Richard Susskind, Neil Cameron, Clive Whitfield-Jones of JGR, Derek Sturdy of LIR/Sweet & Maxwell and L*Ti* editor Charles Christian. The event is organised by Osney Media and sponsored by **Legal Technology Insider**. Fee £499 + VAT. Call ☎ 0171 880 0000 or visit <http://www.osneymedia.co.uk> ➔

➔ **March 27 & 28, BILETA, Trinity College, Dublin.** The 13th annual conference of the British & Irish Legal Education Technology Association takes place in Dublin this year, with speakers including the President of Ireland, Professor Mary McAleese. For more details check out the web site at <http://www.bileta.ac.uk>

April 3 & 4, Law Society of Scotland Exhibition, Glasgow.

Truemist, who organise the Barbican and GMEX events, have been appointed to organise the exhibition that will run alongside this year's AGM and conference of the Scottish Law Society. For details call ☎ 0181 742 3399.

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

LATEST NEWS COMMENT & ANALYSIS

Recruitment Advertisement



Legal IT Account Managers and Implementation/Development Specialists

Resolution Systems require experienced Account Managers to join the expanding Legal Sales Division. Our product set includes FirmWare Practice Management System, case management, workflow and Integrated Document Management software.

This opportunity is available to highly motivated people with at least two years' experience in the market. You will need to be able to negotiate with firms at partnership level and understand their business needs and requirements. Full training on our range of products will be given.

A comprehensive employment package is available, including a generous car allowance and pension scheme with exceptional on target earnings.

Resolution are also looking for people with skills in Microsoft products including NT, SQL Server, Exchange and development tools to join our growing development and implementation team.

These opportunities are based at our Croydon offices with the majority of our clients based in the City and the South East, although this is rapidly becoming nationwide.

**Contact: Alby Smith, Legal Division Manager, Resolution Systems Ltd,
Lombard Business Park, 20-26 Purley Way, Croydon CR0 3JP.
Tel: 0181 665 5050 Email: AlbySmith@ResolutionSystems.co.uk**

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Editor:
Charles Christian

For all editorial, advertising and subscription matters contact...

Cloudnine Technology, Ferndale House, North Lopham, Diss, Norfolk IP22 2NQ

**☎ 01379 687518
Fax: 01379 687704
Email: editor@cloudnine.co.uk**

**Next issue...
Issue 57 of the Insider will be published on Monday 23rd March.**

Stop Press... Stop Press...

SOS WINS RIVALS' SITES

Solicitors Own Software (SOS) has won two orders from firms previously using rival suppliers' products. Calvert Smith & Sutcliffe has ordered a 30-user SOS practice management system – the firm is currently an Axxia site. And Jackson Brierly Hudson Stoney in Rochdale has signed a £80,000 contract for integrated accounts and case management software to replace its present Videss system.

ENTHUSIASM FOR THIN CLIENTS GROWING

Two more London firms – Denton Hall and Speechly Bircham – are investigating Citrix WinFrame and Microsoft Hydra “thin client” technologies.

Systems integrator Lawtech Services is currently working on a Winframe project with Speechly Bircham that is intended to link the firm's old Unix-based ICL Officepower office automation system with the laptop PCs now being used by fee earners.

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