Hummingbird buys KLA in surprise deal

Despite the fact the two companies have barely been on speaking terms since a previous distribution deal unravelled in June 2000, late last Thursday night the document management systems developer Hummingbird acquired the systems distributor and implementer Kramer Lee & Associates for an undisclosed sum.

Although KLA will now become a wholly owned subsidiary of Hummingbird, it not only will remain a separate brand "for the foreseeable future" but also continue its existing distribution arrangements for third party software products, including the Interface InterAction CRM. But, not surprisingly, its reseller deal for the rival iManage DMS will be terminated although KLA will continue to support its existing iManage projects and sites.

Hummingbird UK manager Liz Maloney said it was after the recent acquisition of the LegalKEY records management system, for which KLA was the UK distributor, that Hummingbird took the opportunity "to rebuild some bridges with Kramer Lee".

As part of the acquisition deal, almost the entire management structure and workforce of KLA will join Hummingbird. The one exception is Tom Lee who is taking early retirement. According to one of his KLA colleagues, Lee - who can take most of the credit for originally introducing Hummingbird's DMS to the UK legal market - is expected "to spend more time with his boat".

SOS ousts Infographics from flagship conveyancing site

Solicitors Own Software (SOS) has bumped case management software specialists Infographics out of one of its flagship sites - the MyHomeMove.com (MHM) online conveyancing operation, which is backed by the utilities group NPower - after a little over 18 months on the project.

MHM originally approached SOS to provide an accounts system for the operation, which plans to offer a 'no move, no fee' fast track conveyancing service that will allow homeowners to buy and sell properties within 10 days. However during the course of the first SOS demonstration, MHM also expressed an interest in case management, so the SOS team introduced them to Solicitec's SolCase software.

Following extensive tests of an integrated SOS/SolCase solution, in August last year MHM purchased a pilot version of the accounts and case management software. Insider sources suggest this demonstrated substantial improvements in functionality and performance, so in November 2002 MHM placed a £200,000 order with SOS to swap out the Infographics FloSuite case management system, that some 120 staff at MHM had been using, and replace it with SOS/SolCase software.

The MHM contract is one of several in recent years where SOS has come to the aid of a site struggling to implement a new system. In late 2001, Hugh James in Cardiff swapped out Pilgrim's LawSoft system in favour of an SOS/SolCase solution.

Lexis looking to enter PMS market ?

Legal publisher LexisNexis Butterworths is currently investigating the size and scope of the UK legal accounts and practice management systems market, prompting speculation that Lexis might be considering 'doing a WestLaw' (earlier this year the West/Thomson group purchased the PMS supplier Elite) and diversifying into the legal applications software field.

We have been hearing rumours on and off for the past 15 years that applications software is the logical extension of any legal publisher's product portfolio. However the latest moves coincide with a suggestion in Richard Susskind's column in *The Times* that the development of a proposed 'hub' (to provide large inhouse legal departments with a single point of access to their numerous panel law firms' online billing and matter progress reporting data - as an alternative to logging into separate extranets and portals) would be better left to legal publishers, such as Lexis and West, who already have experience of implementing global information systems, content delivery and all the associated security issues.

The Insider web site

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

www.legaltechnology.com

Supporting legacy data

Edinburgh-based Legacy Support (0131 478 9292), which was originally set up by Harry Usher and Nigel Bruce in 1999 to support the remaining U-Legal sites through the Y2K period, has now built up a thriving data conversion and migration service.

Nigel Bruce says that although over the past 12 months the volume of data conversion projects the company handles has increased by about 40%, the biggest change has been in the scope of the work.

"The whole area of data management," says Bruce, "has moved a long way since the early days when the focus was purely on transaction processing and transferring balances from one system to another. Along with the restructuring issues that arise when firms merge, practices now realise that the data collected over the years has a considerable value to the business quite apart from the statutory requirements for its maintenance. As well as legacy conversions, we are often asked to undertake data mining work and to represent the results in a Microsoft compatible format."

www.legacy-support.co.uk

News in brief

■ **SIMPSONS GO BEST OF BREED**
Scottish firm Simpson & Marwick has opted for a best of breed solution to replace its current Pilgrim practice and case management systems. Elite will provide the PMS, while Solicitec will supply the case and workflow management elements. Elite now has 12 law firm sites in Scotland, including eight of the top 20 largest practices.

■ **ON THE CASE IN COVENTRY**
Coventry City Council has contracted AIM Professional Systems to implement a new Evolution case management and time recording system in its legal services department. The council, which will also be using the system to support 'best value' and Lexcel, plans to develop inhouse its own council-specific workflows, including procedures for handling childcare cases. The council also plans to share its experiences of Evolution with other users belonging to the public sector subgroup of the ACUA (AIM Computer Users Association).

How much is the UK legal IT market worth ?

Just how much is the UK legal IT market worth in terms of annual software sales? Estimates we have seen recently range from as little as £70 million to as much as £200 million however the position is confused by the stratification within the market.

For example, High Street and smaller commercial firms still focus almost exclusively on accounts, PMS and case management packages - and spend between 3-to-4.5% of their annual turnover on IT although this figure does also include hardware and staff salaries. On the other hand, larger firms opting for the best of breed approach inevitably need to carry out bespoke integration work, the sheer scale of some of their operations raises a whole new cost dimension and they run a wider range of systems, including KM, CRM and document management, with the result that their spend averages out to between 5-to-7% of turnover.

From the Insider's researches, High Street and smaller commercial firms spend £125 million pa on software - we estimate case and workflow management systems account for just over one-third of this figure. Once larger firms - effectively the 200 largest firms - are added into the equation, the figure is closer to £200 million. Add in hardware, datacoms, training, inhouse IT staff salaries and related overheads and the market's overall annual spend on IT is in the region of £400 million.

New Bar software initiative

For years barristers used to complain that ACE had a monopoly of the chambers' IT market and as a result competition in the shape of Meridian Law was initially welcomed. Unfortunately Meridian, now part of the Mountain Software group, was a little too successful and in November last year it went on to acquire its arch rival ACE.

The Bar's reaction was predictable - the launch of a new initiative to "break the looming software monopoly in the Bar" and an open invitation to a maximum of 20 chambers to join a consortium to fund new barristers' fees, chambers management, and marketing system. The invitation says no set of chambers will be required to pay more than £10,000 into the development pool. Chambers interested in the venture should contact Chris Billing of Business Information Systems on 07957 432707.

Bunkers pave way to outsourcing

Seven partner Sussex solicitors Bunkers has become the latest firm to outsource the day-to-day management and support of its IT network to a third-party service provider, in this case local systems integrators PAV it (01273 834000). With just over 50 users on the network, Bunkers is one of the smaller firms to go the outsourcing route, with PAV it delivering end user systems through a thin client infrastructure. **www.pav.co.uk**

WinScribe share swap to provide better DDS deal

Yesterday (1st July), the UK digital dictation systems distributor Mycrom Information Systems announced the completion of "a significant share swap" with the New Zealand based DDS developer WinScribe Inc. With the two companies now having a significant stake in each other, Mycrom now becomes WinScribe Europe (0118 984 2133) and will be totally responsible for the marketing and support of the WinScribe digital dictation products in Europe.

WinScribe Europe's managing director Philip Vian told the Insider the system would continue to be sold through a reseller network, which currently includes Berrys and SRC, but added that one of the main benefits was "this joint venture provides us with a strengthened position within the group, giving us a closer relationship with the product development team in New Zealand and greater influence on the product roadmap."

Outlook looks good for Opsis

Opsis Practice Management Solutions (01780 764947) can now offer an Outlook interface for its case management system. Opsis MD Brian O'Neill is, however, keen to stress that "it is more than a mere front end but such a basic and core element of the system that in many instances the user will be unaware whether they are in Outlook or case management." An integrated accounts package is also available. **www.opsisltd.co.uk**

New products from Cognito

As part of its strategy of moving beyond accounts systems and into the broader field of legal case and practice management technology, Cognito Software (01279 821230) used its recent user group meeting in the West Midlands to announce details of its latest software releases.

These included: the DocuManager document management and assembly system - in effect a file management and automation application for firms not requiring the processing power of full blown case management software - and the Cognito InTouch marketing system. DocuManager is available now and InTouch, which Cognito also use to support their own marketing activities, is in final field testing with a major client.

The company has also been expanding the number of work types supported by its case management software. These now include block contracting for civil and criminal work, personal injury, including road traffic and employer's liability cases, conveyancing and matrimonial/family law work. A case management version of Cognito's well known Custodiens trust and probate accounting software is also under development and scheduled to be launched later this year.

www.cognitosoftware.co.uk

News in brief

■ **ECLIPSE PROCLAIM NEW USERS**
Eclipse Legal Systems (01274 704100) has secured nine new user sites for its ProClaim personal injury case management software in the past two months. They include seven solicitors practices - the best known is Wrigley Claydon in Todmorden, the legal expenses insurer Composite Legal Expenses and Sunderland-based medical reports specialist UK Independent Medical Services.

■ **AIM OUSTS AXXIA AT TWM**
TWM Solicitors in Surrey has ordered an Evolution integrated case and practice management system from AIM Professional Systems (01482 326971) to replace the firms incumbent 160 user Axxia software.

AIM software has also been selected by Steel & Shamash to support the firm's Legal Services Commission franchise to handle public funding work. The firm's practice manager Melissa Butler said the decision to invest in IT was prompted by the realisation that "without a modern practice management system in place capable of automating LSC forms processing requirements, the profitability of publicly funded work would inevitably decrease."

■ **NEW TELECOMS AT RIX & KAY**
Rix & Kay, who run three offices in East Sussex, have installed an Inter-Tel Europe (0116 290 3000) Axxess phone system. Along with new handsets and support for centralised voicemail, the Axxess system has also reduced intra-office call charges because the existing megastream data links between the three offices can now also be used for voice communications.

Looking for IT staff ?

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

For details of the latest vacancies, which include openings for a legal applications support analyst in Bath, a sales consultant in London and Novell specialist in Manchester, visit **www.legaltechnology.com**

People & Places

■ **NEW CASE/BPM CONSULTANCY**
Tony Axelrod, who for the last six years was director of case management systems at Laserform and before that in practice as a solicitor, has set up his own independent consultancy. Called e-Syscare (07986 947974), Axelrod says the consultancy's main objective is to help firms get more out of their investments in case management software, particularly conveyancing systems.

"I take the view there is much that can be done to improve on usability and efficiency by redesigning processes, workflows and documents and by better targeted training. Considerably better utilisation of existing systems can be achieved, I believe, without necessarily incurring expense on additional software." **www.e-syscare.com**

■ **BAKER ROBBINS MOVES**
Andrew Levison and the Baker Robbins' London office team have moved to new premises at 2nd Floor, 146-148 Clerkenwell Road, London EC1R 5DG. The main switchboard number is 020 7923 5100.

■ **DARBY STARTS UP TART SYSTEMS**
Ivan Darby, who until the end of last year was the IT & electronic publishing director at LexisNexis Butterworths - and widely rated as one of the few Butterworths people who really understood ecommerce and the dotcom revolution - has formed his own KM and ebusiness consultancy.

Called Tart Systems - which stands for Technology Accelerating Radical Thought - the consultancy aims to demonstrate how technology can be a catalyst not just for new ventures but also the reinvention of traditional businesses. Although Tart is initially providing consultancy services, Darby, who was also responsible for the development of the Books on Screen user interface, has not ruled out the launch of new products. For more details phone 01483 832530 or visit **www.tartsystems.com**

■ **BE PROFESSIONAL IN THE CITY**
BeProfessional, the web services company backed by Berwin Leighton Paisner - and currently running a CBI-sponsored HR law site for smaller businesses, has moved to new offices at Kay House, 7 Arundel Street, London WC2R 3DX (phone 020 7240 7971).

Time is right for Voicepath

Although Voicepath (01926 821900) has been active in the digital dictation field since the late 1990s, the company's head of sales Francis Davis believes the market has really only now caught up with the concept it has long been advocating. "When we started, we had to educate law firms on not only the merits of digital dictation over analogue tape but also the concept of outsourcing transcription. Five years on, firms are familiar with the benefits of DDS and are starting to look for ways to drive them further."

Davis cites the growing interest in outsourcing transcription to remote locations, such as India and South Africa, as evidence that Voicepath's time has come but without the attendant security, time zone, data protection and 'political' issues associated with a Third World transcription service.

Voicepath, which only operates in the legal sector, has a network of teleworkers in the UK who can turnaround dictation in as little as 30 minutes. (Unlike some internet based services, Voicepath does not use speech recognition to automate the transcription process but relies entirely upon people.)

However this is only part of the story as Voicepath can also provide the entire dictation hardware and workflow software infrastructure, including integration with any inhouse document management, to provide a complete ASP (application service provider) solution for a minimal - in some instances zero - capital outlay, that can reduce a firm's reliance on secretarial staff and replaces it with a per line based transcription fee.

■ By way of complementing its services, Voicepath last year acquired Comtec Translations (01926 335681) which specialises in the translation of business to business documents. With the Comtec link, a lawyer can now dictate in English and within hours receive a transcription English and the relevant foreign language. Comtec support all the major business languages, including Chinese, as well as those of the EU accession states. **www.voicepath.net** - **www.comtectran.com**

Wide area access for DigiScribe

Crescendo, the developers of the DigiScribe digital dictation system, have launched a wide area services (CWAS) version of the system, which means users can now log on to the office server from any location to dictate and transcribe in realtime. To prevent against the loss or corruption of data, voice dictation is saved to the CWAS server on a second by second basis. DigiScribe is distributed in the UK by DigiVoice (0870 770 1717).

DDS case study now on the web

The Insider's web site now carries a case study on Wedlake Bell's experiences with its BigHand digital dictation system. Topics covered include how do firms address the cultural and technical issues associated with a DDS rollout? The study can be downloaded free as a PDF file from **www.legaltechnology.com**

Wheeler & Perceptive to provide Classified data

Perceptive Technology (020 7618 6440) and legal marketing specialists Wheeler Associates have formed a joint venture to deliver an online service for accessing, analysing and interpreting feedback from client satisfaction surveys.

Called Classified, the service is based on Perceptive's Mentor e-business system, which will automate the analysis of client satisfaction data, manage the feedback mechanisms and produce graphical analysis of key performance indicators. Wheeler Associates will design and manage the survey, work with firms to set the performance indicators, conduct and gather data from phone or face-to-face interviews and interpret the results.

KM - US law firms still lagging behind in the know how stakes

According to a new report published earlier this summer by the University of Florida's Legal Technology Institute, US firms are still lagging behind the UK in terms of the sophistication of their knowledge management operations. However the report also suggests it is only a matter of time before the Americans catch up, as many of the problems they are currently struggling with mirror the issues UK firms had to tackle two-to-three years ago.

For example, of the firms with a KM project in place, nearly 80% said their efforts were primarily limited to their document management systems and 90% felt IT was critical to the success of a KM initiative. This reflects the view that also used to be prevalent in the UK - that KM was just a matter of installing a powerful enough search engine.

This probably also explains why nearly one fifth of US firms with KM had systems containing upwards of 20,000 documents. This contrasts with the situation in the UK where it is now recognised that 'big software' is not the answer and that the success of KM depends upon being exclusive rather than inclusive in the choice of documents. In fact it has been suggested that even a magic circle firm may really only need as few as 6000 documents in its know how system.

In addition to technology, US firms are also stumbling over such issues as strategy and return on investment. For example, 40% said their KM projects were being held back by the lack of a coherent strategy over what the KM initiative was meant to achieve and nearly 30% said they had not invested in KM because they could not agree on how to calculate the financial benefit. It is also evident that even where a strategy was agreed, this was frequently a substitute for obtaining an appropriate buy-in from a firm's management, fee earners or support staff. Not surprisingly, 44% of firms complained that they had been supplied with insufficient resources to achieve their KM goals.

■ The report was based on a survey of 300 US law firms by PwC's Legal Research Center - the survey was sponsored by the Tikit Group (020 7400 3737).

Fresh on the radar - new product sightings

■ **BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE REPORTS** Irwin Mitchell has become the first major firm in the UK to install a suite of business intelligence reporting applications from UK-based financial information specialists IMPAQ (01483 466900).

The new IMPAQ software, which has been integrated with Irwin Mitchell's Axxia Arista PMS, will be used to automate and disseminate key commercial data and financial reports, including disbursement, work in progress and monthly profit levels, to all levels of management with the firm's five offices via an intranet.

The IMPAQ system contains three main elements: UAnalyse, an MIS providing full drill-down facilities to monitor different aspects of the firm's performance; UView, which consolidates reports and allows anytime, anywhere access; and Proactive, which send users automatic alerts on key business indicators via Outlook.

Commenting on the new system, the firm's head of management accounts Stuart Robinson said "Traditionally firms have not been so strong on reporting and using the data generated by their IT systems for the maximum business benefit. In particular we recognised that a significant amount of our non-value added time was being spent on producing and distributing cumbersome paper based reports." **www.impaq.co.uk**

■ **DIGITAL STORAGE MADE SIMPLE** CJB Tech (01889 564358) is now offering document image processing services to law firms. CJB recently installed a Canon system at Hardy Miles & Titterton, in the Derby area, which the firm is using to transfer its paper and microfilm archives onto CD-Rom.

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Legal technology events diary

■ JULY 11, MANCHESTER. VoicePower is holding a series of seminars looking at the WinScribe digital dictation workflow system and how it can be used by law firms. The Manchester event is followed by similar presentations in York (15th), Otley (16th), Leeds (17th) and Sheffield (29th). For details call VoicePower on 01943 468000.

■ JULY 23, LONDON. Knowledge management of external content - lunchtime briefing on the integration of external content with internal KM systems. The briefing (which starts 11:45 am & ends with a buffet lunch) has been organised by KM specialists Vrisko at St Alphage House, near Moorgate, and includes presentations by Robin Hall of Linklaters and former Lexis epublishing guru Ivan Darby. For details call Steve D'Arcy at Vrisko on 020 7448 9713 or email **sdarcy@vrisko.com**

■ AUGUST 18-to-21, BOCA RATON, FLORIDA. LawNet - along with February's LegalTech show in New York, this is now the must-attend legal IT event in the US.
　　　　　　　　www.peertopeer.org

■ SEPTEMBER 16 & 17, NEW YORK. LegalTech Fall at the New York Hilton. For more details visit **www.legaltechshow.com**

■ SEPTEMBER 25 & 26, LONDON. The Law Society's annual conference at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre. This year the event includes sessions on court modernisation and IT.

■ OCTOBER 15 & 16, LEEDS. The Legal IT 2003 Leeds exhibition. For more information visit **www.legalitshow.com**

■ OCTOBER 15-to-17, GLENEAGLES. The 'GlenLegal' Legal IT forum at the Gleneagles Hotel in Scotland. The event is now being run by the Informa Group. For details contact commercial director Stephen Parrott on +44 (0)20 7017 4043.

■ NOVEMBER 28, MANCHESTER. The Association of Personal Injury Lawyers IT fair at the Crowne Plaza. **www.apil.com**

Web site effectiveness - still not hitting the mark

Following on from the Insider's March survey, **see issue 146**, on the way law firms handled telephone enquiries from prospective clients, last month we asked communications benchmarkers Performance House (01768 866050) to turn their attention to the internet and look at the effectiveness of firms' web sites.

Performance House have devised a statistical measurement framework for analysing email and web communications, with the emphasis on the practical use of sites rather than their look and feel. Using this approach, out of a sample of 15 mid-sized firms, the top performing sites were: RooksRider.co.uk (86.4%), closely followed by HobsonAudley.co.uk (85.8%), Wollastons.co.uk (85.1%) and MemeryCrystal.co.uk (83.9%).

However, looking at the more general conclusions to be drawn from the survey, the results suggest that some firms have not followed up their initial investments in web sites with effective communications procedures that actually make them useful from the point of view of the visitor - and potential client. For example, only half of the firms in the sample carried case studies on their sites to help explain the work they do, the structure of some sites made it difficult to identify a firm's areas of specialist practice, and 25% of sites did not contain any links to or names of partners at the firm.

Leaving aside the firm whose email links were broken, all the sites contained an email 'mailto' facility for requesting specific information. But how effective was it?

When we looked at phone communications earlier in the year, the results were appalling, with 62% of firms not fulfilling their promises to supply further information. When it came to making similar requests via the web, the response was slightly better with this time just under 59% failing to deliver. It may be an improvement but hardly one to shout about and just goes to confirm suspicions that most law firm CRM (client relationship) strategies are undermined by poor execution.

Email management news in brief

■ **LEGATO GOES IN AT RALEYS**
Raleys Solicitors, who specialise in large scale group actions - the Barnsley firm is currently acting for 18,000 miners with chest disease and another 9500 with vibration white finger, has selected the Legato EmailXtender email management and archiving system to handle the storage and retrieval of its growing volume of email. The system was selected with the help of Sunderland-based Scenta Consulting (0191 501 8321).

■ **FOUR MORE FIRMS SIGN UP FOR DESPATCHBOX**
DespatchBox (0207 520 9310) has announced four more wins for its DDX email encryption software. The four new sites are Olswang, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, Pinsents and DWF (Davies Wallis Foyster). DDX is also available through Tikit.

Sonic stealing the lead in the firewall stakes

As 'always on' intranets, extranets and email systems come to play an increasingly vital role in law firm IT infrastructures, so the installation of firewalls to provide secure, remote connectivity has moved on from being a nice-to-have to a must-have requirement. But, which system should a firm go for?

Although there are dozens of products out there, including the Checkpoint, Netgear, WatchGuard Firebox and Cisco PIX systems, the one that currently seems to becoming the firewall of choice for many firms is SonicWALL.

For example, following a review of the rival WatchGuard and Checkpoint systems, Bournemouth based Lester Aldridge installed a SonicWALL PRO 3000-series VPN (virtual private networking) device at its head office in 2002 after coming to the conclusion that SonicWALL also offered the best range of products to suit its future network expansion plans. This has included the subsequent installation of SonicWALL SOHO appliances to provide secure point-to-point datacoms links with new offices and major clients and business partners.

Commenting on the benefits of the firewall, the firm's head of IT Neil Prevett said "Deployment of SonicWALL's security appliances in the network has made a huge difference to our day to day business. VPN access has helped us introduce more flexible working practices for staff and save money through greater productivity and lower connection costs," because VPN also allows remote users to connect to the practice network from home or anywhere else at local call rates.

The Lester Aldridge system was supplied by SonicWALL reseller Keyfort (08707 273535). **www.sonicwall.com**

Web deals on Merseyside

As a result of being awarded supplier status under a new EU backed business development initiative, Liverpool-based web designers the Mando Group (0151 281 4040) can now offer law firms in the Greater Merseyside area (including the Wirral) up to 40% funding towards the cost of a web site design project.

New intranet for Wilberforce set

Wilberforce Chambers in Lincoln's Inn last week went live with a new intranet designed by Whitespace Software (020 7257 6309). Along with providing access to internal case documents, library and administrative information and chambers diaries, the senior clerk Declan Redmond said one of the driving forces behind the project had been the need for the "efficient centralisation" of the management of information, within a set of chambers that was spread across five separate locations and frequently involved both barristers and clerks wasting time chasing around looking for information. **www.whitespace.co.uk**

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Legal trade shows - the fallout continues

The fallout from the item on legal IT trade shows in the last issue of the Insider continues, with the almost universal reaction of readers indicating that the traditional exhibition has clearly lost its allure for both visitors and exhibitors. But, the picture is not entirely black and white.

For example, although the organisers of the LMS conference at the Birmingham NEC last month have now given full refunds to the suppliers who took stands there, Cordial Events, who run the Legal IT events in London and Leeds, say they have been swamped by demands from exhibitors wanting to book larger stands at next year's (11 & 12 February) London event. Cordial have also switched media sponsors for their events. Out go *Legal Week* and *Legal IT* magazines and in comes The Lawyer Group on an exclusive three year deal.

We are also hearing nothing but compliments about the quality of the delegates and the format of the Ark Group's Lex Connect event in Amsterdam. Next year's Lex Connect is scheduled to take place in Amsterdam on 1 & 2 March 2004 and is certainly an event more suppliers should seriously consider, not least because it is would seem that English is also the language of legal technology in Northern Europe.

Apparently, undaunted by the problems other organisers have been facing in recent weeks, the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) has just announced that it is planning to run an IT fair at its business management conference in Manchester on 28 November. And, the Insider has just learned that another group is planning to hold a new format legal IT event in London next January.

As to the persistent rumour that the Legal Software Suppliers Association might start running its own trade shows rather than continue working with commercial event organisers, LSSA chairman Alan Richardson told the Insider that "it was just a rumour. We discussed exhibitions at the recent LSSA annual general meeting. Whilst the ICC event (last month's LegalTech Solicitors in Birmingham) was probably the worst attended anyone had experienced, all agreed the Legal IT London event was still beneficial." But, Richardson went on to warn that LSSA did have reservations about the value of regional trade shows.

New client verification service

Callcredit (0113 244 1555 - a joint venture between the Skipton Building Society and Dun & Bradstreet) has launched two new services - CallML for new and CallVerify for existing private clients - to help law firms comply with the new and draconian Money Laundering Regulations that come into force later this year. CallVerify is a bureau service that allows firms to submit existing client files for checking on a batch basis, while CallML is a web-based online service that can be used to confirm the identity of new clients individually on a 'pay as you go' basis.

Cameron aims to offer 'liquid' consultancy

Neil Cameron, who for the best part of a decade dominated the legal IT consultancy scene, has teamed up with fellow independent consultants Jill Bazalgette, Mike Fisher, Clive Morris and Tim Travers, to launch the Neil Cameron Consulting Group "with a shared vision of providing independent and indispensable added value advice to law firms."

Cameron believes "law firms are crying out for a single source of multi-disciplinary complementary skills they can turn to for opinionated and independent advice. This is just as likely to be ad hoc advisory work at key stages of a firm's strategic exploitation of new systems and working practices, which we like to call liquid consulting, as it is old style system procurement."

www.neilcameronconsulting.com

Buzzword corner...

ACCESS HETEROGENEITY - the phrase comes courtesy of Darren Schofield of Citrix, speaking at a Solution 6 seminar in London last month, and sums up the need for a modern network to be sufficiently flexible to cope with ever changing access locations - office, branch, home, on the road and from a client's premises - as well as a proliferation of access devices, including desktop PCs, laptops, PDAs, wireless and GPRS phones.