



# Thorpe quits Elite for Tikit

In a move that has stunned erstwhile colleagues and caused widespread celebration among competitors, David Thorpe has quit Thomson Elite and moved to the newly created post of sales director at the Tikit Group. Thorpe, a consummate salesman who almost single-handedly established Elite in the UK as the market leading practice management system for larger law firms, resigned shortly after the parent Thomson Corporation parachuted in former Sweet & Maxwell online publishing specialist Jitendra (JV) Valera as vice president international for Elite.

Thorpe, who formally joins Tikit at the beginning of July, will be heading up sales across the full portfolio of the company's product. One consequence of this change is it frees business development director and company founder Liam Flanagan – who now becomes commercial development director – to focus on new product initiatives and innovations, including projects involving document assembly and productivity.

In other Tikit news, following the acquisition of ResSoft by Tikit, the support functions of both companies have been merged into a new client services group headed by Steve Knowles. After 30 years of working in IT, Chris Hoad is leaving Tikit for a combination of lifestyle reasons and to pursue other interests. And, Krista Moore is joining Tikit as marketing manager at the end of this month.

Meanwhile back at Thomson Elite, JV Valera has assumed responsibility for the day-to-day management of the UK and European operations and will also be developing business strategy, including growth opportunities in the UK and European markets. In addition Derk Kropholler, previously with Timesoft and Solution 6 in Continental Europe, has been appointed UK sales manager.

## DWF go to BigHand

Top 50 firm DWF is to roll out the BigHand digital dictation system to over 400 users at its Manchester, Liverpool and Warrington offices. Although the firm had previously run a 55-user SRC/WinScribe DDS pilot, the firm's IT director Phil Whitehead subsequently opted to switch to BigHand. Among the reasons cited for the change were that BigHand was felt to be more server efficient, could offer more user friendly management reporting options and had an ongoing partnership with market leading case management systems supplier Visualfiles.

## Baker Mack IP move

Baker & McKenzie announced earlier this week that it had replaced all of its locally installed trademark databases with a single web-based IP management system that will be accessible to over 400 users in all 57 of its international offices that provide intellectual property advice.

Called Global IP Manager (GIPM), the new system is a customised version of the IP Online (0118 958 2002) WebTMS product. GIPM runs on SQL server and has direct links to online patent office databases, as well as integrated imaging for logos and device marks, multilingual data entry with support for non-Roman character sets, and links to the firm's Elite PMS and document management systems.  
[www.ippo.com](http://www.ippo.com)

## Insider website gets new look

This week sees the Insider website relaunch with its first major redesign in over two years. All the old favourites are still there – breaking news, the legal IT jobsboard, the searchable archives and the Insider top 250 chart – but with a cleaner and more accessible interface. In addition, over the next few months the know-how section will be expanded to create the definitive resource for buyers guides, white papers and legal technology information.  
[www.legaltechnology.com](http://www.legaltechnology.com)

## News in brief

### Cutting back on storage space

East Anglian firm Norton Peskett has rolled out Invu (01604 859893) digital document storage software to replace its old hard copy records management. With seven branch offices and two storage sites, the firm had been experiencing up to 24 hours delay in locating archived files. Invu has been integrated with the firm's SOS PMS.

[www.invu.net](http://www.invu.net)

### Conveyancers switch to DPS

Brighton conveyancing firm ACT Law has replaced its Quill accounts software with DPS Software's Cashier system.

### Whitehill launches XML layouts

Whitehill Technologies, best known for its bill formatting software, has launched Layout Designer, a graphical interface for the creation of style sheets that control the presentation of XML data. The new system can be run as a stand-alone application or used as a component part of Whitehill's xml-Transport data conversion software

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

### Oyez & Videss crack SDLT code

Coinciding with HM Revenue & Customs approval of Oyez's new barcode SDLT1 form, Videss has released support for the form to all its case management software users as a free upgrade. Old style Phase 1 substitute forms will no longer be accepted by HMRC after 1st July.

### Cheque printing on a LaserJet

Transam (020 7837 4050) is marketing secure, APACS approved, MICR (magnetic ink character recognition) cheque printers based on the HP LaserJet range. The snappily-named JetCAPS MicrDIMM Pro lets you print cheques on a standard LaserJet equipped with magnetic ink and secure printing firmware.

### Professional Plus phone number

A typo last time meant we gave the wrong phone number for Professional Plus, the correct number is 020 7729 2306.

## Intervolve hope to be new face in legal PMS

Wellingborough-based Intervolve (01933 666000) is hoping to become the next big thing in legal practice management software with its new Exemplar suite of integrated solutions for solicitors.

Exemplar, which began life as a bespoke development for the firm of Battens by Microsoft systems house Computer Productivity Ltd (Intervolve is a trading name to avoid confusion with another legal systems suppliers also called CPL) has at its core Microsoft's Great Plains financial management system plus a Solicitors Accounts Rules compliant client ledger and fee earner desktop. The system, which has a strong emphasis on performance management information reporting, has been built around Microsoft's .NET framework and SharePoint so it can also provide the foundation for a practice-wide portal. In addition, Intervolve can also offer integration with Microsoft's CRM client relationship management system and Invu digital document storage software.

Exemplar is slated to be rolled out in Battens' Lawyers at Work personal injury claims division this July, with a firm wide implementation to replace the incumbent Axxia system to follow. Intervolve is also working directly with Microsoft on a number of legal-market specific marketing initiatives over the next 12 months.

[www.intervolve.co.uk](http://www.intervolve.co.uk)

## Eclipse signs up for PISCES

Eclipse Legal Systems (01274 704100) has become an associate member of PISCES, the Property Information Systems Common Exchange Standard body. A number of conveyancing and remortgage service providers already use Eclipse Proclaim case management software, including national heavyweights such as 300-staff Barnetts Solicitors whose senior partner Richard Barnett is the chair of the PISCES lenders conveyancing working group.

In other Eclipse news, Edinburgh personal injury claims firm Gebals has upgraded from its old Eclipse Chase software to the latest Proclaim system. The upgrade brings the total number of Proclaim users to in excess of 5000. And, Eclipse will be previewing the next release of its Proclaim case management software in Leeds (5th July) and Surrey (Horley, 12th July). New features include improved reporting, a comprehensive audit trail, XML import/export developments and plans for a new user interface look and feel.

## New St Albans firm breaks away with Elite

New solicitors practice SA Law, which was created when the St Albans office of Pictons broke away from the rest of the Home Counties firm to create a 35 fee earner private client and niche commercial practice, has selected Thomson Elite to supply its new accounts and practice management system. Although the former parent Pictons was already an established Elite site, SA Law is still one of the smallest firms in the UK to-date to go with Elite instead of one of the more traditional High Street suppliers.

In other Elite news... 65 fee earner Wright Hassall in Leamington Spa has chosen Elite to replace its old AIM Evolution accounts system. And Thomson Elite has announced a series of enhancements to its Business Intelligence software, including 'right time' access to performance data and reports on a daily basis.

## HR arena starts to hot up

Betesh Fox in Manchester has become the latest firm to sign up for Laserform's HRnet personnel management and CPD administration system. However Laserform could soon face some competition from Swindon-based Infosupport Centre (01793 619238) whose HR software – which is already in use at Ricksons in Preston and Browne Jacobson in Nottingham – can also provide 'self service' facilities for staff and CPD tracking. Infosupport's managing director is John O'Neill, no stranger to the legal IT sector as he was the MD of Avenue Legal Systems until he sold the company to Technology For Business (TFB). [www.infosupport.co.uk](http://www.infosupport.co.uk)

## IOS launch InterAlia Lite

IOS Limited (020 8249 6530), who began life as Integrated Office Solutions providing Microsoft Word macro services, have just launched a 'Lite' version of their InterAlia for Lawyers document production and file management system. Like the main system, InterAlia Lite provides firms with a faster way to produce Word documents and implement standards in style, formatting and document storage, but in a slimmed-down version specifically targeted at firms with up to 30 users. Features include structured file management, search facilities, label and court document formats, standard paragraph numbering, precedent management and automatic invoice calculation. Pricing starts at £3000 for a 5 user licence, including customised document layouts, training and installation. [www.iosl.co.uk](http://www.iosl.co.uk)

## News in brief

### Cromwells go end-to-end with Axxia

Cromwell Solicitors in Birmingham has selected Axxia to provide its new front and back office software. Along with accounts and desktop time recording, the firm will be providing all staff with access to case management software. The firm selected Axxia to provide an end-to-end solution rather than go with multiple vendors.

### Cobbetts Incasso and Linetime

Cobbetts' specialist debt recovery division Incasso has selected Linetime's Deptime SQL software to support its operations.

### SearchFlow and xit2 create new interface

NLIS search provider SearchFlow and IT company xit2 have announced plans for a co-operative venture to deliver technology that will allow any size of law firm to create home information packs.

[www.xit2.com](http://www.xit2.com)

### Seddons select VoIP solution from hSo

West End law firm Seddons has implemented a VoIP (voice over internet protocol) telecoms platform based on the Voice+ system from managed service provider hSo. Seddons, who previously relied on a single ISDN30 system, say within two months of switching to hSo they witnessed a 24% saving on call costs and they no longer have the average of one-to-two days of downtime each month they had with the old ISDN system.

[www.hso.uk.com](http://www.hso.uk.com)

## 89% want SMS texting

Despite the perception that mobile phone text messaging is a lost art to anyone over the age of 30, a new survey conducted by conveyancing case management systems supplier ConveyanceLink has found that 86% of home movers want to monitor progress by online/extranet tracking and 89% would like to be kept in touch by SMS. Worryingly, the survey also found that 22% had not arranged a mortgage at the time of instructing a solicitor.

## People & Places

### **New IT director at Bircham Dyson Bell**

Central London firm Bircham Dyson Bell has appointed John Le Huquet as its new IT director. He has been with the firm as a consultant since the beginning of the year and prior to that was IT director of the real estate group Hillier Parker, later CBRE.

### **Ten years with Needham & James**

West Midlands IT solutions and training company Humber Ashford Associates has just celebrated 10 years of working with Needham & James in Stratford-upon-Avon. The firm was one of Humber Ashford's first customers when the company opened for business in 1995.

### **New IT & media head for Patent Office**

Mark Pacey, previously the director of information systems at Companies House, has joined the Patent Office Board as director for IT & communications. Along with IT responsibilities (in addition to receiving over 56,000 applications for trademarks and patents last year, the Patent Office had to load information from over 650,000 forms on its database) Pacey will be taking charge of the Awareness, Information & Media Team, which delivers a range of intellectual property training and information facilities.

### **Maclays' RNIB accreditation first**

Maclay Murray & Spens has become the first UK firm to have its website accredited under the Royal National Institute for the Blind's 'see it right' accessibility guidelines. The firm already makes documents available in a Braille format.

[www.mms.co.uk](http://www.mms.co.uk)

### **Trustworthy computing over dinner**

Transam and Microsoft are running a series of dinners in London this summer to explain Microsoft's new 'trustworthy computing' security initiative. The events take the form of a roundtable forum, with places limited to 10 guests. Contact Bev Nicholls at Transam (020 7837 4050) to reserve a place for either 12th or 26th July.

## DDS news in brief

### **Openness wins Nflow its latest DDS order**

West Midlands firm Sydney Mitchell has just rolled out an Nflow (01376 532266) digital dictation system to 75 users in three offices – and eliminated a large transcription backlog within three weeks of installing the software. Commenting on the deal, practice manager Sarah Archer said "the Nflow team clearly demonstrated they knew exactly what they were doing. More importantly, they did not try to wrap the solution up in expensive consultancy. In fact they were the only company to make an effort to give us a comprehensive and competitive price from day one." The firm's IT manager Rowan Alys added that Nflow were also "the one supplier who showed willing to integrate their DDS with our other systems."

### **Outsourcer aims to provide a more dedicated service**

OutSec (0870 243 0294), a UK outsourced transcription and secretarial services company now targeting the legal sector, has gained Investors in People (IIP) accreditation. The company has also developed its own web based file transfer system (called FileManager) so authors can upload their dictation from the office, at home or even from an internet cafe. However managing director Vanessa Phillips says the element that really differentiates OutSec from other digital dictation transcription bureaux is that its panel of legal secretaries is managed in such a way that firms can have regular access to a dedicated secretary familiar with their worktypes and transcription requirements.

[www.outsec.co.uk](http://www.outsec.co.uk)

### **Nash & Co select Crescendo**

Nash & Co in Plymouth has become the latest firm to install a DigiScribe XL digital dictation system from Crescendo Systems (0870 770 1717). The firm's IT manager Simon Whitaker said a deciding factor was the system's support for real-time dictation from anywhere on any device, including laptops fitted with wireless VPN cards. The Insider website's KM & white papers section now includes a collection of case studies from Crescendo on the use of DigiScribe at law firms and inhouse legal departments, including the NHS Scotland and Hewitsons.

### **Penningtons go multi-site with BigHand DDS**

Penningtons has just rolled out the BigHand (020 793 8200) digital dictation system on a multi-site basis to 400 staff at five different locations. Meanwhile, at the other end of the scale, two partner Hamilton Davies in Stevenage has also installed BigHand, the firm citing the benefits of greater efficiency and no more of the technical problems associated with tape "that would eat up staff time".

## Speech recognition gets another chance

Over the past 15 years speech recognition has been in and out of favour more times than we can count. Its latest champion is XoVox Communications (01142 011361), a company that brings together the skills of Chris Ford and Dave Kitchener (both ex-Philips) with CEO Howard Briggs's Volexia team and, in a consultancy role, Joe Murphy (ex-G2 and Philips).

Although XoVox can offer stand-alone speech recognition based on the Dragon 8 system, where the company differentiates itself is by working on integration projects. The best-known of these – called LoaSys – is an integration with the LegalDocs document creation system but XoVox is also working with a number of digital dictation suppliers. In the latter scenario, speech recognition runs in the background to build up voice profiles from dictation files, so it can then be switched when an author needs the option of a full speech recognition facility.

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

In other news... Crescendo Systems has unveiled a system that has Philips SpeechMagic running in the background to Crescendo's own digital dictation software, and, the Insider is currently trialling IBM's ViaVoice software.

## DDS exporter licence clarified ?

Over the past few months we have been hearing confusing reports about the Winscribe exporter licence. This is the fee charged to law firms who want to use the Winscribe digital dictation software but outsource some of their transcription work to third-party agencies. On paper it sounds reasonable enough but two organisations have now told the Insider they have been quoted £32,000 a year for exporter licences – this is on top of the charges they would be paying to transcription agencies – and it is apparent some of Winscribe's would-be competitors are stirring up the FUD (fear, uncertainty & doubt) factor over the exporter licence to their competitive advantage.

Winscribe describe such claims as deliberately misleading and point out the exporter licence is actually a one-off (not a monthly recurring) fee based on the number of hours (charged at £40 per hour) of transcription to be outsourced each month. So, if a firm wants to export a maximum of 15 hours transcription a month, it will pay a once-only charge of £600. On this basis, a firm would have to outsource an improbable 800 hours of dictation a month to incur an exporter licence fee of £32,000.

## News in brief

### Clifford Chance catch Redbus

In a six-way tender, Clifford Chance has selected Redbus Interhouse SA of France to provide a fully secured environment to house the firm's core southern and eastern European IT infrastructure and dedicated servers, which support 10 offices across continental Europe.

[www.interhouse.net](http://www.interhouse.net)

### Addleshaw Goddard into InTechnology

Addleshaw Goddard has awarded a contract to InTechnology (01423 850000) to provide support for the firm's wide area network through InTechnology's managed services offerings, including their LANnet network and renting co-location space at InTechnology's datacentre.

### Dentons go with patch management

Denton Wilde Sapte has selected the SUM security update manager system from Configuresoft to automatically update and distribute Microsoft patches. The firm estimates SUM has cut by 80% the time IT staff used to spend on patch management.

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

## Insider Job of the week

### Business Development, Laserform

Laserform is looking to recruit a Business Development Manager for its electronic forms division, based at Lymm, Cheshire. The successful applicant will be responsible for building & maintaining business relationships with key legal practices countrywide. Salary negotiable. Please apply with current CV to Mike Boynes at [mike.boynes@laserform.co.uk](mailto:mike.boynes@laserform.co.uk)

### The Insider Jobs Board

Looking for legal IT staff, including posts in management, sales, development, KM, support, marketing, accounts or training? The Insider Jobs Board has the best choice of legal IT jobs available in the UK and you can post your vacancies free of charge by emailing [jobs@legaltechnology.com](mailto:jobs@legaltechnology.com)

## News in brief

### **BLP signs up for PISCES data centre**

Berwin Leighton Paisner has become the first UK law firm to sign up for the recently launched PISCES Data Centre, which was developed by real estate systems specialist Calvis. The software allows disparate databases to communicate with each other and so, in effect, acts as a central repository for information relating to real estate transactions. The PISCES Data Centre can also be used to process filers that are not PISCES compliant

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

### **DPS joins LSSA**

DPS Software has become the latest company to join the UK legal IT industry body LSSA (Legal Software Suppliers Association). DPS managing director Osman Ismail said "LSSA has gone from strength to strength and we are delighted to join the association. Co-operation between suppliers in the legal market can only lead to better software and services for customers."

### **48% still on Win2k**

According to new research by AssetMetrix Labs, most organisations cannot take full advantage of Microsoft's latest productivity tools because they are still running older versions of the Windows operating system on their desktops. AssetMetrix estimate Windows 2000 is the predominant OS on 48% of desktops, compared with just 38% on Windows XP. We'll draw a veil over the 14% still running Windows 95 or 98!

Despite the fact Windows 2000 starts moving towards end-of-life on 30th June (when it leaves Microsoft's main support phase and moves onto extended support – which is likely to mean no more new full service packs) AssetMetrix believe most Win2k sites will now hold off migrating to XP and wait to see what the new Longhorn operating system can offer when Microsoft launches it next year.

## nQueue win as Murray mints experience

Speechly Bircham has become the first UK law firm to install a cost recovery system from Phoenix-based nQueue Inc. The firm has installed the nQPrint print tracking and cost capture package, with the sale and implementation handled by nQueue's exclusive UK channel partner Tikit.

Rupert Murray, one of the pioneers of the UK cost recovery market – he was with Equitrac for over 10 years – has joined nQueue as global vice president of sales. In his new role Murray (who will be clocking up an impressive air miles tally, as he will be commuting between the UK and US on a regular basis) will direct the development of nQueue's sales both in the US and internationally, as the company pitches itself against the established players Copitrac and Equitrac and the newer contender Billback.

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

## Aderant rebrand info suite

As part of a rollout of a more complete and interactive set of product suites, Aderant has announced the rebranding and enhancement of its Business Intelligence software. Now called Aderant Executive Office, the latest release (7.0) includes a number of enhancements to its profitability, budgeting, opportunity calculator, web publisher and analytics modules. Clayton Utz in Australia, which recently rolled out Budgeting 7.0, is already reporting that the system has reduced its budget development cycle by nearly 40% from eight weeks to five weeks, with partners and managers now able to focus on the business issues rather than consolidating spreadsheets.

In other Aderant news, the Dutch firm Hekkelman has selected CMS.Net as the basis of its new practice management system. The 49 fee earner firm will be rolling out the software at its Arnhem and Nijmegen offices in conjunction with local Aderant reseller Timesoft.

## Iron Mountain's data mountain

Following its recent acquisition of Connected Corporation, the Iron Mountain outsourced records management group has formed an electronic vaulting and digital business unit. The company already holds over 9 petabytes of digital records for customers. One petabyte equals one thousand, million, million bytes of data: the equivalent of 500 million floppy disks or 20 million 4-drawer filing cabinets holding a total of 500 billion A4 pages of standard printed text.

[www.ironmountain.co.uk](http://www.ironmountain.co.uk)

## Video conferencing the software way

Video conferencing is a technology that has never enjoyed the success it perhaps deserves however a new system, currently being piloted by several firms – a first order is imminent – could revive the concept. Called Marratech, it is marketed and supported in the legal sector by Image Lynx (0800 763 8942) which in recent years has been responsible for installing video conferencing technology across the Scottish courts system.

Marratech differs from the competition in that it is a server software solution delivering straight to the PC desktop, rather than via proprietary hardware, and is sufficiently flexible that users can log in and out of conferences as and when they need to participate. In fact Image Lynx founder Charlie Duthie says it is probably better described as an always-on interactive collaboration tool within a 'virtual office' that could include different members of a fee earning team and even clients. Marratech also supports an interactive whiteboard facility.

Image Lynx was set up by Duthie, a former sales director of H G Usher, and now includes Michael Ballard among its team. The Marratech client software will run Windows 2000/XP, Mac OSX and Linux desktops and, because it can be downloaded free or accessed directly from a browser, there are no restrictions to bringing additional parties into a conference, providing they have broadband and a suitable microphone and USB web camera.

[www.marratech.co.uk](http://www.marratech.co.uk)

[www.imagelynx.co.uk](http://www.imagelynx.co.uk)

## Longhurst joins Hummingbird

Hummingbird Legal Solutions has appointed Paul Longhurst as director of business consultancy services. He will also have responsibility for leading the professional services team. Longhurst, whose track record includes senior roles with Allen & Overy and Herbert Smith, was most recently with ResSoft and Tikit.

In other news... Allen & Overy is deploying the LegalKey records management system to manage physical files at its London and New York offices. The rollout is slated for completion by the end of this summer. Olswang, also looking at LegalKey, is planning to start migrating from DOCS to DM5 at the end of July. And, Insider sources report that the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg is currently beta-testing Hummingbird DM6 with a view to rolling it out later this year.

## Recognising patterns

Faced with evaluating 35Gb of restored email data relating to fraud allegations, Lovells selected FTI Consulting to assist them with an e-discovery project. FTI recommended Attenex Patterns software to identify potential key documents to be reviewed and subject matter coded in a Ringtail database. As previously reported, Attenex uses pattern recognition to cluster related materials so fee earners can rapidly cull the relevant from the irrelevant.

In the Lovells' case this meant reducing 2 million documents to just 11,000 in three months at a cost of \$1 million, compared with the original estimate, using traditional methods, of a one year timescale and a total cost of \$4-5 million.

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

## Lit support news

### All change at Millnet

Litigation support specialist Millnet has appointed Bella Wilkinson as its new head of technical services. Wilkinson takes over from Nigel Murray, who has left to set up his own e-disclosure service, and will head the technical side of Millnet's litigation support activities, including the continuing development of the company's DocBuster suite of e-disclosure tools.

Previously the litigation support manager at Ince & Co, Wilkinson has also worked at Freshfields as well as US litigation support vendor Array Technology.

[www.millnet.co.uk](http://www.millnet.co.uk)

### LIT Group expanding into EU

The London team at LIT Group has completed a first wave of projects for a major City firm and is now in the planning phase with several EU firms. LIT Group's UK managing consultant Mark Burrows said e-discovery products such as Attenex were starting to take off as firms realised that electronic data could be processed and reviewed at up to 10 times the speed of manual review methods.

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

## Publishing news

### Try before you buy ancillary relief

Family law specialists Class Publishing (01652 652222) has launched a new and enhanced version of its Quantum and Quantum Pro systems for preparing Form E and ancillary relief applications in matrimonial proceedings. The software, which was designed with input from Maggie Rae of Clintons and Nicholas Mostyn QC, is priced from £225 and available on a 35 day free trial on CD or as a download from the Class website.

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

### British Library research resource

The British Library has launched a new pay-as-you-go research resource. Called British Library Direct, it provides online access to a database of articles from 20,000 international journals, including 500 legal titles. Once a user has located a relevant article, they can pay by credit card and have the full text delivered to their desktop within two hours. The British Library say the new service should appeal to small-to-mid sized firms who need an occasional research facility but cannot justify an annual subscription to one of the legal publishers' online services.

<http://direct.bl.uk>

### E-learning from Thomson NETg

Thomson NETg (020 8994 4404), part of the Thomson Corporation that also owns Sweet & Maxwell and Elite, has begun targeting the legal market with its range of over 1700 different IT e-learning courses. These include basic Microsoft Office courses through to intensive 'boot camps' that allow IT staff to quickly update their IT skills. NETg also offer courses on 'soft' skills, such as business planning and presentation. NETg say e-learning courses are a cost effective alternative to traditional instructor-led classroom courses, not least because they can cut training times by as much as 50%, which in turn means less time spent by staff out of the office attending courses.

[www.netg.com/catalog/default.asp](http://www.netg.com/catalog/default.asp)

## Law librarians put concerns to LexisNexis

Amid growing concerns that legal publishers LexisNexis Butterworths were planning 'a very large hike in price rises this year on subscription services', earlier this summer the Legal Information Group (LIG) of the British & Irish Association of Law Librarians (BIALL) held a meeting with senior Lexis directors in the UK to raise these issues.

Although Lexis assured LIG that there were no plans for major price rises, they did concede that 'there may have been some communication problems with individual sales representatives' which they hope to remedy by reviewing their training procedures and, where necessary, providing additional training to sales staff and account managers.

In the wake of the recent sale of part of the Butterworths portfolio to Tottel and similar now resolved uncertainties over the Times Law Reports, Lexis also said they would try to improve communications concerning the removal or addition of content available on the online service. Finally, LexisNexis accepted there was 'a lot of concern' about the new global platform, particularly the lack of involvement in testing the system. Lexis is now inviting BIALl members to take part in a voluntary 'transactional usage pilot' – anyone interested in taking part should contact LIG member Ann Hemming at [ann.hemming@hughjames.com](mailto:ann.hemming@hughjames.com)

BIALL is currently developing a code of good practice which is intended 'to provide the means to improve transparency in law librarians dealings with publishers and help to maintain some common standards'.

[www.biall.org.uk](http://www.biall.org.uk)

## Alternatives to WebEx

Over the last couple of years WebEx has emerged as the de facto standard for running online conferences and demos – or webinars – across the internet however, there are alternatives. Probably the closest competitor is WebInterpoint from NicheGnat, which does allow a degree of interactivity to participants and costs from £55 per month. But, if you only need to broadcast in one direction, such as when delivering a training or product presentation, have a look at the Glance system. Internet specialists Conscious Solutions say Glance, which has a starting price of just US\$50 a month, more than pays for itself in terms of saved travel costs and is an ideal tool for qualifying leads prior to meeting people in person.

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

[www.glance.net](http://www.glance.net)

## Perceptive refocus on legal KM business

After two years spent developing business opportunities in the not-for-profit market with flagship sites such as The Royal British Legion and French Chamber of Commerce, Perceptive Technology (020 7618 6440) is returning to the legal sector with a new focus. Managing director Mike Sharples said Perceptive had changed its approach and was now positioning its Mentor KnowledgePort software as “a comprehensive, flexible and robust KM solution that can either add value to existing document management systems or operate in a stand-alone capacity.”

Mentor, which has also been rewritten over the last couple of years as a .NET product with support for XML, XSLT and Web Services, was recently implemented at Walker Morris in Leeds to deliver know-how resources to both fee earners and clients. A white paper from Perceptive on the need for specialist KM tools is available on the Insider website..

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

## Fresh on the radar

### Microsystems launch D3 document assembly system

After a 23-city promotional campaign, including a seminar in London in April, the US-based Microsystems group has launched its new D3 document assembly and content management system. Built around the enabling technologies within Microsoft Office 2003, including XML and IBF, D3 simplifies document creation by allowing law firm staff to ‘harvest, store and re-use content’ from disparate data sources within the firm (such as CRM, case management and billing systems) without leaving the familiar Outlook or Word interface. Microsystems say one of the benefits of D3 is it eliminates the need for firms ‘to create and maintain costly and under-used templates’ or run traditional document assembly solutions. D3’s UK channel partner will be announced next month

[www.microsystems.com/d3/index.php](http://www.microsystems.com/d3/index.php)

### German DMS supplier throws hat into the ring

The German document management systems supplier DocuWare AG is throwing its hat into the UK legal DMS ring and holding two seminars next month (London, July 7 and Manchester, July 8) to show how DocuWare, which is compatible with MS Exchange, Groupware and Lotus Notes/Domino, can meet the DMS needs of law firms, including handling WP files, scanned documents and email. For details call DocuWare UK on 01932 268455.

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

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## The ASP in Spain is mainly in Liverpool

Two more start-up firms have ordered case management systems from Visualfiles – but with the software delivered as a managed ASP service, accessible on a 24/7 basis to any user with an internet connection. The two firms are Johnson Yates, which was formed by the recent merger of personal injury claims specialists JTP Solicitors and Addison Yates (the initial system consists of a 25-user case management plus SOS accounts implementation) and Marbella-based HomeAnswersEurope. The latter firm was formed by Brian Marson, the founder and, until he retired to Spain in 2003, the chairman of the Marsons volume conveyancing practice, and his wife Susan, with the objective of providing a one-stop legal and professional advice shop for people wanting to buy homes in Spain.

The Visualfiles ASP service has been developed in conjunction with 7 Global, who host the firms' databases (the service supports both the Visualfiles case software and the SOS PMS) on their servers located in the Old Bank of England vaults in Liverpool. Visualfiles' Andrew Lindsay says the ASP option is becoming increasingly popular with start-up firms who want zero IT infrastructure costs, managed solutions that remove the hassle of running 24/7 networks, and IT budgets that can be fixed in advance.

## PI and Ogden online

As a Law Society president once said, the stark choice facing smaller firms today is either "get a niche or get out." But if you do have a niche, you also need the appropriate technology. One example of this is a new system called PI Quantum, which was recently launched by Quantum Software (0161 236 9796) to help personal injury lawyers prepare schedules of damages and, where necessary, update, amend and recalculate them at a click of a mouse.

The unusual feature of PI Quantum is that it is only available as a subscription-based online service although completed schedules can be printed out as Microsoft Word documents. Quantum's developer (and a forensic accountant) Robert Weston says the benefit of the online approach is it allows reference and other standing data, such as tax and Ogden tables, to be updated the same day they are published, without lawyers or support staff having to download updates or wait for the arrival of, and then install, update CDs. For low volume usage, firms can pay as they go, with prices starting at £39 per case, or opt for an annual subscription where prices start at £349.

[www.quantumsoftware.co.uk](http://www.quantumsoftware.co.uk)

## Missing print costs ?

According to research by Equitrac, the typical top 200 US law firm loses over \$1.5 million each year in unrecovered costs because they inadequately track the output of desktop and networked digital printers. Equitrac CEO Mike Rich estimates that "three out of four firms who recover copier costs are not doing the same with their digital document output." Rich says products such as Equitrac's new Print Tracking 4 system not only help track print costs but also improve reporting so firms can better manage colour printing.

## Nick's Diner

After 23 years with Pilgrim Systems, most recently as finance director, Nick Murray is leaving to 'follow his dream' of running a hotel and restaurant. Murray and his family are taking over the Old Library Lodge in Arisaig, near Mallaig on the west coast of Scotland – the beach scenes for the movie Local Hero were filmed there.

[www.oldlibrary.co.uk](http://www.oldlibrary.co.uk)

## Point taken

The last issue's story about WP point sizes reminded one reader that last April 1st someone at his firm circulated a spoof memo to partners saying data storage requirements could be cut if everyone used smaller typesizes in their documents.

## Legal Technology Insider

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