LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

Workshare press the reset button

According to Workshare's new CEO Alan Fraser, when he joined the company in late 2008 "it was immediately clear that not all customer needs were being met and there were significant customer concerns about the company and its products" This month, after extensive meetings with customers, reseller partners and industry organisations such as ILTA, Workshare has – in the words of European V-P Frank Boening – pressed the 'reset button' to begin, what it hopes, will be a new era for the company.

In terms of the issues the company seeks to address, these include improvements in the quality of support services and improvements in product quality. For example, release 5.2 SR2 (due out in the next couple of weeks) has been extensively beta and post beta tested to the point where it will be the first release in the company's history with zero PIs. There are also changes to Workshare's product pricing and licensing policies – full details are to be announced in July but will include no increase in support costs this year. The company is also reaffirming its commitment to the legal market by streamlining its partner channel from several hundred to just 11 strategic partners around the world. The idea here is *...continued on page 2*

May's big launch: search from TFB

TFB has announced its Partner for Windows practice and case management system is now available (at no extra software licence cost) with full integration to Microsoft Search Server 2008. The new feature allows users to index and subsequently search and retrieve content from all documents stored in their Partner for Window systems.

May's big deals

Freshfields selects Autonomy search
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer has chosen Autonomy iManage Universal Search (IUS) to handle its content and knowledge management requirements. The system will be used by over 6000 lawyers and staff in 27 locations.
• Phoenix Business Solutions report they are encountering interest from firms wanting to switch from the old Interwoven + Vivisimo powered search platform to the new Autonomy IUS offering, with projects already underway at SJ Berwin and Blake Dawson.

Leeds Day swaps out AIM for Linetime
Leeds Day Solicitors in East Anglia has selected Linetime's Liberate legal accounting and Liberate Signature Edition case management system to replace its AIM Evolution (now part of the IRIS group) software. The eight partner, 70 staff practice operates from three offices.

Cripps Harries Hall goes with DocsCorp
Cripps Harries Hall has selected pdfDocs Desktop and compareDocs systems from DocsCorp as its 'next generation PDF management and document comparison software'. The firm was previously a Workshare Deltaview user.

Lovells moves email marketing platform
Lovells LLP has moved its email marketing platform from an internally managed system to an SaaS (software as a service) solution provided by Concep. The Concep service, which is being rolled out globally to Lovells' practice areas and offices after a short pilot, integrates with the firm's existing LexisNexis Interaction CRM.
www.concepglobal.com

Workshare resets

continued from front page... these new super partners will be able to provide far more in depth implementation and support services than under the old regime. As for Europe, there are now just three partners: Intraforce covering Germany and Italy, Morningstar covering Benelux and Scandinavia, and Tikit covering the UK, Ireland, Spain and France.

New product launches

New bill drafting software

Pre-release testers are reporting that, after just two weeks' use, the new iDraft Pro bill drafting software for law firms and costs draftsmen is reducing average bill drafting times by around 20%. iDraft say the software, which also converts bills to Claim 1 forms for legal aid work, is 30% cheaper than its main competitor. A free 30-day trial version of the software can be downloaded from the iDraft website.
www.idraft.co.uk

Asset Checker for probate professionals

Asset Checker is a new service providing probate professionals with a facility to trace and value the shareholdings of deceased estates online. The service currently provides access to around 80% of UK listed companies, representing 15 million shareholdings.
www.assetchecker.co.uk

CaseCheck goes UK-wide

Scottish online legal information provider CaseCheck has linked with Law Brief Publishing so it can now offer users free access to a database of more than 500 case summaries.
www.casecheck.co.uk

Two Elite 3E sites go live in Europe

Last month saw two Elite 3E implementations go live in Europe. The first was DWF LLP, which can claim the distinction of becoming the first firm in the UK to go live with 3E. There, 3E replaced DWF's existing PMS software (as a result of mergers this included Norwel and SOS systems) throughout its offices in Leeds, Liverpool, London, Manchester and Preston. The DWF roll-out has taken two years to plan and implement (DWF announced the 3E order back in June 2007) with Tikit's financial and consulting practice (headed by Mike Bailey) involved throughout the project, including handling the data conversion.

The second go-live was at Helsinki-based Hannes Snellman, which also has offices in Russia and Sweden. The 100+ lawyer firm selected 3E because it needed to support multi-currency and multi-branch operations, as well as time and cost narratives in four languages (English, Swedish, Finnish and Russian).

What PDF should do for you?

Document technology specialist DocsCorp has published a free, downloadable, white paper by John Heckman of Heckman Consulting. The paper looks at the top five features you should expect to see in modern PDF software and what they can do for your organisation in terms of efficiency gains and integration with third-party systems.
www.docscorp.com/whitepaper

Pilgrim offering flexible finance

With banks more reluctant than ever to fund investments in software and IT, finance provider Syscap has been working with Pilgrim Systems to devise a number of more competitive and flexible financing solutions for Pilgrim customers. These include: only starting paying on live operation of the LawSoft system; deferring payments for 12 months; paying a monthly amount per user that includes the software, services and annual support; and, spreading the cost of the investment over 3 to 5 years.

Contract management vendor wins first site

Cork (Ireland)-based Dolphin Software (+353 21 234 8217) has launched its new Dolphin Contract Manager system – and secured its first win, with the Northland Ontario Transport Commission. Dolphin, whose software runs on a Microsoft Sharepoint platform, has also signed up five reseller and integration partners across the US, UK and Ireland. They are Gimmal Group, Mindlance, ICS Solutions, Triad Group and Spanish Point Technologies.

"Using technology to automate and control the contract lifecycle management process is relatively new but has huge benefits for organisations. Contract management software creates a single repository where everything associated with contracts, from cradle to grave, can be tracked," says Dolphin's CEO Ronan Lavelle.
• Lavelle previously held senior roles at Open Text and Hummingbird. The contract lifecycle management software market is estimated to be growing at 23% pa.
www.dolphin-software.com

Rauf heading-up Intralinks initiative

Samia Rauf, who left Workshare last month after several years of being the company's best known face in Europe, has joined Intralinks as an account director for its legal sector operations. Intralinks is best known for its Workspace virtual data-room, which is widely used in M&A due diligence work, however Rauf is now investigating whether the same approach can also be used in other areas of legal work.

Intralinks are, not surprisingly, remaining tight-lipped about their plans save to say its core will be a 'critical information exchange' that will provide an alternative to email attachments or the need to burn and courier DVDs from one organisation to another. Rauf adds that the existing Intralinks' technology platform – Workspace is effectively a 'cloud' based document repository offered on an SaaS basis – fits very well with current trends in legal IT architecture. Intralinks expect to announce details of their initiative by Q4 this year. www.intralinks.com

New wins

Cartwright King select Select
Cartwright King, which has over 100 staff in offices in Nottingham, Derby, Leicester and Sheffield, has selected LawFusion from Select Legal Systems as its new case and practice management.
• Select has also launched LawFusion Direct, a hosted version of its software.

Start-up starts up with IRIS Legal
Plymouth-based start-up Bright LLP, which has a total of 14 fee earners and 8 support staff, says that after investigating the legal software market (including Eclipse and TFB) its selection of IRIS Law (Business Edition) to support its practice and conveyancing case management needs was the right decision. The firm's IT manager David Moore adds that being an early adopter of IRIS Law v1.9 "was a very worthwhile and productive decision."
• Liverpool-based mental health and child protection specialist Hogan Solicitors has upgraded from its old IRIS FoxPro accounts to IRIS Law Business to support its practice management, probate work, civil billing and Laserform electronic forms. The 15 fee earner and 27 staff firm says the migration required just 3 days for data conversion and 8 days of training.

Arrow points at Visualfiles
Arrow Global, one of the largest consumer debt buyers in the UK, is deploying a LexisNexis Visualfiles case management system to create an inhouse, centralised debt recovery system. The company says the new system will enable them to automate litigation-related recovery processes, achieve significant operational efficiencies and facilitate a likely increase in debt collections.

New Insider survey

Legal Technology Insider and the Oyster IMS information management solutions consultancy are collaborating on an online survey to add two new streams of data – covering Records Management and Email Management – to the Insider Top 250 Chart of IT systems used by the UK's largest law firms.

Our intention is to identify current trends and provide the industry with a useful benchmark on the use and deployment of these technologies within the legal sector. The survey results will initially be presented at an event sponsored by Oyster IMS and then be available to download from the Insider and Oyster IMS websites.

The closing date for the survey, which should take no more than 12-to-15 minutes to complete, is Friday 5th June. The survey is on SurveyMonkey, click here to access it **http://tinyurl.com/o68mza**

New product launches

iManage + HighQ dealroom integration
Phoenix and hosted extranet specialist HighQ Solutions have announced an integration between HighQ's SitePoint legal dealroom system and Autonomy iManage WorkSite DMS. The first phase of the integration has commenced and allows simplified publishing of iManage WorkSite content to a hosted client extranet. Phoenix and HighQ see this integration as pivotal in streamlining the process with firms that use the iManage WorkSite document management system. SitePoint clients include Allen & Overy, Freshfields and SJ Berwin.
www.highqsolutions.com

Telepresence widens its reach

Telepresence is becoming an established technology within enterprises. As mentioned by Malcolm Simms in the March issue of the Insider, telepresence is also a 'must have' technology for law firms looking to reduce costs and collaborate effectively. The benefits are manifold. Billable time spent travelling by fee-earners incurs a double hit for a firm's cost. The reduction in carbon emissions meets the green standards increasingly adopted by management teams. Most crucially, the use of telepresence encourages collaborative working without the constraints of jittery AV, hesitant telephone conferences or proprietary online collaboration tools.

But what about the cost of implementing telepresence in local offices? For global firms, it may be justifiable to install telepresence facilities at major sites but how do they extend the reach to small offices or third parties? For telepresence to really work it needs to be as ubiquitous and as interconnected as a global fixed telephony network.

Tata Communications, part of the Tata Group, believes it has the answer with its network of public telepresence rooms. These are available on an hourly, pay-per-use basis to walk-in customers, thereby widening the reach of telepresence and democratising what has traditionally been cost prohibitive technology.

• Tata is holding a briefing at its 51 Buckingham Gate (London) public telepresence room, followed by a lunch at the Quilon on the 15th July. For more details or to register for the event, email **james.wale@tatacommunications.com**

New wins

Copitrak secures two major London projects
Copitrak has won two cost recovery deals. Long-time user Simmons & Simmons is modernising its infrastructure and Olswang is installing embedded Canon MEAP solutions.

Clyde & Co selects e-discovery service providers
Clyde & Co has selected Epiq Systems and Trilantic as its preferred providers of electronic disclosure services.

Merrill transcends its transcription services portfolio

Merrill Legal Solutions is now offering LegalCraft's Transcend product as an alternative to Livenote for real time reporting and transcription applications. Transcend, which will be offered as a service, has a number of interesting features including a tabbed interface – so it is easier to switch between documents, auto-scroll for historic documents, and a full screen view for users less likely to annotate the transcript. Merrill predict one of the big attractions of Transcend is that it can be installed in a matter of minutes, works in a wireless environment, and is compatible with Windows Vista

• In other news, Merrill's Lextranet hosted review software is to be hosted locally in the UK from July/August. Although Lextranet has been used in the UK in recent years – most notably in the Princess Diana/Dodi al Fayed coroner's inquests – it has met some resistance as it was previously only hosted in the US. Merrill communications manager Reema Corney says the combination of a subscription rather than per gigabyte pricing structure plus features including de-duping, conceptual searching and a graphical view of social networking connections make Lextranet potentially a very strong player in the market. **www.merrillcorp.com/mls**

Tikit Word day next week

Tikit's next Word Excellence Day, run in conjunction with the UK Document Excellence Group, takes place next week (Tuesday 2nd June) at the New Street Square offices of Taylor Wessing in London. Jointly chaired by Sherry Bevan of UKDEG and Charles Christian of this parish, the programme includes sessions by Lawrence Graham on why migrating to Office 2007 need not be a big deal, and David Griffiths of Pannone on his firm's new Sharepoint-based document management system (*see also page 6 in this issue*). UKDEG will provide an update on the latest Word 2007 migration trends and there will be sessions looking at e-learning, house styles and standards, and the potential role of speech technologies in document creation.
• Over 100 delegates have already registered for the event, for more details email **marketing@tikit.com**

Digital dictation news

Thomas Eggar move to Bighand
Thomas Eggar LLP has replaced what the firm's IT director Neil Renfrew describes as a "home-made" digital dictation system with a Bighand DDS workflow system. The system has been rolled out to 500 users and the firm estimates eliminating temp costs alone will pay for the system in 12-to-18 months. Renfrew is currently piloting Bighand's Blackberry application.

nFlow integrates with Pilgrim LawSoft
In a legal IT first, 60 user Magrath LLP in London has gone live with an integration of nFlow's DDS running in conjunction with Pilgrim's LawSoft PMS. The firm's IT manager Nick Doughty said an immediate benefit was that document creation and management was now automated and streamlined.

More Irish firms take DDS
Keyhouse Computing in County Wicklow report that despite the recession, Irish law firms are continuing to invest in the Keyhouse digital dictation system. Latest wins include John Molan & Sons, Bourke Carrigg & Loftus and Meagher Solicitors. **www.keyhouse.ie**

VoicePower holding overview event
Independent speech technologies supplier VoicePower is hosting two digital solutions workshops at its West Yorkshire offices on 25th June. The sessions will review some of the latest developments and look at systems from Olympus, Dragon NaturallySpeaking, Philips and Winscribe. The session start times are 10:00am and 1:30pm and include lunch. For details call 01943 468000 or visit **www.voicepower.co.uk**

People & Places

Calvis appoints head of sales
Calvis has appointed Maciek Janowski as its new director of sales & strategic marketing. Janowski, who has knowledge of the legal, property and financial sectors, has been "brought onboard to open doors in new sectors," as well as head up sales strategy for the Calvis Sharepoint and Interaction for Blackberry solutions. Maciek was most recently with LexisNexis on the Interaction European sales team.
www.calvis.com

Lawrence sets up own consultancy
Long-time legal IT market recruitment consultant Nigel Lawrence has set up his own recruitment business following the recent demise of Bayfield. The new consultancy is called Cogence Search and is based at 33-37 Charterhouse Square, London EC1M 7EA. The office number is 020 7397 1590.
www.cogencesearch.com

Town comes to TFB
TFB plc has appointed Sean Town to their sales team. Town has worked in the legal software market for many years, most recently at IRIS as one of their senior sales executives. Richard Higgs, TFB's sales director, added "I am really pleased Sean is joining us and feel sure his knowledge and experience in the market will quickly add significant value to our sales efforts."

Page joins 7Safe as consultant
Adam Page, previously litigation support manager at Clifford Chance, has joined the litigation support and computer forensics consultancy 7Safe as a senior e-discovery consultant.
www.7safe.com

Thought Leader #1 Sharepoint as a DMS – meeting the challenges
by David Griffiths, IT director, Pannone LLP

Sharepoint is a hot topic at the moment and it's easy to see why. It can provide a highly flexible and scalable platform for a corporate intranet, collaboration tools, as well as the basis for a knowledge management tool, extranet and most attractively of all, a moderately well-featured document management system. Added to this, once the free WSS 3.0 is upgraded to MOSS, it sits at the core of the Microsoft Office family and with some under the bonnet work can be tightly coupled to many other systems. It can potentially become the cornerstone of an IT system.

Essentially, it offers a lot at not much cost and in the current economic environment that alone is a powerful argument for adoption. Pannone was in the market for a DMS, and when we considered Sharepoint as a candidate, as we and no doubt many others have, we came to note that there are a significant number of limitations when using Sharepoint out of the box:

• Volumes of documents and numbers of sites can be troublesome and careful planning is required to ensure a Sharepoint farm remains performant over time.
• Navigation is a little long-winded for lawyers who need to get to their documents quickly.
• There are glaring omissions such as the lack of unique document references.
• Integration with Office 2003 is fairly poor.

Add to this list the lack of any pre-packaged document migration tools and a dearth of community discussion on Sharepoint and we have some sizeable barriers to adoption. At Pannone we explored whether Sharepoint could be made to run as a viable legal DMS, and quickly came to the conclusion that with some work it clearly could!

Of course, a number of vendors offer integration packages and we considered some of these. Some are good, some less so. They are generally not focussed on integration with the existing information systems in firms, and after noting that any third party products would not be owned by ➡

�map our business – and that we'd be heavily reliant on a third party for any modifications, we made the decision to build the additional tools and perform the configuration work alone.

The Pannone approach was to assess the strengths and weaknesses of Sharepoint and find solutions to them focused entirely on the way our users work. Extensive discussions were held with users, and good practice and wish-lists gathered from other DMS applications. The key weaknesses in Sharepoint as a DMS were in integration with Office 2003 – in common with many other firms, for various reasons we have no immediate plans to move to Office 2007 which does have fairly good integration – and a key focus of our work has been in building tools to perform this integration in a familiar, matter-centric way.

Other extensive areas of work have been integrating our PMS, CRM and CMS systems, creating a highly-specified and future-proof farm and in reconfiguring many out of the box elements. The end result is a solution – Pannone Workspace – which offers a feature and data rich solution with tight integration into Office applications.

A key point to remember is that work will always be required when adopting a DMS, whether this is integration work, customisation, or the addition of new features. There are very few vendors who would fund this work themselves, so it is true to say that there will always be some cost of adoption. The Pannone approach of honestly assessing Sharepoint and addressing how this feature-rich yet loosely structured application framework could be made to fit our model has produced an excellent fit for our firm at a very low cost to the business.

Sharepoint has many positive attributes but it is true to say that it is not the panacea that some suggest. However with work, skill and focus on what legal users require, it can form the basis of a high quality, highly business-focussed legal document management system.

The hows and whys of e-marketing

Gerald Newman's LawComms consultancy has published three new free, downloadable guides on media relations, website health-checks and e-marketing techniques, including search engine optimisation. Newman says they are ideal for barristers chambers and High Street firms.
www.lawcomms.com

Mobile data seminar

Communications specialists Total, in conjunction with Blackberry, O2 and Bighand is holding a mobile data solutions event in Bristol on Friday 26th June. The event starts with lunch at 1:30pm, followed by a series of round-table – and Powerpoint-free – sessions on different aspects of mobile working for lawyers, then a keynote by Insider editor Charles Christian, followed by afternoon tea at 4:45pm. The event, which is being held at the Gloucestershire County Cricket Club ground in Bristol, concludes with an opportunity to watch an early evening Twenty20 match between the Somerset Sabres and the Gloucestershire Gladiators. The event is free but numbers are limited so it is essential to register in advance via Total's microsite for the event.
http://tinyurl.com/o8rbak

New product launches

First Pilgrim Release 8 site goes live
Pemberton Greenish in London has become the first firm to go live with LawSoft Release 8 from Pilgrim Systems. Release 8 has over 270 new features including advanced workflow generation, enhanced KPIs, risk management monitoring plus document and email management with drag & drop filing and indexed document bundling. LawSoft Release 8 is compatible with Windows Server 2008 and Internet Explorer 8.0 and will integrate with both Microsoft Office 2003 and 2007 – so firms are not precluded from taking advantage of the latest LawSoft functionality if they remain on their current Microsoft platforms. Pemberton's IT director Michael Kinnear described Release 8 as "a textbook upgrade" with no downtime and immediate benefits. Pilgrim is running a series of Release 8 events in June, visit
www.pilgrimsystems.com/events.htm

New product launches

Virtualisation takes to the cloud
InTechnology has launched its VSS virtual server service to provide virtualisation facilities in a cloud computing environment. At its heart is a 'self provisioning portal' – a secure web interface that allows users to manage their hosted VSS set-up, including determining when and which virtual machines they want to bring online. This will be an on-demand service with flexible, per month, per server pricing, including the ability to reduce both power and servers in times of low load.
www.intechnology.com

Preuveneers launch conveyancing portal
South London law firm and software developers Preuveneers, in conjunction with a Knowledge Transfer Partnership with London South Bank University, has launched a web-based conveyancing case management portal – called Smart Legal Move – that will allow authorised users to conduct property transactions from any location with online access.

Latest Eclipse Proclaim developments
Eclipse Legal Systems has released details of the latest developments with its Proclaim case and practice management software. These include new graphical KPIs – available Q4 2009 and an ability to embed 3rd party websites and fast lookups such as DVLA in the main Proclaim case management area. In addition, stage two of Eclipse's 3-stage MS SQL roadmap is near completion and will allow case data to be manipulated in a SQL environment.

ISYS announces sdk9
ISYS Search Software has released ISYS:sdk9, a new enterprise search integration kit for OEMs, independent software vendors and system integrators.
www.isys-search.com

Thought Leader #2 CVM – putting a value on what you do
by Leigh Caldwell, chief executive, Inon consultancy

Hourly rates are the traditional way of valuing a lawyer's work but fixed price proposals are becoming more common. Some services are priced from a menu, and in litigation the reward can be a percentage of the cash won for the client. The problem with all of these methods is they are only a rough approximation to the true value, which is whatever the client perceives the service is worth. And how do you know what that is?

A new technology called CVM (Client Value Management) has the answer. It uses behavioural economics to work out the subjective value of each service to each client. This lets lawyer and client agree an equitable way of charging, and ensures that firms can generate the revenue they are entitled to while spending their time on activities that best serve the client.

For example, how much is a will-writing service worth? Competitive benchmarking (a search on Google) might suggest £9.99; an hourly rate approach might indicate £600. But in reality, the value depends on the client, their needs and the emotional context. If someone is leaving a £10 million legacy, what is the value of the peace of mind of knowing that it will go to the intended beneficiaries with no disputes? Chances are that the perceived value is a lot higher than £600.

Behavioural economics provides the means to work it out. The theory behind it draws on the fields of psychology, economics and marketing. It provides a range of tools that can be used to measure the value a person puts on a service, in order to set prices accordingly. Just as importantly, it makes the service more valuable by framing it in the right way, offering the right package and putting it in the context of other services.

An example would be that will-writing service. If two services are offered at £199 and £299, the majority of buyers will select the £199 service. But if a third, £800 option is added most buyers will switch from the £199 to the £299 option. This strategy provides an extra reassurance to the buyer that the mid-priced service is of a higher quality and will better meet their needs – and in subconsciously recognising that quality, they are likely to switch upwards from the cheap option. The ⇨

➡ confidence of dealing with a quality supplier is a major perceived benefit for clients when they are using a law firm. Offering a higher-priced service sends a crucial signal that the firm is a quality supplier.

Larger deals involve more factors and more people, and this is where the CVM technology comes into its own. By allowing the firm to record the different aspects of the service it offers and understand the decision-making process of each individual within a client company, CVM can show the firm what price points to choose, what words to use and who to pitch to at each stage of the process. Its built-in economic model will simulate the profits the firm would achieve and the probability of winning the work at each different price level – and the software will recommend the right prices and services to offer.

CVM can be used both in the pitch process – to analyse tender documents and predict the unstated concerns and priorities of the people writing them – and after the client instructs the lawyer, to measure the value that clients experience while working with them. By implementing the recommendations of the CVM tool the firm can actually improve how clients perceive it – therefore increasing their trust in you, the lawyer, and strengthening their confidence in acting on your advice. This is in the client's interest as well as yours.

Different clients have different motivations. Some are focussed on cost, some on reducing risk, others on responsiveness, customer service or added value. CVM can recommend questions to ask each client that will uncover those motives – and give the firm a better insight into how to meet each client's unique needs. Better service and better understanding will lead to more instructions from new and existing clients.

Of course a software system can never replace expert judgement and good client relationships. So CVM is a tool that sits alongside the lawyer and supports the value (and valuation) of their work. But the lawyer still has the final call on which service to offer to which clients and at what price.

Unless of course, like one London firm, you set up your CVM system to go out to the web and generate new leads for you, automatically producing quotes for simple standardised legal services. This automated approach ➡

➡ may not be the right one for every firm – but every practice can use CVM to generate extra revenue and enhance the value of its service to clients.
www.inon.com

New wins

Beachcroft takes Research Monitor
Beachcroft LLP is the latest firm to select Research Monitor from Priory Solutions as its cost recovery platform to track and charge back for the use of a selection of online services within their UK offices. In addition to cost recovery, Research Monitor also provides usage monitoring.
www.priorysolutions.co.uk

Two regional firms order FWBS
Regional firms Hilliers and Poole Alcock have both placed orders with FWBS for the company's Matter Centre system and Indigo Practice Centre PMS. The firms will also be taking account of the recently announced interface between Matter Centre and the Practical Law Company (PLC) service.

Which? legal service to use DPL
The legal phone advice line Which? Legal Service is to launch an online will creation service directly to the public using the latest .NET-based will drafting system from DPL Professional. Members of the public complete one of DPL's interactive questionnaires to input the information to create their wills. These are then checked by real-live solicitors after which the customer can download their will document, together with a commentary explaining the terms of the will and signing instructions.
• UK will writing service Just Wills plc has launched an online will writing service that goes directly to the public. This also uses the DPL will drafting application.
www.dplprofessionalsolutions.com

Case study: Thorntons move to best practice

Because it takes information security assurance and the integrity of client data seriously, Thorntons recently undertook a review of its existing firewall and remote access solutions in conjunction with the Sapphire consultancy. According to IT director Sarah Blair "We wanted a system that was flexible, easy to administer, straightforward to use and cost-effective."

With Sapphire's help, Thorntons chose to implement Microsoft's Intelligent Application Gateway, a browser-based secure socket layer SSL VPN solution that forms part of the Microsoft Forefront line of business security products. Thorntons also chose to implement PINsafe from Swivel, to deliver a second layer of authentication around Microsoft's IAG existing authentication procedures, and the StoneGate firewall from Stonesoft.

In terms of the benefits, these include giving Thorntons the ability to monitor and track access to its systems more closely. It has achieved much better granular control over what people access and can now generate a full range of management reports to further aid the decision-making process.

The system also lets Thorntons enforce specific policies, allowing access to the firm's network to be tightly restricted. Devices which do not have the correct security levels or the right anti-virus software, for example, will only be permitted restricted access. These processes are self-managing, requiring no direct intervention by Thorntons' IT team.

"Another benefit," adds Blair, "is before we had the new system, every time staff needed to work from home, were going on holiday or on a business trip, we had to reconfigure each individual laptop, which often meant home visits for many users. Today, all this is handled automatically and centrally."
www.sapphire.net

Implementation case studies

Pitmans opt for IP telephony
Faced with meeting the challenges of the Legal Services Act, John Hargrave, finance director of Thames Valley-based Pitmans, identified telephony as a critical area where the firm could differentiate itself by increasing customer service and overall productivity. "However our 18 year old hardware-based system was starting to see the strain as we continued to expand. It was increasingly difficult and expensive to add new users and there was no way it could be integrated in our core business processes."

After researching the market, Pitmans felt they needed "a software-based product that had been designed as an IP telephony solution from scratch, not as an afterthought". Hargrave adds "Another key factor was we wanted our supplier to have the same business culture as ourselves – highly responsive and customer-focussed. Pitmans' solution was to go with Swyx reseller Atia Systems and a SwyxWare software based telephony solution.

According to Hargrave, the SwyxWare implementation "revolutionised" the way Pitmans conducts its business. "We have consolidated our receptionist activities so calls can be answered from any location based on availability. With CLI, we can also fast-track the principals of our largest clients directly through to the relevant senior partner, without going through reception. This provides exactly what we want for the future – a high level of personal service and customer care. We can also record all calls and attach the resulting .wav file to a client record and store accordingly. It is also possible to direct calls according to the type of enquiry and relevant division."

Hargrave says Swyx has also had an impact on the bottom line. Being software-based all moves and changes can be handled internally whereas in the past each move required an engineer to be called out at £100 a time. For a firm like Pitmans, where there may be 10-15 changes a month, this is a major saving. Turning to the future, the firm plans to offer softphones as an alternative to traditional handsets, as well as integrating Swyx with Pitmans' CRM system.
www.swyx.com

Bird & Bird make an email double-take
Although Bird & Bird employs a clustered Exchange system and a reliable storage platform to maintain the availability of email, there was still a risk that a full site failure would lead to messages not being received and service being affected. For this reason, the firm's infrastructure manager Jon Spencer decided, as part of ⇨

⇨ business continuity planning to evaluate and review replication tools to provide an additional level of protection.

"Our employees rely on email," says Spencer. "Even the shortest period of downtime is simply not acceptable. The local Exchange environment provides us with a high degree of resilience however there was an awareness of how a site failure would lead to an outage. Consequently, we began investigating the replication and disaster recovery tools on the market for protecting email."

After looking at the solutions available, Spencer chose Double-Take Software's data replication technology as the most suitable . "In speaking to experts on Exchange, their feedback was Double-Take provided the best product available for ensuring continuity of email," adds Spencer.

Double-Take provides asynchronous replication of data from the production server to a remote target server. Working with reseller Jcom, Spencer implemented the disaster recovery platform. Double-Take automatically replicates data from Bird & Bird's email servers to a remote disaster recovery cluster, consisting of three virtual machines hosted on a HP DL380 server running VMware ESX Server and attached to a HP MSA storage array. In the event of a site failure affecting the Exchange server, service is automatically moved over to the remote site. For Bird & Bird, recovery of the email service even after a full site failure can now be achieved within 15 minutes.
www.double-take.co.uk

E-conveyancing news

Online chain transparency site launched
Property Link Solutions has launched a free, web service that allows everyone within a property chain to view the status of all their related transactions.
www.propertylinksolutions.co.uk

Evaluating mortgage offers online
EvaluateConsumer is a new mortgage comparison tool that lets users select and then apply for the best deal available.
www.evaluatetechnologies.com

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The Backpage

More legal IT industry charitable endeavours
Congratulations to MDA SearchFlow who have raised over £11,000 during the past year for the Demelza House, which provides specialist care for terminally ill children needing respite care in Kent and South East London.

Meanwhile, here are some fundraising activities coming up over the next few weeks... Later this month John Flanagan of IRIS Legal is embarking upon the Water Aid Trail 100 event. This involves 50km of walking and climbing up one of Scotland's more remote mountains – Ben Alder – to raise money for Water Aid, a charity that provides clean water and sanitation in Africa and Asia.

Next up – on 21st June – some 15 of the staff at Eclipse Legal Systems will be taking part in the Leeds 10k *Run for All* event. Last year they raised £2000 for the Martin House charity and are hoping to exceed that sum this year.

Finally, Jason Hulme – now with CPA Global but probably still best known from his time with the Legal IT Forum – is hoping to raise money for the Action Medical Research charity by cycling the 400 miles from London to Paris this July in under 4 days. Click on the link below to sponsor Jason – and tick the gift aid box to give him an extra 25% if you are a UK tax payer.
www.action.org.uk/sponsor/jjbrit1031

Marathon men - missed one
Apologies to Tolan Collins, the IT manager of Hewitsons LLP, for omitting his London Marathon results in the last issue. Tolan completed the course in 4:05:23 and so far has raised £1300 for the mental health charity Cam-Mind.

Legal costs estimator for pro bono work
Costs lawyer Jim Diamond and national pro bono legal work charity LawWorks have agreed a deal to let people use Diamond's LegalBudgets software free of charge so they can more accurately estimate legal costs and the risks associated with litigation. It is hoped this will encourage more people to use the LawWorks free mediation service.
www.lawworks.org.uk

It was 10 years ago today...
Stories reported in the May 1999 Insider included news that... DPS Software was about to enter the legal accounts market – the company had previously focussed exclusively on case management. The Gartner Group was advising PC networks to stay on Windows NT 3.5 rather than to move to NT 4.0. The consultancy described the notion as 'ridiculous' adding 'you may as well open a bank account in the name of Bill Gates as move from Windows 98 to NT 4.0 to Windows 2000'. No change there then. And, after 20 years in the legal IT business, it was announced that Phil Fitness was stepping down as the managing director of Technology for Business in an MBO that would see Simon Hill takeover as MD. Elsewhere, Shanks & Bigfoot, with their single *Sweet Like Chocolate* had just pushed Boyzone off the No.1 slot in the UK top 40 chart and the movie *Notting Hill* went out on general release.

Legal Technology Insider

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Next issue...
The next issue of the Insider (No. 221) will be published on June 25, 2009. The editorial deadline is June 19. In the meantime keep up with the latest news by visiting our blog at www.theorangerag.com