LEGAL TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

Quick and clear returns win deals

While much of the UK legal IT market still seems to be in the post-recession doldrums (over the past month the Insider has seen one litigation support bureau, one of the smaller legal accounts software vendors and four minor IT consultancies close their doors for good) one area that continues to thrive is the costs recovery and expenses management sector, where there are quick, clear cut and easily quantifiable returns on investment (RoIs) to be enjoyed.

Recent wins here include Hill Dickinson, where the firm has swapped out Equitrac and is now rolling out Copitrak copy, web expenses and print management modules across its Manchester, London, Liverpool, Chester and Singapore offices. CMS Cameron McKenna has selected GlobalExpense to handle employee expense reporting and control. A key factor here was the system's ability to handle reporting and statutory compliance for PAYE and VAT, without placing a burden on its inhouse IT team. And, Ashurst has extended its investment in its APS Billback cost recovery suite.

Finally, Addleshaw Goddard has invested in MeetingZone audio conferencing technology. Along with reducing the costs associated with travelling to business meetings, MeetingZone offers a daily billing facility that allows conference costs to be automatically allocated and billed ⇨

⇨ to the appropriate matter, whereas the firm's previous conference system involved 'arduous, manual line by line data entry' at the end of each month. Both the Hill Dickison and Addleshaw projects also have 'green' spin-offs, cutting back on paper usage and CO_2 emissions respectively.

Eclipse join iPhone set

Following Barnetts Solicitors recent launch of its iClick conveyancing quotes and progress monitoring app for the Apple iPhone, Eclipse Legal Systems (Barnetts' iPhone app uses data generated by Eclipse Proclaim case management software) will be launching an iPhone/Proclaim integration in its upcoming v3.2 release. Eclipse is also working on a Google Calendar integration.

CRM available via SaaS

Managed service specialist e-know.net has launched a new client relationship management and marketing module for smaller law firms. Called CRM Plus, it is based on Microsoft Dynamics CRM and can be delivered in two ways: as an addition to e-know.net's managed desktop (as part of a fully outsourced solution) or on a SaaS-basis for firms only looking to 'out-task' certain applications. Pricing starts at £35 per user, per month, with the underlying SQL Server platform and licences rolled in at no extra cost.

• e-know.net has announced details of a £1.6 million investment in hosting facilities, including the creation of a third data center. Along with additional processing capacity, the new data centre, due to come online in early January, has been designed to be more 'carbon aware' using, for example 46% less energy than conventional cooling and air conditioning systems.

Scots firm says SaaS saves 25 hours a month

Glasgow firm Cameron Macaulay say that since switching to an SaaS-based (software as a service) solution from Virtual Practices (which delivers SOS Connect case and practice management software, along with outsourced legal cashiering) managing partner Malcolm Cameron has saved around 25 hours a month on administration, which he can now devote to fee earning and practice development. Virtual Practices adapted the SOS software to comply with Scottish Law Society accounts and reporting requirements.
• In other SOS group news... Thursfields has gone live with its SOS Connect implementation, with a 'big bang' roll out to 110 people in three offices, including a data transfer from an IRIS/Mountain legacy system and amalgamating records from 10 separate databases in just under six months.

New user group launch

Workshare has formed an EMEA user group, which is holding its first meeting at Lawrence Graham (London) on 8th December. Along with looking at the future direction of Workshare Professional, the main item on the agenda is selecting the user group chair. The nominations are Karen Jacks (Bird & Bird), Damien Behan (Brodies), Kevin Goosman (Cobbetts) and Simon Thompson (Linklaters).

Another day, another LPO

Latitude South NZ is the latest entrant into the UK LPO (legal process outsourcing) market, with a range of services for both inhouse legal teams and law firms. Co-founded by New Zealander's ⇨

⇨ Andrew Hamilton and Larissa Glubb, with facilities in both New Zealand and Singapore, Latitude South say their team of lawyers (mainly based in New Zealand and all 9+ years PQE) can realise savings "of up to 50%" on substantive legal support services, including know-how work and drafting bespoke documents.
www.latitude-south.com

Revamp for GB offering

IRIS has revamped its offerings for the Scottish law firm market with the launch of IRIS Law Scotland. Brian Welsh, general manager of IRIS Legal & Property Solutions Scotland (formerly GB Systems) describes ILS as a "fully integrated modular solution capable of fulfilling the requirements of any practice, irrespective of its size or speciality". These modules include stand-alone case management for such applications as wills and executry, personal injury and debt recovery. In addition, there is a pay-as-you-go SaaS option for smaller firms starting from £95 per month.
www.iris.co.uk/lawscotland

Is this answer to Progress versus SQL debate ?

With the debate still rumbling in the LexisNexis and IRIS camps about the Microsoft SQL Server versus Progress debate, Focus IT managing director Andrew Bremner says this need not be an either/or decision. According to Bremner, the two platforms can co-exist in a best of both worlds scenario, with a production database on Progress and reporting on SQL, by using a data replication tool such as Bravepoint Pro2SQL. Currently Pro2SQL replicates Progress 9 & 10 data into SQL 2005 but a SQL 2008 version is on its way.
www.focusitlimited.co.uk + **www.pro2sql.co.uk**

November's new wins

Eversheds select DTE Axiom via Phoenix

As the quest to find a clear successor to Carpe Diem continues, Phoenix Business Solutions has announced that following a pilot, Eversheds has selected DTE Axiom as its new time recording platform. Phoenix is DTE's European distributor.

Seneca floats Lake's boat

Leeds start-up law firm Lake Legal LLP has implemented the Seneca system from Emis IT as its new case, accounts and business management platform. The Lake Seneca system also includes anti-money laundering, client care and credit control workflows, as well as digital dictation and electronic forms integration.

Jersey's oldest firm buys Eclipse

Le Gallais & Luce (believed to be Jersey's oldest law firm) has selected the Eclipse Proclaim suite (including accounts and case management) to replace its legacy IRIS AIM system. Eclipse is tailoring the system to handle the unique elements of property law in Jersey.

Munich RE UK chose Exari to automate contracts

Munich Re's UK Life Branch has chosen Insurance Accelerator from document assembly specialist Exari to automate treaty contract drafting.
www.exari.com

Rouse protect with Double-Take

IP specialist Rouse & Co s now using Double-Take Software's replication and workload optimisation systems to minimise any downtime on its Microsoft Exchange and Elite Enterprise PMS platforms. Other users of Double-Take in the UK include Bird & Bird, Field Fisher Waterhouse and DLA Piper.
www.doubletake.com

Simmons & Simmons sign 12 month LPO deal

Simmons & Simmons has signed a 12 month LPO (legal process outsourcing) deal which will see Integreon providing offshore legal support services, including document review, due diligence, document production and review. ⇨

TFB take IRIS site number 28

TFB plc has picked up two more IRIS sites, with Matthew & Matthew LLP selecting TFB's Partner for Windows case and practice management system to replace its Mountain FoxPro case and Solpack (non-IRIS) accounts software. And media niche practice Collins Long, is swapping out an IRIS Opsis system in favour of TFB software.

Watson Burton extend their cube

Following its success running the Sales Analysis 'OLAP cube' from Anlys, Watson Burton has extended its investment is business intelligence tools and now bought a General Ledger cube to replace its own inhouse reporting system.
www.anlys.co.uk

Manby Bowdler use Aastra IntelliGate

FBC Manby Bowdler LLP has selected Aastra's IntelliGate to support 'one number' calling across its telephone system, including Blackberrys.
www.aastra.com

New product launches

Vu on view for solicitors

Medico-legal services provider Premex has launched Vu, a new facility that lets law firms schedule medical assessments, process and manage personal injury claims via the web. Medical experts input their availability, which can be viewed by solicitors, who then select a relevant specialist from a national panel of experts. After deciding on a time and location that best suits everyone's needs and the circumstances of injured parties (at any time over 15,000 appointment slots are available) instructions are submitted and appointments booked. Premex managing director Donald Fowler says Vu can speed up the overall claims process, drive costs down (both important in light of the Ministry of Justice's recent overhaul of personal injury claims and introduction of shorter timescales) and help cut non-attendance rates, a key cause of delays in the PI process.
www.premexservices.co.uk/vu-demo

LawWare to ship GB Group's URU

The enterprise edition of LawWare's practice and case management software will now include integration with the GB Group's URU identity verification service to help both improve the accuracy and reduce the time it takes to carry out anti-money laundering and related checks.
www.lawware.co.uk

ISYS launch enterprise access suite

ISYS Search Software has launched its new 2009 Enterprise Access Suite. This features a core of embedded search, infrastructure and information access software, including the ISYS Anywhere mobile enterprise search server. The latter module allows a mobile user armed with any browser-enabled device (including laptops, iPhones and Blackberrys) to access both locally stored and centralised content from anywhere.
www.isys-search.com/technology

Esselar put security into the cloud

Esselar, a new name to the Insider but apparently they've been active in the hosted IT arena for over 10 years, say the advent of cloud computing now makes it viable for firms of all sizes to switch from static, relatively easy to hack and phish, passwords to two-factor authentication (2FA) for security – and without the high costs associated with traditional hardware based 2FA solutions. According to Esselar marketing manager Lucas Betes, what has changed is that the back-end servers that validate 2FA passcodes can now be hosted in the cloud, so staff working remotely can log-in securely while someone like Esselar takes care of the servers, maintenance and patching etc.
www.esselar.com

E-learning news

Blended training and support for roll-outs

Capensys, a new e-learning services provider is offering 'blended training' for law firm IT roll-outs. Blended training comprises a range of software tools and training methods, ranging from floor walking, to e-learning courses and virtual workshops, and on to the company's new 'Angel' context-sensitive within-application support. The Angel is like a smarter, less irritating version of Microsoft Office's old Clippy. For details email
spasfield@capensys.com

CPD podcaster makes alliances

CPDcast, a provider of CPD accredited legal podcasts has formed an alliance with Littleton Chambers, who will now be supplying employment law and commercial litigation podcast content. CPDcast has also linked up with the City Law School to offer law students free podcasts. As part of the deal, students get access both to the school's own podcasts and the CPDcast catalogue of over 300 podcasts.
www.cpdcast.com

Scottish Law Soc pilot speech recognition

In April this year the Law Society of Scotland began a 12-week trial of speech recognition software using Dragon Naturally Speaking. The Society had previously rejected this technology but following the launch of the latest version of Dragon (v10), believed it was sufficiently advanced, along with required PC processing horse power, to revisit it and explore the potential applications.

Gordon Brewster, director of central services at the Society, said "We identified five members of staff to participate following a successful live demo at the Society's offices. The software and set up was installed by Paul Amery, of Database Design & Development. Amery highlighted the techniques and approaches to successful voice recognition noting only those key tools needed at the start as part of the one hour training session to ensure a sound start for those taking part."

The initial trial period has since led to a full pilot involving a further five staff who have all reported it as transforming their document production processes, with one commenting that the costs for her would be recovered in a month. All staff report that accuracy is excellent, with a key feature being the ability to review immediately what has been produced, offering users a streamlined approach that results in significantly shortened document turnaround times.

The new system has been thoroughly tested in a range of situations, including using a portable Olympus digital device remotely to record dictation and then push that dictation through Dragon. This had excellent results at around 10 words per second. The system was also tested in various offices located around the Society in central Edinburgh, from shared offices – where ⇨

⇨ the results were not so good – to those exposed to a lot of external traffic noise, while others are much quieter. Both worked very well.

Brewster said "We have not used Dragon to replace our nFlow digital dictation solution. It is seen as complementary with staff using direct typing, digital dictation or voice recognition depending on the material to be produced, the timescale, and complexity. I am now persuaded this technology does have an application in a legal environment and a business case can be made for it." *Paul Amery can be contacted at* **paul.amery@ddd-3.co.uk**

Digital dictation news

Bighand launch server-side speech recognition
Bighand has launched server-side speech recognition (based on Dragon v10) as part of the v3.3 release of Bighand's digital dictation system. The new module (which supports voice submission from Blackberrys and smartphones, as well as conventional dictation hardware) offers both speech recognition only (where the author checks the text) and speech recognition with proofing options (where the secretary checks the text). Any corrections made by secretaries automatically update an author's speech profile. *For further details see Orange Rag blog 05/11/09.*

Leeds firm implements nFlow
Leeds law firm Lee & Priestly LLP has replaced its legacy digital dictation system with nFlow's v5.0 .NET workflow software. The firm has rolled out nFlow to 64 users and is now looking to integrate it with its LexisNexis Arista accounts system.

Winscribe extends device support
Winscribe has added the wireless Philips SpeechMike Air and the Blackberry Storm 2 smartphone to the range of digital recording devices it supports.

Killer tactics for social media

Conscious Solutions has published a new guide to social media for law firms, including FaceBook, Twitter, blogging, podcasting and LinkedIn. The guide looks at each platform in turn and gives some commonsense, pithy advice on the pros and cons of using each one. We love (and agree with) the sentiments expressed in #49 MySpace/Bebo "Ignore them. Both these social networks are populated by young people ie younger than Facebook users. Leave them to have somewhere to play without adult supervision!"
• *51 Killer Tactics for an Effective Social Media Strategy for Law Firms* costs £14.99 and can be ordered from **guides@conscious.co.uk**

As Amazon would say if you like *51 Killer Tactics*, then you may also be interested in *Social Media for Lawyers: Twitter Edition* by US attorney turned PR consultant Adrian Dayton. This is a new special report (price £145.00) from the Ark Group looking at the technical and operational issues associated with legal tweeting. We like Dayton's view on 'policy' for monitoring tweeted comments. His advice is "Don't say stupid things. You avoid 'bad acts' offline so avoid them online."
www.mpmagazine.com/bookshop.asp

Vital statistics: 79%

In the course of recording a new Ark Group webinar on technology strategies, Insider editor Charles Christian asked the audience how many firms had formulated a post-recession IT strategy to take account of emerging technologies and changed business circumstances. The answer was just 21% – the remaining 79% were still working with old IT plans that had not been updated.

International news

iManage goes into Norwegian firm Simonsen
IRIS Nordics (aka Morningstar Systems and no relation to IRIS in the UK) has implemented an Autonomy iManage Worksite DMS at top 10 Norwegian firm Simonsen. The firm is currently running Worksite 8.3 but plans a v8.5 upgrade.
www.morningstarsystems.com

Dutch firm Turnaround to go fully digital
Dutch niche law firm Turnaround Advocaten has selected the IRIS Document Server and IRIS Powerscan products as the next steps in its moves towards creating a fully digital law office. Morningstar Systems is handling the project which will involve digitising incoming mail and converting it into full-text searchable PDF files.

More DocsCorp European wins
Delphi, rated 2009 Swedish law firm of the year, has swapped out Workshare DeltaView in favour of DocsCorp compareDocs and Metadata Assistant. German tax law specialists Flick Goche Schaumburg has also switched from DeltaView to compareDocs.
• DocsCorp has announced a French language version of its pdfDocs Desktop and compareDocs systems. The Desktop product is already available in Norwegian and the software will soon be available in German. DocsCorp's French channel partner is Copitrak Systems.
www.docscorp.com/fr

BCM Hanby Wallace selects Interaction
Irish law firm BCM Hanby Wallace has selected LexisNexis Interaction as its new CRM platform. Interaction V-P & general manager Daniel von Weihe said Hanby Wallace "is one of many firms that have invested in CRM since the downturn".
• Interaction will hold a CRM strategy masterclass on 9 December (9:00am to 1:00pm) at Lawrence Graham's London offices. Call 0207 347 3717.

New product launches

IRIS enhance ClaimIT debt recovery system

IRIS has released an enhanced version of its ClaimIT debt recovery software (originally developed by IRIS subsidiary MSS AlphaLaw) with new features including a more modern user interface. IRIS has also introduced a two-tier price structure, offering per-case pricing for firms new to debt recovery work, as an alternative to unlimited case licences for firms with volume workloads.

New releases from Hubbard One

Hubbard One has launched two new software releases for its suite of legal marketing products. They are: Marketing Center v6.4, which provides comprehensive integration between Contact Manager workflows and ContactNet relationship data; and, Contact Manager Communicator. The latter is described as providing marketers and business developers with 'a comprehensive platform for enhanced email marketing, website integration, marketing automation and analytics'. (This sounds like Hubbard One's answer to Tikit's eMarketing/ReAction Server product suite.)
www.hubbardone.co.uk

Saturn27 to resell Smart Time in UK

Saturn27 has signed up to resell Smart WebParts' Smart Time in the UK. Smart Time, which was launched in the US this summer, is a web-based on-demand time capture and time entry system that 'finds missed or leaked time that may not otherwise get billed' by searching network applications (Exchange, DMS, BES servers etc) to provide fee earners with a detailed journal of their daily work activities and so help answer the question 'what did I do today and is it billable?' According to Saturn27's COO David Gallagher, the only competition is IntApp's Time Builder and one top 25 London firm is already involved in a Smart Time proof-of-concept pilot. For a 100 fee earner firm, prices start at £200 per fee earner pa.
www.smart-webparts.com

Legal first for unified comms with integrated IP

InTechnology is claiming a legal market first with the launch of its new unified communications (UC) solution with integrated IP telephony. According to InTechnology's Richard Quine, until now voice has been the missing link in UC systems but by bringing together telephony with hosted Microsoft Office Communications Server, law firms could realise a 50% saving in unwanted or superfluous email and voice messages by cutting down on playing 'telephone-tag' (or communications latency). To promote the service, InTechnology is offering a one-month free trial of the service for up to 10 users at five law firms. The trials are offered on a first come/first served basis. For details call Mark Halpin on 07958 173812 or email **legal.sales@intechnology.com**

iPhelion now reselling DocMinder in the UK

London-based software consultancy iPhelion has become the latest organisation to sign up to resell WordTech's DocMinder critical date management system in the UK. DocMinder lets users assign responsibility for the completion of tasks to documents or links and diarise them on an Outlook calendar. The system's workflow will then automatically send out email reminders to the relevant staff members until the task is completed. For details email Pip Johnson at **pip.johnson@iphelion.com**
• As reported last month, Ascertus is also reselling DocMinder in the UK

DPS launches anti-spam service

DPS Software is offering its users a hosted anti-spam plus firewall service. DPS technical director Scott Ridley says after monitoring the emailboxes DPS hosts, less than 5% of email traffic into law firms is legitimate, with the rest being spam.
• DPS say that following recent personal injury law changes announced by the Ministry of Justice, it will have a revised road traffic accidents claims system available for beta testing in January.
• DPS is holding its annual user group meeting on 13 January at Microsoft's London Victoria centre.

New NLIS licence award

Land Data, the NLIS (National Land Information Service) regulator, has awarded a third NLIS channel licence. The recipient is the Australian land and property search company GlobalX Information Services, which joins SearchFlow and Thames Water in the English & Welsh market.
www.globalx.com.au
• Last month the NLIS Hub reduced its transaction fees to channels by 50%. The cost saving is intended to be passed on the conveyancers, to increase the attractiveness of ordering electronic searches through NLIS.

LexisNexis and Kestrel in Streamline link-up

LexisNexis and Kestrel Business Solutions have formed a strategic partnership to implement, deliver and add value to the LexisNexis Streamline BPM/workflow system in the large law segment of the legal market. Kestrel client liaison director Alex Young said "LexisNexis Streamline is the first of its kind and a market challenger. Over the years, the mid to large sized law firms have invested heavily in best-of-breed applications and now in the current economic climate are looking to further exploit those technologies to maximise tangible business benefits, especially in the front office. Up until now there have been limited tools available that genuinely allow firms to cost-effectively and easily build on their existing systems, and leverage the modern Microsoft-centric architecture and skills that already exist within their organisations."

Commenting on the link-up, LexisNexis Practice & Productivity Management general manager Tim Cheadle said "Kestrel has considerable experience

⇨ in delivering high quality strategic and implementation services and, like us, understands the business challenges firms face. The combined strength of our expertise and resources opens up unprecedented opportunities for firms, facilitating radical and ground breaking changes in the way they conduct business. It is this common drive and motivation that makes us ideal partners."
www.kestrel-bs.com

News in brief

TFB and Nflow in dictation alliance
TFB plc (part of the Tikit Group) has anounced that its Partner for Windows case and practice management system now offers full integration with the nFlow digital dictation system. The link was piloted at Rix & Kay Solicitors LLP in Sussex, where 100 users across three offices can now launch nFlow DDS directly from within Partner for Windows modules, including time recording. When a file is opened in nFlow, it automatically opens the relevant TFB matter progress file. The software runs over a Citrix network

FWBS users win prizes
At the recent *English Law Society Excellence Awards*, FWBS Matter Centre customer Watkins & Gunn won the *Lexcel Award for Excellence in Practice Management* category. The firm uses the Matter Centre software to adhere to Lexcel requirements on tracking risk. Another FWBS customer – Thomas Mansfield LLP – won the *Excellence in Innovation* category, an award sponsored by TFB.

Wear that gong with pride
DDS specialist nFlow was presented with a medal in the *Best Small IT Supplier of the Year* category at last week's *BCS (British Computer Society) & Computing UK IT Industry Awards 2009* at the Battersea Parks Events Arena in London. (Where?)

People & Places

Fraser Mayfield joins LexisNexis
Fraser Mayfield has joined the solution consulting team at LexisNexis Practice & Productivity Management . He was previously with Aderant.

New president & CEO for ZyLab
Pieter Varkevevisser has been appointed president & CEO of ZyLab. He takes over from Johannes Scholtes, who assumes the role of chairman of the supervisory board and chief strategy officer.

Insider featured job

Customisation Developer - Aderant
Working with Aderant Expert software packages within the legal and enterprise market, this primarily development position requires experience with a .Net language and HTML to develop customisations that integrate with SQL DBMS. A client facing element is also required, including training, specification definition, customisation handover.

The candidate must work to high standards while maintaining the ability to *Get the job done* within deadlines. Team work is necessary as is the ability to work without direct supervision. The successful candidate must have strong communication and analytical skills as well as a good understanding of the legal and enterprise markets to achieve the above objectives. Core Competencies: excellent SQL scripting skills, .Net development experience, competent with Microsoft SSIS and SSRS, Visual Basic, HTML, Web Services, .Net (ASPX/XML/C#), excellent oral and written communication skills, methodical approach to problem solving, ability to work to and deliver to strict deadlines.
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The Backpage

Musical crimes revisited

Those of us of a certain age will recall that Christmas 1980 was marred by John Lennon's song *Just Like Starting Over* (he was murdered on 8 December that year) been knocked off the UK chart No.1 spot by St Winifred's School Choir with their record *There's No One Quite Like Grandma*. Well, they are back and are taking on Vera Lynn and whoever wins the *X-Factor* to compete for the 2009 Christmas No.1. Yes, 29 years after the original recording, 18 members of the choir have re-recorded the track for a charity fundraising effort as part of the *Innocent Big Knit* campaign on behalf of Age Concern. So what has this got to do with legal technology? Turns out that one of the members of the original and the newly reformed St Winifred's choir is Catherine Bailey, the head of marketing for IRIS Legal Solutions. To add to her crimes against music, Catherine and the school choir also provided the backing vocals for another No.1 chart hit: Brian & Michael's *Matchstalk Men and Matchstalk Cats & Dogs* in 1978.

Putting your technology where your mouth is

Vendors are rising to the challenge thrown down last month by Eclipse Legal Systems as to who uses the most of their own software inhouse – or eats their own dog food as one cynic cruelly put it. To-date the contenders include nFlow, FWBS, TFB and EMIS-IT. Full results next time.

It was 10 years ago today...

November 1999 saw American Lawyer Media announce plans to bring their LegalTech show to the UK in 2000. They did but after a couple of years they went back home again. Exeter-based Michelmores became the first UK firm to start rolling out Axxia's then-new Windows NT-based Artiion system. Keystone Software raised £1million on the AIM stock market through a share placing. And, a last-ditch attempt to rescue the once wildly popular but, by late 1999, technologically isolated LINK legal online forum and email service was rumoured to be underway. The attempt failed and the LINK service closed.

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Next issue...

The next Insider (No. 226) is published on Thursday 17th December 2009 (editorial deadline 12:00 noon, Friday 11th November). In the meantime keep up with the latest legal IT news from around the world by visiting our blog at **www.theorangerag.com**