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More acquisitions piling up in ediscovery sector

Back in April we reported on a busy Q1 for acquisitions in the ediscovery sector with nine companies changing hands. This month the check books are out in force with six more acquisitions either of ediscovery vendors or by companies in the EDD and litigation support space.

In chronological order we start with **SuperiorGlacier** which in late May announced that its **SRM Legal Division** had acquired NYC-based ediscovery services provider **Intelligent Discovery Management** for an undisclosed sum. IDM's co-founders Ken Krebs and Cathy Frazier will remain with the business.

One week later SRM Legal acquired NYC-based legal technology staffing and recruitment specialists **Sight Search & Selection**. Commenting on the deal, SuperiorGlacier's president & COO Gadi Rosenfeld said "There are significant synergies. The addition of Sight's team and comprehensive staffing services helps propel our aggressive growth plan and strengthens SRM's position in the New York City marketplace." Sight's managing director Rob Gibbs is remaining with the business. (The terms of this deal were also not disclosed.)

www.srmlegal.com

➡ Next up, it was the turn of Manhattan-based **Empire Lawyers Service LLC** to acquire the assets of **Aetna Judicial Service**, one of the oldest and largest process serving agencies in NYC. Empire, itself a part of Skinder-Strauss Associates, will merge Aetna with its New York-based **American Clerical Service** to form the largest court clerical and process serving attorney support firm in the City. (The terms were not disclosed.)

www.americanclerical.com

Then, last week, Texas-based **Flex Discovery** acquired **Landmark Legal Solutions**, which has offices in Chicago and Washington DC. The terms were not disclosed and Landmark is now known as Landmark, a Flex Discovery company.

www.flexdiscovery.com

In other acquisitions, **Thomson Reuters** has acquired **Apsmart**, a London-based developer of apps and other mobile applications. With TR now one of the most active publishers of apps for its Westlaw and other businesses, the company said it made sense to acquire an established app development company rather than hire developers on an ad hoc basis.

Finally, yesterday the **Huron Consulting Group Inc** acquired the London-based legal systems integrator **Ascertus Ltd**. Ascertus, which mainly operates in the UK/Continental Europe corporate legal departments market, has an established reputation for its work with matter management, ebilling and document management systems, including Autonomy iManage and Prosperware. Ascertus will become part of the Huron Legal division, which last year also acquired UK-based H4 Partners and the ediscovery business Trilantic. The terms were not disclosed however Ascertus founder Roy Russell is staying on as managing director of Huron Legal, based in the company's London office.

www.huronconsultinggroup.com/legal

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June's wins, deals, swapouts and rollouts

The **Sadler Law Firm LLC**, an 80 attorney practice with offices in Houston, Fort Worth and Pittsburgh, has implemented **LawBase** case and matter management software from **Synaptec Software** to support the firm's different practice areas. LawBase has been integrated with the firm's **Juris** time and billing system.

www.lawbase.com

Labor law specialists **Gallon Takacs Boissoneault & Schaffer Co** report that since implementing a **C2C ArchiveOne** solution, the firm has reduced the storage requirements consumed by its Microsoft Exchange 2003 email system by over 60% from 72Gb to just 26Gb of data.

www.c2c.com

Training solutions provider **Capensys** has signed four major law firm contracts with **McGuireWoods**, **McInnes Cooper**, **Ogletree Deakins** and **Patton Boggs**. Recent additions to range of software applications that Capensys can offer training for include Office 2010, Autonomy iManage FileSite and NetDocuments.

www.capensys.com

Five hundred attorney **Davis Wright Tremaine LLP** has selected **kCura Relativity** as its new ediscovery platform. Litigation support manager Denise Farr said they found Relativity the most flexible solution for integrating with the firm's workflows.

www.kcura.com

Three more firms have migrated from legacy dictation technology to digital dictation workflow, speech recognition, mobile dictation and voice productivity solutions from **Bighand**. The three are **Hanft Fride** in Duluth (MN) and **Aronbeg Goldgehn** and **Shelsky Froelich Ltd**, who are both in Chicago. Aronbeg is focussing on the Bighand iPhone app, Shelsky is taking advantage of the workflow features

to streamline internal processes and make efficiency gains, while Hanft Fride said it was a no-brainer when the cost of servicing the old analogue system became as expensive as buying new digital hardware. Bighand marketing manager Allison Stegich said the three firms' experiences highlight the immediate benefits voice productivity technology can now deliver to small and mid-sized law firms.

www.bighand.com

Business litigation specialist **Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan LLP**, which has 600+ lawyers, has licensed the **Lateral Data Viewpoint** all-in-one ediscovery processing, analytics, predictive tagging and document review platform.

www.lateraldata.com



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Christian UnCut: the price isn't always right

It seems like it was just the other day (*hey, it was just the other day in our April issue as it happens*) we were reporting on the shake-up within the ediscovery and litigation support vendor sector, with nine acquisitions since the start of the year. Well, as we report on this issue's front page, there have now been six further acquisitions to add to the total and I'm sure there are a few more that have fallen under the radar.

Along with *Who's next?* the big question on the minds of remaining independent EDD vendors must be *What are our chances of being bought?* It is an understandable question as the founders of most smaller tech companies aspire to an exit strategy that involves them being acquired by a larger group. But just how feasible is this? Having watched M&A activity in the legal IT and EDD space in both the UK and US for a number of years, I think there are some important lessons wannabe sellers need to remember...

(1) Don't be greedy – Most acquisition prices are far lower than the participants would have us believe, particularly once structured earn-outs are factored in. I've known several companies miss out because they fell for the hype and asked silly-money prices.

(2) Nobody wants low hanging fruit – Often the companies most desperate to be bought are the ones nobody wants to buy, at any price. If you have a badly run, unprofitable company, nobody will want to buy you because they know you'll either go out of business and cease to be a competitor else all your customers will defect of their own accord.

(3) The budget will not be there – We've all heard incumbent management say how great it is to become part of a larger group and have access to greater resources. Don't you believe it. Once you are part of a larger organization, you'll be fighting for a share of the marketing and R&D budgets with dozens of other departments and subsidiaries.

(4) It will be hell – Ever wonder why so many senior executives quit companies shortly after being acquired, rather than stay on for the full earn-out period? It is because they discover life in a big organization means some fresh-out-business-school MBA from head office telling them how to run the company they spent the last 20 years developing.

(5) Forget loyalty – Once your business has been acquired, you will have very little say over the way longstanding staff, branch offices and customers are treated, so develop a thick skin.

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People & Places

Milan Bobde has joined **IntApp Inc** as product manager on the Time Builder team. Previously Bobde was at **Elite** where he held various roles, including responsibility for business intelligence and mobile applications, as well as managing the development of the integration architecture for 3E.

Wolters Kluwer Corporate Legal Services (CLS) has promoted **John Weber** to the post of executive vice president and general manager to run the group's **CT Corporation**-branded business, which specializes in compliance and governance products. Weber was previously with **CLS TyMetrix**.

After several years of being referred to as 'DTI' by customers and using the abbreviation in its own communications, **Document Technologies Inc** has formally rebranded as **DTI**. The corporate logo has also been revised and there is a new website.

www.dtiiglobal

Intelligent Discovery Solutions (iDS) has hired **Tracy Good** as manager of project management at its Washington DC office. Before joining iDS, Good was an ediscovery coordinator at **Computer Sciences Corporation**.

Wilson Legal Solutions, a provider of Elite 3E software services to law firms, has increased the staffing at its NYC office. **Dan Sullivan** and **Craig Rimby** have been hired as, respectively, senior director and senior consultant, while senior director **Brad Oelmann** has been redeployed to support the New York operations.

In response to strong revenue growth, **Informative Graphics Corporation** (IGC) has increased its total staff headcount by one-third in the past 18 months. The company has also hired **Jay Mayne** as its new CFO and vice president of operations, replacing the previous CFO who retired in April after 18 years with the company. Mayne has over 25 years experience in corporate accounting, most recently as director of finance at **Viasoft Inc**.

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New product launches

Bellefield Systems has announced the availability of its **iTimeKeep** mobile time recording app for **TABS3** time and billing system users. The cloud-based app will run on the iPad, iPhone and Android platforms via and 3G/4G or wifi connection.
www.itimekeep.com

The **ArchiveOne** email archiving solution from **C2C** now offers complete mobile device support so users can access archived email data from any tablet or smartphone including the Blackberry, iPhone, iPad, Android and Microsoft platforms. C2C's CEO David Hunt said today's users are on the go and need to access their email data anywhere and anytime."

Hunt added that ArchiveOne is completely transparent to users, employs a 'zero-training' design and installs in about an hour, while the 'Archive Access' features use open standards, such as Web Services, HTML and XML, so all mobile device types are supported. A live online demonstration and a 30-day trial are available at www.c2c.com

Mitratech has announced updates to its **TeamConnect Enterprise**, **TeamConnect Legal** and **Collaborati** solutions. The new features include a package of over 30 out-of-the-box reports on budget and spend management, invoices and matter statistics, plus a new Secure Access Portal for ↗

↗ external counsel so they can collaborate on legal matter from outside the corporate firewall.
www.mitratech.com

Litéra has released version 2.0 of its **Metadact-e** system, which will allow users to more easily prevent metadata leaks, including information sent from mobile devices. New features of Metadact-e 2.0 include the ability to clean attachments in more file types, such as password-protected zip files and embedded email messages. Users can now be alerted when auto-detected tracked changes are present and define the action to be taken.
www.litera.cm

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