

Internet Newsletter for Lawyers

By Delia Venables

January/February 2006

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Hot Topics for 2006! by Delia Venables

Lawyers have been using the internet in several new and interesting ways over the last year. Here is my personal selection of some of the most exciting developments.

Blogs, News Feeds, Podcasts and Mobile Computing

A **blog** is a website designed for frequently added news items which can be set up using various templates and where the detailed work of running a website is done for the blogger by the blogging service provider. This enables interesting (or indeed, uninteresting) people to give us their views without delay.

A **news feed** is the way that you (the end user) can identify the blogs you wish to see and have the latest entries automatically brought to your computer. The process is called **RSS** (Remote Site Syndication) and you download special software to set this up. The blogger has to provide the information in a particular way to enable this to happen and not all blogs offer this facility. And not all people who read blogs want this information "popping up" on their screen when they are in the middle of doing something else.

A **podcast** is an audio programme in MP3 format, designed to be "broadcast" to mobile devices such as the i-pod (whence the name), various PDA's and smart phones. The programmes can also be downloaded to any modern PC, which provides a method of accessing podcasts for those for whom downloading music and then listening whilst working out at the gym is a skill too far! For real devotees, the process can be automated with RSS so you are notified of all new podcasts and can download them very easily for later consumption. Podcasts have suddenly leapt into the public consciousness because of Ricky Gervais' current series of podcasts for the Guardian.

There are quite a few legal blogs and Justin Patten, of the Human Law Blog, describes how it is done and the benefits to be gained in the current issue, page 9. An earlier article (but an excellent tutorial) on [RSS feeds](#) by Nick Holmes was in the May/June 2004 issue.

There is also an article by Tony Fisher of Fisher Jones Greenwood on podcasting - the first UK law firm to offer this facility for clients (page 10).

e-conveyancing, HIPs, HIPAG, Electronic Signatures, IT and Pisces

This is the topic which will dominate the thinking of many High Street firms over the next year. We started the year with [e-conveyancing - the story so far](#) by Alastair Rhodes in the January/February issue, considered [Lawyers and Electronic Signatures](#) by Stephen Mason in the July/August issue, moved to [Ten things a firm should be doing now for e-conveyancing](#) by Tim Platel in the November/December issue and asked [PISCES - what is it?](#) answered by Osman Ismail, also in the November/December issue. In the current issue, on page 7, Rob Hailstone of HIPAG describes how HIPs are going to work and how HIPAG is setting up a trial to produce HIPs online for its member firms.

Portals and SharePoint in Particular

Most commentators think that Microsoft's SharePoint is the must-have application for all law firms needing to bring together different departments (with different knowledge bases), multiple offices (possibly in different countries) and multifaceted access for clients (with different needs and access rights). SharePoint brings together a document management

system, a website (content) management system and a knowledge management system - and it makes the coffee too. At the moment it is probably beyond the reach of most smaller firms but this will change over the next year or two. There is an article on SharePoint - what it is and how it works - by Alastair Morrison on page 3.

Volunteers please! I need someone to write about how they have set up a Sharepoint portal, with all the practical problems they may have encountered and (if possible) the solutions. Descriptions of how people have installed other portals would be welcome too.

For Barristers in Particular

The majority of chambers now have good web sites with easily accessible (and cross referenced) information on the barristers, the special work areas and quite often cases and other legal resources as well. This is an enormous improvement over a couple of years ago. However, the improved web sites are only the tip of the iceberg. Chambers and clerking services are developing which are based on the ability to be anywhere. The article in the September/October issue on [Chambers without Walls](#) by Neil Goodman-Smith described the operation of the first and largest internet chambers, BarristerWeb, and an article in the March/April 2006 issue will describe a very significant online clerking service, ClerksRoom.

Even for "normal" chambers, the internet is making new methods of working possible as described by Martin Poulter, in [How Barristers Use the Internet](#), July/August.

Quite a few individual barristers are also using the internet to raise their profile and deliver new services, and Daniel Barnett describes how he is offering lectures based on a combination of the "ordinary" telephone with web technology on page 10. Gary Webber described the [Benefits of maintaining a website](#) (he maintains the Property Law site) in the July/August issue. Several barristers offer free newsletters on particular topics and I hope to cover these more fully in a future issue.

Will Microsoft Rule the World?

Well yes, probably it will. However, there are a few brave lawyers who continue to experiment with alternatives. In the November/December, Robert Newey looked at [Alternatives to Windows](#) and in particular, the benefits of an Apple Mac for lawyers, possibly in combination with PC's in a normal office. The virtues of an Apple Mac are further described by Stephen Mason (see page 8) and there is an article on the Firefox browser as an alternative to the ubiquitous Internet Explorer by Andrew Barrett (see page 8).

BAILII is the Biggest and Best

The wonderful BAILII continues to prosper and grow - see page 9 for information on the Open Law Project, which is aiming to make historical materials (not just current ones) free for everyone to use. But do not rely on the fairies to keep this project in existence! See my appeal on page 9.

Libraries are Continuing to Change

The inexorable shift from printed legal resources to online services continues, but not without demanding major changes from legal libraries, librarians and their users. On page 11, Jane Clavin of Dublin firm A&L Goodbody looks at how the physical space of the library is changing as well as its contents and considers the impact of online resources on supervision, training and (most of all) the library budget.

Providing Legal Services on the Web

There are very few high street firms actually selling legal services from their sites and quite a few of the firms which started to do this three or four years ago have now quietly dropped these facilities from their web sites.

Why is this? It is actually very hard to make money from selling services online and it requires major web skills which few smaller firms can muster. Even if they succeed, they are reaching the lowest cost part of the market with only modest financial returns and they risk irritating their "normal" clients ("Why are you selling these contracts for £200 on the web when you have just charged me £500?").

Larger firms do not generally try to sell services directly over the web but find ways, instead, of delivering services or information over the web, tailored to clients' requirements, which then forms part of a larger client service, charged in a more traditional manner. On page 5, Nick Holmes writes on "Online Legal Services - what the big firms are doing". He considers client extranets, deal rooms, premium advice and know-how and document automation, with examples of each. Perhaps this is the path which smaller firms will take in future - particularly if improved software (like SharePoint) make the provision of services such as extranets, shared workspace (dealrooms) and access to particular knowledge bases, available much more easily.

On the same general theme, Alex Heshmaty looks at the concept of Virtual Lawyers and asks "How far can it go - and how far *should* it go?" (see page 8).

Using the Web for Marketing

It used to be the case that the search engines were impartial but no longer. Firms and chambers are vying with each other to maximise their position in the search engines, and paying for a placement is one option.

This is a topic we cover on a regular basis. Nicola Webb wrote [How to get into the Search Engines](#) for the March/April issue and David Rose wrote [Web Marketing for Chambers](#) for the November/December issue. Nick Holmes will be writing a major article on Search Engine Optimisation for the March/April issue. This will be a substantial article, too long to be printed in the newsletter, but it will be provided as a downloadable (and free) supplement for newsletter subscribers.

Broadband Gets Faster

Broadband speeds are getting faster and cheaper, which is extremely helpful for the many applications now using the internet as a basis for the transfer of information. "Ordinary" ADSL can now reach 8Mb but hot on its heels is ADSL2 with speeds up to 12MB and ADSL2+ with speeds up to 24Mb. First to offer ADSL2+ is Lawyers Online (see advert on page 3) and I hope to have reports of actual users soon.

VoIP - Voice Over Internet Protocol

We haven't covered this at all yet but it is certainly going to be a very hot topic over the next year or two. *Would anyone volunteer to write about this?*

And of course, the first legal e-book **Whither the Legal Web? By Nick Holmes and me**

Essential reading for anyone who wants to consider the "Where are we going?" as well as the "Where are we now?" - and you can earn CPD too. See www.infolaw.co.uk for more details and how to purchase the e-book online.

Microsoft's SharePoint - what is it and what can it do for you? by Alastair Morrison

A more extensive version of this article, with many references and links to further material, can be downloaded from www.venables.co.uk/n0601sharepoint.doc.

SharePoint is special software, running on a PC server, which provides a web-based method of collaboratively working on documents. In a sense it might be regarded as a web server, as it runs on Microsoft's IIS product (plus SQL databases) but one which is specialised in that it provides easier control over what users may do on it and easier use of documents in the databases that it sets up.

For example, an office meeting might result in the need for a group of workers to co-write some confidential material. With SharePoint it is reasonably straightforward:

- * to create a new, secure, document area, or workspace;
- * to define who can, and with what rights they can, access that workspace; and
- * for the relevant individuals to be emailed with a URL to the workspace informing them that it is ready for use.

From the user's perspective, the SharePoint workspace they access has the familiarity of a web site; but it is a site to which it is easy to upload documents, or on which you can edit documents already there. Once the document is finished and approved it may be placed in a document library housed in one of the SQL databases SharePoint uses. This may contain thousands of other documents. A user can access these items via SharePoint. It acts as a web interface between that user and the SQL databases and search capabilities.

There are two main aspects to SharePoint, or, to give it its full title, 'Microsoft SharePoint Products and Technologies'.

Windows SharePoint Services (WSS)

This is the core of SharePoint. It provides document sharing facilities and is much more sophisticated than previous Microsoft efforts in this area; for example, the public folders aspect of the Exchange Server groupware product. (Public folders are greatly used as a collaboration mechanism in many organisations but, as Microsoft is now concentrating its information sharing efforts on SharePoint, their future is uncertain.) Document libraries created with it support routing and approval functions, checking in and out, and reversion to previous versions. Thus WSS can be used as a dealroom, an extranet type facility for external collaboration or an intranet service for internal firm matters.

WSS is a free, downloadable part of Windows Server 2003. It provides the fundamental engine for creating shared workspaces and may well be sufficient for many (smaller) firms. It can be used on its own, i.e. without the other main element of SharePoint, which is discussed next.

SharePoint Portal Server (SPS)

SPS, as the name suggests, is more of a portal and allows greater customisation and scalability than WSS alone. (For those of you still struggling with the portal concept, see Delia's own article from July/August 2003 - [Developing a Portal for your Law Firm](#)). SPS runs on top of WSS, which provides all the underlying basic functions SPS needs. SPS is not free. It builds upon the collaborative working aspect of WSS and may be regarded as a document and knowledge management tool on account of its additional (to WSS) search and categorisation capabilities.

Both the free WSS and the purchased SPS use SQL databases which store content, metadata and configuration information. For larger environments, SQL Server will need to be deployed, and licensed. However in a single-server SharePoint deployment, MSDE (Microsoft SQL Server 2000 Desktop Engine) alone can be used. MSDE is a free download.

The operating system required to run SharePoint is Windows Server 2003. Not every firm will be using this at present and one may question whether it is worth upgrading merely to be able to use SharePoint. Maybe not, but remember that the official 'end-of-life' for Windows 2000 was 30 June 2005. This means that Microsoft has moved it out of mainstream support into 'extended' support. Therefore it would be wise (for security reasons if nothing else) to upgrade servers to Windows 2003. Once upgraded, there is little reason not to investigate SharePoint.

Hardware requirements for WSS and SPS

To give some sort of indication of what is needed, a possible 'minimum' and 'recommended' configuration are given below. Nowadays the minimum specification can easily be found on an 'entry level' desktop or laptop, and indeed there is no reason not to 'try out' SharePoint on non server hardware. However, as noted, it requires the Windows Server 2003 operating system, which (while it can be installed on a desktop PC) is designed to run on server hardware. Therefore one would be advised to run a live SharePoint service on server hardware certified as such.

As minimum requirements:
Pentium III processor, 512MB RAM, 550MB HD.

Recommended:
2GHz Pentium 4 processor, 1GB RAM, 100 GB HD.

Setting up and managing SharePoint

As you might expect with any reasonably sophisticated piece of software (e.g. email system or web server), getting SharePoint 'up and running', i.e. installing the software and initially configuring it, will require a degree of IT expertise. However, day-to-day administration, use and configuration should not need great IT skill since most activities are wizard based (point and click).

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What can SharePoint do for your firm?

Several of the law firm functions for which SharePoint can be used have been mentioned above. Collaborative working with third parties by using WSS as an extranet (virtual dealroom) is one possibility. SPS offers the potential for document management, through its ability to search across a variety of sources, internal and external (e.g. web sites, email repositories and SQL Server databases). There is even the prospect of knowledge management, by using SPS' native support for taxonomies.

Producing the classifications for a taxonomy is at present quite a rudimentary process. But Microsoft, with its vast resources of finance and talent, may well purchase, develop or otherwise 'acquire' more sophisticated techniques in the near future. This speculation is particularly compelling given the company's current targeting of the 'information worker' for its products.

At present, to produce a taxonomy within SPS, you create 'areas' (i.e. categories and subcategories), as appropriate, to reflect the work types of your firm. These you populate with actual documents, as well as links to other content sources such as web sites and file shares. Sufficient items should be added to each area to cover as many aspects of that area as possible. Areas are then used to create a training set, which is used by the 'Topic Assistant' to suggest appropriate areas for other items.

One can see from this description that the user, rather than IT specialists, is in control of configuring as well as using this part of the product. A major design aim of SPS is to enable ordinary users to create their own, ad hoc, collaborative spaces (to facilitate meetings, manage projects and create documents) without relying on IT support. It provides pre-defined templates for Web sites, plus a 'self-service' site creation feature. Thus the user should be able to get on with using and benefiting from the product, rather than waiting for IT help.

Which size of firm is SharePoint for? Answer – every one. This is not a flippant response because while the product is scalable for deployment in a server farm it is also designed for use in a single server environment. Thus it may well be deemed suitable for firms of all sizes. An example of a small firm using SharePoint comes from the US. Frazer, Ryan, Goldberg, Arnold & Gittler “ ... deployed several Windows SharePoint Services team workspace intranet sites, including a large shared document library, ...” (see Testimonials section below).

Impact of SharePoint

As discussed above, SharePoint can provide a document management facility. However, it is also a platform on and for which other software producers are increasingly building their products. In the legal sphere specifically, one has only to read the legal IT press, or attend law technology exhibitions, to know that producers of certain non-Microsoft products, widely used in law firms, are increasingly developing those products to integrate with and exploit SharePoint (as a means to further enhance said products). e.g. Interwoven, Workshare.

Given this situation, even those firms that view SharePoint as insufficiently sophisticated for their work may find an incentive (or indeed need) to implement it. In other words, future requirements of certain third-party products that firms rely on may compel them to use SharePoint. Indeed one observer believes that SharePoint “may become something of a de facto standard”.

Testimonials

Here are some examples of law firms using SharePoint. (for detailed references, see the full Word version of this article at www.venables.co.uk/n0601sharepoint.doc).

“Portal Solution Saves Law Firm 30 Minutes Loading Time for Every Intranet Document” This concerns the use of SPS by Clarke Willmott, a UK firm.

“Knowledge Management Portals: It's just a phase” The article notes Freshfields use of WSS as a starting point for developing its enterprise portal.

“Law Firm Builds Productivity-Enhancing Portal for Improved Information Access”. A US firm, Appleby, Spurling & Kempe, is using SPS for accessing information that resides in multiple systems.

“Law Firm Boosts Client Satisfaction ...” A case study of a small firm - Frazer, Ryan, Goldberg, Arnold & Gittler - which employed WSS, plus SQL Server, to create a 15 GB searchable document library.

SharePoint for law firms

Microsoft is ever anxious to push its products into more business sectors, law being one of these, as it advances from its consumer and corporate desktop strongholds. Firms should make the most of the tools and assistance which are on offer as a consequence. For example, to assist a firm's deployment of SharePoint, Microsoft provides downloadable web site templates, for small, medium and large firms, as well as corporate legal departments.

Microsoft is also starting to release freely downloadable applications for (the free) WSS, to make it faster to deploy for specific business processes. For example, it provides a program called 'Legal Document Review Workflow Management'.

What does the future hold for SharePoint?

Microsoft no doubt has many plans for it but I will relate just one. It is particularly noteworthy in light of the exhortations of legal commentators in recent years for firms to run themselves more as businesses, and the changes to the legal services market presaged by Clementi's review and the looming 'Tesco' laws.

One of the many business management areas into which Microsoft is attempting to extend its reach is 'Business Intelligence' (BI); this is defined in many ways, e.g. “having easy access to critical company data”. One aspect of Microsoft's approach to BI is a new server-based system for managing Excel spreadsheets. Client access will be through Office 12, the next version of Microsoft's Office suite, while the server-based 'Excel Services' abilities will come as part of a future version of the company's SharePoint technology.

Thus, rather than 'What is it', the future question might be rather, 'Whatever it is, can we afford to do without it?'

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Online Legal Services - what the big firms are doing

By Nick Holmes

For the largest law firms the provision of online legal services is an imperative but few, if any, of these services are sold to clients directly off the page. The focus is rather on delivering services tailored to client requirements, with the selling effected through the overall marketing of the firm's services and brands.

The range and purpose of the typical online services portfolio is well summed up by [Allen & Overy](#):

"Online services provided by Allen & Overy are used to provide clients with an integrated legal service. Technology is used as a tool to support the full client relationship life cycle. Our online services can help clients to:

- access key transaction documents and information
- keep up to date on the latest legal developments
- have continuous access to premium know-how
- manage and reduce exposure to legal risk
- leverage our international presence and expertise
- manage their ongoing relationship with Allen & Overy"

The client extranet

The over-arching service provided is the client extranet or portal - a secure area on the firm's server where the client (and other parties) can access information and documentation according to their profile. The client's login and stored profile and subscription information not only determine which services can be accessed but provide a unique view of all available and relevant resources.

The client extranet provides access to 3 types of resource:

- matter-specific information and documentation (the online deal room)
- client-specific information and documentation
- subject-specific information and resources (premium advice and know-how).

Good examples of these services are provided by [Linklaters](#), [Freshfields](#), [Eversheds](#), [Simmons & Simmons](#) and [Berwin Leighton Paisner](#). (For the links, please use the online version of this article).

The online deal room and beyond

The online deal room has been enthusiastically adopted in the last few years as an alternative to sending documents back and forth between the various parties by email. Its advantages are:

- Security. Email is not a secure way of sending documents between law firms or between law firms and their clients. With the online deal room, access is restricted and documents transmitted are encrypted so that, even if intercepted, they cannot be read.
- Accessibility. Documents are stored in one central location, accessible from any internet browser, anywhere, any time.
- Certainty. Users can be sure they always have access to the latest versions of documents and other information, avoiding the dangers inherent in relying on imperfect email filing and retrieval.

Different levels of access grant authoring and editing privileges to specific individuals according to their login. For

example, lawyers on the other side of the transaction may be given the right to download and amend a document and to upload it back into a "suggested revision" folder, whereas specified lawyers from the host firm will be able also to publish the final draft.

Since access is over a standard internet connection, the facility is available not just from the office but also from home or on the road, and by all parties. So, for example, during a telephone conference all can access the deal room and be on top of the latest information.

The same technology can be extended to provide access to client-specific information including case tracking and billing information; to offer clients the facility to store their own documents, accessible and searchable in the same way; and to enable collaboration between client offices.

Premium advice and know-how

Not long after the legal world first acknowledged the potential of the internet, the first premium (for which read wallet-breaking) advice services were launched by Linklaters and Clifford Chance, garnering a lot of publicity.

In 1997 Linklaters launched [Blue Flag](#) (still probably the best-known such service) offering thousands of pages of coverage of compliance rules and regulations applying to the financial markets. Blue Flag now encompasses all the premium online legal services from Linklaters: a suite of products designed to assist in-house counsel, compliance departments and company secretaries by leveraging both technology and Linklaters' in-depth knowledge.

In May 1998 Clifford Chance launched its NextLaw online service to help international businesses monitor key aspects of their data protection compliance.

Such "expert" systems, encapsulating considerable know-how, are costly to develop. The majority of advice services, whilst still compiled by specialists, are more straightforward information services, in the form of alerters, guides and other more detailed reference services.

Most of this information is authored internally by the firms themselves, but some services incorporate external resources. For example, [Eversheds' Knowledge Banks](#) are online services providing subscribers with key law and news information feeds organised under subject areas. Under the brand name Eversheds.complete the solution was developed by LexisNexis UK for Eversheds and provides clients with the full text of all relevant cases, statutes, texts and materials from LexisNexis, combined with expert commentary from the firm's specialist lawyers, plus feeds of breaking news from LexisNexis, Reed Business Information and the Financial Times.

Many firms have also developed e-learning tools which help reduce clients' exposure to risk and regulatory issues. These take many forms, frequently including inter-activity and multi-media.

An extension of this type of product is the facility to generate appropriate documentation as well, as in the Berwin Leighton Paisner / Deloitte [BeProfessional](#) joint venture. This is an interactive web-based service designed to help small businesses with start-up compliance, HR, employment law and health and safety issue. It offers comprehensive, step-by-step solutions and generates the necessary documentation (eg contracts of employment, dismissal letters, risk assessment forms) and importantly provides an audit trail. See further the Document automation section below.

Free resources

Many firms also provide free resources. Where these are confined to articles, newsletters and alerters that would formerly have been distributed free to clients in hard copy, they probably represent no more than the client would expect. But there are some stand-out examples of free online services which provide substantial value but which are provided free as a means of satisfying existing clients (who will be paying their way through use of other services) and attracting new clients (who are drawn, and hopefully stick, to the honey pot).

A leading example is [elexica](#), from Simmons & Simmons. It offers registered users an extensive range of high quality legal information, including legal updates, legal checklists, training modules (with CPD hours), a weekly EU Diary, regular current awareness emails in a variety of practice areas, from construction to tax, an extensive library of fully categorised web links and in-depth analysis of topical legal events such as the pre-budget report and annual budget.

Another is Pinsent Masons' [OUT-LAW.com](#), which has 5,000 pages of free legal news and guidance, mostly on IT and e-commerce issues. These issues can affect any organisation, and OUT-LAW is as much for those in a software start-up as it is for the compliance team at a bank. Its intent as a marketing site is clear: "If and when you need further advice, we hope you'll choose Pinsent Masons, the law firm behind OUT-LAW.COM."

[Law-Now](#) is CMS Cameron McKenna's free online information service. Using email and the firm's main website, Law-Now provides a personalised information service on key legal developments — you choose what information you wish to receive from a list of topic areas. In addition the Law-Now Toolkit provides easy-to-understand guides to important legislation, checklists, risk analysis tools, useful web links and more.

Document automation

Apart from the premium advice systems mentioned above, the main focus for the productisation of law firm expertise has been in the field of document automation. Legal contracts, particularly for specialist, high-value transactions, are the product of accumulated legal knowledge and expertise and technologies have developed over the past 15 years or so that enable this expertise to be encapsulated in "intelligent" documents. The technology can also be cost-effectively deployed to generate lower-value documents which need routinely to be produced, but which must comply with ever-changing regulations.

Two document automation systems have emerged as the leaders: HotDocs from LexisNexis, distributed in the UK by [Capsoft UK](#), and DealBuilder from [Business Integrity](#).

According to Charles Christian's [Legal Technology Insider Top 250 IT system chart](#), HotDocs is used by (at least) 16 of the top 40 law firms, followed by DealBuilder on 7.

Examples of the online applications offered include:

- Linklaters (BlueFlag) uses DealBuilder for their [Term Sheet Generator](#) which helps bankers produce term sheets, with an embedded advisory capability and directing clients to the most relevant advice for structuring their deals.
- Eversheds recently launched [HR Contract Builder](#), developed with DealBuilder, which is designed for human resource professionals in large organisations and automates the process of drafting employment documents.

- Allen & Overy's [newchange documents](#), developed with HotDocs, produce automatically tailored legal documents, assembled from thousands of possible clause combinations, by working through a set of interview questions.

The future of corporate client servicing

What success have these services had and how will they develop?

Matthew di Rienzo, previously involved with large projects at Clifford Chance, sees firms backing away from large-scale investments in e-services to clients, principally due to the fact that they have not seen a sufficient return from previous and current investments. He believes that the big legal publishers will start to provide the key technology platforms and the firms the legal knowledge: in other words, law firms will go back to concentrating on their core competencies and stop being technology providers.

Clients have not adopted the firm's online services with the same enthusiasm as the firms themselves. Shaun Drummond reports in [From e-brochure to electronic deal-room](#) (Lawyers Weekly, Australia) that their researches show that corporate clients prefer to set up their own secure sites on which the various law firms they deal with can place their documents, avoiding the problem of trawling around several law firm extranets.

The desire for the client to command the portal prompted an interesting initiative in 2003 by nine major investment banking groups to agree IT standards for the electronic delivery of legal services, so their in-house legal departments would eventually only have access one system. The project has now been realised in the form of the Banking Legal Technology (BLT) portal, developed at the initiative of Deutsche Bank by [DraftSpace](#). The nine investment banks (ABN Amro, Barclays Capital, CSFB, Deutsche Bank, Goldman Sachs, HSBC, JP Morgan, Morgan Stanley and UBS) currently use this to access fully searchable legal updates that are uploaded and indexed by five law firms (Allen & Overy, Clifford Chance, Freshfields, Linklaters and Simmons and Simmons).

The big legal publishers are also responding. Simon Carter, writing for Legal IT in [Seeing through the portal](#) (April 2005), reports that both the Practical Law Company (PLC) and LexisNexis are launching improvements to their information services with a growing focus on providing in-house lawyers with valuable information as efficiently as possible. PLC's new service will offer 7,000 subscribers and registered users access to indexed, searchable, publications provided by up to 10 law firms who will pay to contribute. PLC sees this as a marketing channel for law firms, offering them an efficient way to reach potential clients, rather than spending a lot of money creating valuable content that is then distributed often in a slightly erratic way.

Nick Holmes is a publishing consultant and Managing Director of Information for Lawyers Ltd, www.infolaw.co.uk. Email nickholmes@infolaw.co.uk.

Note - a more extensive version of this article appears in "Whither the Legal Web", the new e-book and CPD course by Nick Holmes and Delia Venables. More details on Nick's site at www.infolaw.co.uk/ebooks/whither.htm.

*See also the article **Virtual Lawyers: how far can they go?** by Alex Heshmaty in the online version of this issue, at www.venables.co.uk/n0601art.htm.*

Home Information Packs by Rob Hailstone

We have recently had publication of the long awaited Draft Regulations, publication of the Procedural Guidance Notes that provide a commentary on the Regulations and an ODPM press release confirming that HIPs will become mandatory on the 1st June 2007. Here are main points:

- No other documents other than those that are "required" (i.e. must be included) or "authorised" (i.e. may be included) are to be included in the HIP
- Copy documents must be accurate and colours, maps and drawings must be reproduced carefully
- The new HIP logo must be displayed throughout the pack
- The "responsible person", i.e. the person marketing the property must have a HIP in his possession or under his control when a property is "put on the market"
- A copy of the HIP must be produced (except in a few circumstances) within 14 days of the date of the request
- The HIP cannot be supplied electronically unless the potential buyer consents
- A reasonable charge can be made for copying/posting a HIP
- A tenanted property does not have to be marketed with a HIP, but a part tenanted property (with a let or a granny flat for example) does
- Some documents i.e. searches, office copies and the Home Condition Report (HCR) must not be more than three months old at the first point of marketing
- If a property is taken off the market for 28 days or more the first point of marketing becomes the day when the property is put back on the market and in some cases new searches, office copies and an HCR will be required. However, if the property is off the market for more than 28 days because an offer has been accepted but that sale does not proceed HIP documents will not need refreshing
- Where, despite all reasonable efforts, certain required documents cannot be obtained within 14 days, marketing may commence but continued efforts to obtain those documents must continue
- HIP legislation is only intended to cover the sale of properties that will or could be used as a home by the owner and where the sale is likely to form part of a chain of transactions; business premises are exempt as are some mixed sales (business and residential), dual use properties, portfolios of properties, unsafe properties and properties marketed for demolition
- Penalty charges can be made for a breach of HIP duties; the charge shall not exceed £500 but is set initially at £200

- The OFT could, in certain cases, issue a banning order preventing some agents from continuing to trade
- The HCR must specify any business or personal relationships between the home inspector and anyone involved in the sale
- Further details of the home inspector certification scheme will be published by the ODPM in January 2006.

The Required documents

- An index (new form)
- A sale statement (new form)
- Home contents form (HCF, replacing the Fixtures Fittings and Contents Form) completed, partially completed or blank
- A home use form (HUF, replacing the Sellers Property Information Form) completed, partially completed or blank
- If the property is registered, official copies of the register and plan
- If the property is unregistered, an index map search and a "good root of title" with either an abstract or an epitome of title
- If the property is leasehold or commonhold a whole host of other documents too numerous to list here
- If part of the property is let, copies of any leases or tenancy agreements
- If the property is physically complete, either an HCR or (if the property is new) an acceptable warranty
- Other HCRs completed within the last 12 months unless completed for a previous seller or his agent
- A energy performance certificate, if not included in the HCR
- If the property is not physically complete before the first point of marketing, a report on a home not physically complete (new form)
- A land charge and local authority search and a water and drainage search.

Some of the Authorised documents

- Completed or partially completed HCF or HUF
- Documents referred to in the HUF or of interest to potential buyers (as listed in paragraph 2 of schedule 5 of the Regulations)
- Copy documents referred to in the official copies
- Further leasehold and commonhold documents
- Documentary evidence of repair or maintenance work carried out since the date of the HCR
- Copy warranties, guarantees or policies
- Further searches i.e. relating to mining, ground stability or relating to common land etc
- Searches relating to other land or property in the vicinity of the property which would be of interest to potential buyers of the property.

Biographical Information on Business People from biogs

The **RESEARCH** service at biogs exploits a vast range of publicly accessible biographical information including access to over 500 Who's Who directories along with many other printed reference works, both in-house and external online databases, archived websites, official documents and thousands of indexed press releases.

There are several services available, including **LEGALMOVES** - a twice monthly current awareness newsletter tracking lawyers and other professional staff as they move positions within the legal marketplace. *Readers of Internet Newsletter for Lawyers are offered an exclusive discount of 20% on the first year for subscriptions taken out during January 2006.*

All first enquiries are charged at half our normal rate of £90 + VAT per hour. For more information on all these services, visit www.biogs.co.uk, email info@biogs.co.uk or phone 01732 358861.

LEX Connect from Ark Group - an exclusive forum for strategic practice management 27 - 28 February 2006, Grange City Hotel, London

LEX Connect is an exclusive, invitation-only business strategy and solutions forum for UK and mainland European Managing Partners, and other senior decision makers who are currently involved in projects to improve the operational efficiency of their firms. Amongst much else, there will be case studies from Berwin Leighton Paisner, Van Doorne, Richards Butler, Shoosmiths, Weightmans and Wragge & Co.

View www.lexconnect.com, email connects@marketing.ark-group.com or ring 020 8785 5932.

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HIPAG and a trial of HIP production

The Home Information Pack Action Group (HIPAG) aims to obtain, for high street solicitors and independent estate agents, a high degree of control over the domestic conveyancing market and thereby help secure their futures. We now have over 300 member firms.

HIPAG will be commencing a trial of HIP compilation shortly, the Pre-Sale Legal Pack. A number of member firms have already volunteered to take part. In order to be compiled in the way that HIPs will eventually work, the trial will have to take place electronically, so firms taking part need to have a good quality fax machine or scanner; Win98 plus a PC; Email facilities; a Broadband Connection and IE Browser 5.5 or higher. The firms will also be involved in online activities, such as creating and uploading pdfs.

Our HIP production will be as follows:

The HIPAG associated estate agent will visit the property, value it and be instructed to sell it. The agent will explain to the seller that a HIP needs to be put in place before the property can be marketed.

Assuming that the seller wishes to order a HIP from HIPAG (because it will combine three essential elements, speed, quality and value for money) the agent will contact the HIPAG hub (by phone, text, fax or e-mail) where HIP production takes place. All the agent will need to do is provide the name of the owner and full postal address of the property. With that information the hub can request and obtain, immediately from the Land Registry, the Official Copies and a File Plan. Once the plan has been obtained the Searches (Local, Water and Drainage) can be requested. All of this work could/should be carried out whilst the agent is still at the property.

The agent will leave, with the seller, the new Home Use Form (HUF), Home Contents Form (HCF) and HIPAG's standard additional enquiries. He will recommend to the seller the local HIPAG solicitor that he has a business relationship with and ask the seller to take those forms, duly completed, to that solicitor as soon as possible.

The HIPAG hub will notify the chosen HIPAG solicitor and a local home inspector that the seller wishes to instruct them to act for him. The solicitor will send his quote/client care letter to the seller asking him to return their instruction form and at the same time deliver to them the completed HUF, HCF and standard additional enquiries. The solicitor will, after checking the forms, either post, fax or send electronically (after being scanned) those forms to the HIPAG hub.

The home inspector will arrange to visit the property and will carry out his inspection. Once his report has been prepared he will send it to the HIPAG hub electronically.

Within less than five working days the HIPAG hub will have, the Official Copies and File Plan, the completed HUF, HCF and standard additional enquiries, the results of the Searches and the Home Condition Report. The hub will add to those documents the Index, Sale Statement and any other "required" document. The hub will then send to the agent, in whatever format he requires, pdf, disk or hard copy etc the basic HIP (or the IMP, Initial Marketing Pack, as we will call it). The agent can then begin, legally, to market the property.

Unlike other HIP providers HIPAG's work will not end there. The hub will also send the IMP to the seller's solicitor. The

solicitor will review the IMP for obvious defects, of a legal nature for example, and begin rectifying those defects whilst the property is being marketed. By the time a buyer has been found, the solicitor will have turned the IMP into a QCP, a Quality Conveyancing Pack.

The solicitor will send his contract, the IMP and any additional documents, forming the QCP, to the buyer's solicitor. The buyer's solicitor will check these documents and advise the buyer that all is in order and either exchange contracts or wait for a mortgage offer to appear or wait for the rest of the chain to catch up, voila!

In a future edition of this newsletter, I will report on how the trial is progressing together with the latest information on e-conveyancing.

If anyone reading this article has any HIP related questions please e-mail them to me at rob@hipag.co.uk. This article is as extensive and as accurate as space will allow but does not cover every aspect of The Housing Act 2004 or the Regulations.

Rob Hailstone, CEO, HIPAG, The Independent HIP Group, www.hipag.co.uk.

Web Extras this month!

See www.venables.co.uk/n0601art.htm for these stories.

Why I use Firefox

by Andrew Barrett, of Vanderpump & Sykes

Andrew uses Firefox, the browser software now providing a (modest) challenge to Microsoft's Internet Explorer. He finds it easy and pleasant to use and much less prone to virus attack and other internet "nasties". The new version (version 1.5) is particularly good. He gives some references for further information.

Why I use an Apple Mac

By Stephen Mason, Barrister and IT and security expert

Stephen follows up on Robert Newey's article in the last issue, and agrees that the Apple Mac is very easy and pleasant to use, is compatible with most Windows applications and is more secure from a virus point of view. He even leaves his Windows computer on his desk and hides his Mac when he goes out, in the hope that a burglar would just take the Windows one!

Do you really need case management?

by Gordon Hewstone, of access law

Gordon objects to the assumption in Tim Platel's article, last time, that any firm doing conveyancing has to use case management. Why should this be the case? He describes some of the problems of having to cope with the rigidities of other peoples' case management system and says that, to some peoples' surprise, solicitors in his firm can actually remember the details of a case without needing to consult a computer.

Virtual Lawyers - how far can they go?

by Alex Heshmaty, web designer for legal applications

Alex looks at the concept of "virtual lawyers" which was much in vogue a few years ago and considers how far this is working in real life and how far it can (or should) go. He looks at how some firms are providing legal services online, as well as commercial concerns (including Tesco) and also considers some theoretical models for giving legal advice without human intervention.

Now BAILII is Seeking Historic Data by Joe Ury

Past methods of getting judgments transcribed and published at little or no cost to the courts has left much of our common law legal heritage locked up in a copyright confusion. The British and Irish Legal Information Institute (BAILII) is trying to wrest the right to publish a selection of important historical judgments from the various entities that have copyright in them. To this end, BAILII, www.bailii.org, is working closely with a body called JISC, the Joint Information Systems Committee. JISC is a committee of the UK further and higher education funding bodies responsible for supporting the innovative use of information and communication technology to support learning, teaching, and research.

This project, called the **JISC/BAILII Open Law Project**, aims to build a database of historic legal resources to be openly available to all. The project will last 3 years and will digitise thousands of core legal judgments and law reports, making them freely and openly available for the first time. BAILII will be greatly enhanced by being able to provide access not only to judgments in cases decided in the last 10 years, but also the most important judgments from the past. This will be of particular benefit to law faculties and students. It will also be of benefit to other users of BAILII such as Legal Advice Centres, Citizens Advice Bureaux, voluntary organisations and overseas users, many of whom are not in a position to subscribe to the Law Reports or to commercial databases.

The project aims to provide access to the most important judgments needed for teaching and studying law at all levels. Other areas will be covered to some extent so that staff and students dealing with legal issues on non-law courses will also benefit. The project will digitise a total of over 40,000 pages. This includes 2,000 judgments of the most cited English and Scottish and Northern Ireland judgments on the core areas of legal study, 400 judgments on non-core areas, 15 research reports in the core areas and 10 research reports in non-core areas.

The project also aims to improve and enhance the BAILII system interface to make it more user-friendly, to make improvements to the search engine and to add facilities that are particularly useful to UK legislation and materials.

Continuing work at BAILII

A visit to our site will show how much we have achieved in our first 38 months of existence. The number of users has doubled over the last year and there are now around 65,000 requests a day, split roughly evenly between solicitors and barristers. 70% of these users visit us at least once a week.

We now aim to increase the numbers of High Court judgments and to continue adding to the list of leading appeal tribunals whose decisions we publish. We are actively exploring ways to increase our coverage of material from Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Ireland. If, as we hope, we can secure access to the majority of these legal materials, BAILII will be an even more notable resource for practitioners, litigants, academics, and students and a major utility in providing the public with a resource to help increase their knowledge of our legal system.

With the continued support of our sponsors we can continue to make BAILII an even more valuable resource for an even larger audience.

Joe Ury is Executive Director of BAILII, www.bailii.org
Email Joe.Ury@sas.ac.uk

Note from Delia:

BAILII needs funds! There is a £50,000 gap between stable promised donations and the money needed to run the project each year, which makes planning very difficult. If BAILII is important to you, either as a resource you use personally or as a philosophical ideal (or both) then please provide a small piece of the funding. I donate £1 for every subscriber to this newsletter - £1,000 for each of the last 4 years. Surely your firm or chambers - or even you personally - could contribute as well? If you can help, please contact Joe Ury as above.

Blogging for Lawyers By Justin Patten

There are still only a small number of legal blogs which may be partly due to the fact they may seem rather mysterious. This short article seeks to throw some light on blogs!

A useful definition of a blog is given by the hosting firm TypePad who describe blogs as "a way of publishing to the web one idea at a time. By simplifying the process of publishing, letting authors create posts easily, and making it simple to link to related ideas on the web, blogs make it easy to update a website while still making sure your words retain a clear, personal voice."

With a blog, it is much easier to put material online (anything between a few words or a long essay) than to "manage" a website. For example, when you add new material, you do not have to rearrange the rest of the content - It happens automatically. In addition, you can invite comments from web users so that they can engage with what you have written online.

The main reason why I blog is that I have a strong interest in current affairs and technology. Blogging enables me to express my interest. I have only been blogging actively for

a couple of months but my own experience has been that my firm's website has gone up significantly in the search rankings and I have obtained two new clients.

Another example comes from Mills & Reeve who have a blog called Naked Law (nakedlaw.typepad.com) written by their technology team. According to Peter Wainman, blogging enables him and other lawyers to engage with the community and to raise the team's profile.

There are 2 key packages which you can use to host your blog: Blogger.com (www.blogger.com) and TypePad (www.typepad.com). Blogger.com is now owned by Google and its main advantage is that is free and you can set up a blog quite quickly. However, the quality of templates is only average and if you want to adjust these you have to use HTML code. TypePad has better templates and you can adjust them further without any knowledge of HTML. You can also easily analyse how many people have visited your site. Whilst there is a cost (between £50 and £150 a year) you receive a free 30 day trial.

There is a useful "blog about blogs" by an American marketing professional Emily Robbins (with comparisons of features) which can be found at blogging.typepad.com.

But take care! There is always a danger that you may write something you later regret. Lawyers should be tuned to the defamation issues of blogging and sometimes you need to pause, before you publish. With the nature of blogging, which encourages other users to make comments, you should always check (and edit) prior to publication.

"Subscription" and RSS

RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication or Remote Site Syndication (depending on whom you ask). This enables Internet users to "subscribe" to websites that have provided RSS feeds, typically sites that add content regularly.

The RSS formats provide web content or summaries of web content together with links to the full versions of the content, and other meta-data. This information is delivered as an XML file called an RSS feed, webfeed, RSS stream, or RSS channel. In addition to facilitating syndication, RSS allows a website's frequent readers to track updates on the site.

However, not all blogs provide an RSS feed - indeed, I have read that only 10% of blogs do this.

Justin Patten is a solicitor specialising in Intellectual Property and how technology is impacting business. His weblog is humanlaw.typepad.com. He also has a more conventional website at www.human-law.co.uk. He is now podcasting too! Email justin@human-law.co.uk.

Podcasting for Lawyers

by Tony Fisher

Podcasts are broadcasts which can be downloaded onto iPods, or any MP3 player, including mobile phones, and listened to whenever and wherever you like. You can also hear them from a PC; if you click on the relevant link on the site "hosting" the podcasts (in our case, a special site we have set up for this purpose, at www.i-legal.info) the audio files will play automatically via Windows Media Player, which about 99% of PC's will already have installed.

As the father of four teenage sons (*this explains a lot, Delia*) and the proud owner of my second iPod, I have been watching the emergence of podcasting with great interest.

For some time now it has been possible to download sound files, like music and audio books, from the internet. But it was only in 2004 that the software was developed to make these sound files available through subscription, so you can download files automatically or on request.

However, it really took off in June 2005 when iTunes (www.itunes.co.uk) launched its own podcast-friendly software, which you can download onto your PC. On its website, you'll see a section devoted to podcasting which allows you to subscribe for free to a wide range of radio shows and information podcasts. For many weeks, Chris Moyles from BBC Radio One held the top spot, until Ricky Gervais knocked him off with a podcast for the Guardian.

If you want to subscribe to a podcast, you just click the subscribe button next to the listing, and it will set up the "feed" for your computer using a special version of RSS. When a new podcast is available, your system is notified and you choose whether or not you want to download it. A half hour radio-style show takes less than a minute to download with broadband but it can eat up around 18MB of memory. If you only want one item, you just click on it and it starts playing straight away.

We are producing our podcasts on subjects ranging from how the new civil partnership law affects people applying for immigration through to issues such as redundancy and written particulars of employment. Within a week of going live, and thanks to publicity in the Law Society Gazette and various local publications, there were 1,500 downloads from our site and a number of enquiries. The most popular items of interest related to wills and immigration.

We now plan to record more of our 21 advice guides which also include family law, accident and personal injury, employment and conveyancing. As well as our own site, there are dozens of podcasting directories now emerging, to which we can add our podcasts, thus attracting (we hope) further visitors to our site. We feel that by podcasting our advice guides, we will encourage a younger audience to seek legal advice. Podcasts are also welcomed by people with visual impairments who struggle with heavily text-based sites.

All you need to do your own podcast is a microphone which you can plug into your PC or MP3 player, some recording software (which can be downloaded from the internet for free) and a prepared script for the person doing the podcast. You also need software to create the RSS feed and to load the MP3 sound file onto your website.

But you'd better hurry – it won't be long before vodcasts take over and videos will be the order of the day!

Tony Fisher is a partner at Fisher Jones Greenwood, in Colchester. The firm's main website is at www.fjg.co.uk and the special site for podcasts is at www.i-legal.info. Email TFisher@fjg.co.uk

Telephone/Web Seminars

by Daniel Barnett

To take part in a telephone/web seminar, delegates dial in to a telephone number (at national rate, i.e. just under 8p per minute) at a pre-arranged date and time. They then listen, on the telephone, to a live seminar. If delegates wish, they can listen over a speakerphone so that more than fee-earner can participate. Simultaneously, delegates with a broadband internet connection can watch a live PowerPoint presentation and can also type in questions which are immediately transmitted to the presenter who can then answer (or ignore!) them as the seminar proceeds.

No special software is required for the delegates apart from a standard browser. The market leader for presenting telephone/web conferences (and the most expensive) is BT (visit www.bt.com and search for 'BT Conference Call'). There are a number of reputable, and substantially less expensive, alternative providers including MeetingZone (see www.meetingzone.com) and PowWowNow (see www.powwownow.com). Depending on the level of service required (for example, whether you require a live assistant to help you, whether you will want to conduct real-time votes/polls, and whether you will want a streamed version made available after the seminar), rates are typically between 12p and 30p per minute per delegate.

Daniel Barnett is an employment law barrister at 1 Temple Gardens and runs the Employment Law (UK) mailing list, a free employment law bulletin which is distributed to 12,000 recipients. Visit www.danielbarnett.co.uk for further details. Email DanielBarnett@1templegardens.co.uk. He is presenting his age discrimination telephone/web seminars on 12th and 23rd January 2006. Visit www.danielbarnett.co.uk/age.htm for more details.

Considerations for Libraries of Law Firms in Ireland - Part 2

Note from Delia - the first part of this article related only to Irish legal resources and was not circulated in printed form to UK subscribers. It can however be downloaded from www.venables.co.uk/n0511irishreviewpart1.pdf. Most of Part 2, however, applies to all legal libraries!

How Electronic Resources Affect a Legal Library by Jane Clavin

Impact on the Library Space

With more and more material available electronically it is harder and harder to justify keeping hard copies on shelves. Most of the case law is now available electronically although there are still some gaps in the collection. The Irish Reports, Irish Law Times and the ILRM all have case law but there is no comprehensive site that collects all judgments, both reported and unreported. Until Firstlaw and BAILII came along there was no systematic attempt to capture *all* material be it reported or unreported. In practice this means that prior to 1997 unreported judgments are still only available in hard copy and from a library point of view these are still looked for. The Courts Service web site has only recently been developed. In an ideal world these judgments should still be stored in hard copy within the library although, when making a case with regard to library space, this point can be hard to get across.

Legislation however is a success story. Legislation from 1922 to today is available online so the printed material can be consigned to the archive.

This library here has just undertaken a review of its hardcopy resources and is placing over half of the collection in an archive. To continue to make resources available to fee earners, much of the archived material is now being purchased electronically. To reflect our change in emphasis from paper to electronic resources, the library is to be re-branded as a Knowledge Centre rather than a Library, a distinction that I think will be lost on most users!

For the future, one significant impact on the library space will be the likely reduction in traffic through the library. At the moment, people still use the library space a lot, though for many people this may be because it remains a quiet and congenial space to work. Librarians do not want their libraries to be banished to the basement and they are becoming quite creative in thinking what added value the library space can offer. One idea is to use the library space for training and seminars. Another is to incorporate a coffee area within the library and encourage users to "drop in" and read the papers.

Supervision of Library Users

There are concerns about research material being accessed by individuals from their own desks (and desktop computers) without supervision and not in the slightly more controlled atmosphere of the library.

- How can Library staff be confident that fee earners search correctly? In this firm all fee earners get several hours training on the various databases but this tends to take place when they start with the firm. After that, training is through seminars and on an ad hoc basis. This means that large numbers of fee earners are doing important and frequently complicated research unsupervised. There are some risks in this.

- The Google Effect. If there is one major negative impact of Google it is the perception that everything is on it and that if it is not there, then it is not available electronically. Trying to get fee earners to grasp that key databases such as Firstlaw and LexisNexis are not searched via Google is difficult and it is also important to get across to users that even now, not everything is available electronically.
- Some users are convinced they have missed something or do not trust the technology at all and insist on reproducing research on hard copy resources.
- Other users may be over confident but inexperienced and think they have everything – these are almost a greater liability than the ones who research everything twice!

Training

Training is the key to getting lawyers used to the vagaries of several systems, and possibly more importantly, to the scope and range of individual systems. I don't imagine that this law firm is the only one to experience the frustration of setting up training sessions only for work matters to become more important and the fee earner not to show up.

To ensure the correct use of these systems, and therefore ultimately to ensure that clients have access to the quickest and most accurate information available, the importance of training and attending training sessions needs to be at the heart of the firm's information policy. A culture needs to be developed that will encourage people to see the importance or this. This culture very seldom grows of its own accord and probably has to be imposed from the "top down". The use of CPD points has gone a long way in encouraging attendance at seminars and this firm is discussing using training etc as part of the fee earners' yearly review.

Budget

The biggest impact of the ever growing dependence on electronic resources is on the library budget. While purchasing a book is a once off transaction, at least until the next edition, purchasing an electronic resource will involve yearly outgoings. Taking into account annual increases, your library budget can increase every year but still leave you little room for new purchases.

Another significant issue is user licences. If I purchase a book as a librarian the publisher knows full well that I am not going to be the only one reading it. However if I purchase that same book through some electronic medium the size of the firm suddenly becomes important and can add considerably to the cost. This applies particularly to journals. There is also the problem of taking out a subscription for a small department only to find that the price cannot reflect the 4 fee earners in that department but is reflective of the whole firm.

Use of Electronic Resources

Finally, is all this worth it? Do solicitors use electronic resources, and are they happy with them? I can only comment on my experiences within this firm, but, perhaps predictably, each new wave of apprentices brings with it a fresh enthusiasm and technological competence. This has led to the development of a two tier technology skill set. The new apprentices are confident about using any technology (for competency see above) whilst the older users are more likely to ask Knowledge Centre staff to do searches for them.

*Jane Clavin is Knowledge Services Manager in A&L Goodbody, Dublin, www.algoodbody.ie, one of Ireland's largest and most prestigious firms.
Email jclavin@algoodbody.ie*

Westlaw UK now provides Weekly Law Reports and Industrial Cases Reports

Following an agreement with ICLR, **Westlaw UK** has added **23,000** more **Weekly Law Reports** (WLRs) and **2,800** more **Industrial Cases Reports** (ICRs) to the existing archive of over 130,000 case reports and transcripts online.

With an archive now stretching back to 1953 for the WLRs and 1972 for the ICRs, this major content addition cements Westlaw UK's position as the UK's premier aggregator of primary law materials. Along with the Official Law Reports, already part of Westlaw UK, the WLRs sit at the top of the judicial hierarchy of law report citation.

Access to both the WLRs and the ICRs are included in a Westlaw UK subscription.

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DeadMan's Handle - stops data theft in its tracks

Losing your notebook might be expensive - but losing your data could be catastrophic.

When your notebook vanishes, panic can replace it. What was on the machine? Was there adequate security - and was it properly activated? You are faced with the prospect of sensitive information falling into the wrong hands.

DeadMan's Handle stops that happening the moment your missing notebook is turned on. Unauthorised access leads to deletion of all designated information and the program itself; no indication is left that there was anything of importance on the machine.

DeadMan's Handle is a new approach to security. It has won a 9/10 "Editor's Choice" award from "What Laptop", a UKT&I innovation award and a nomination for the coveted European IST award.

For more information, visit DeadMan's Handle at www.deadmanshandle.com.

Westlaw UK Intellectual Property From Sweet & Maxwell

Leading commentary from Copinger & Skone Jones on Copyright, Kerly's Law of Trade Marks and Trade Names and Terrell on the Law of Patents - an indispensable source for any intellectual property lawyer.

Key benefits include these:

- ✓ Seamless searching and cross-referencing throughout the text
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