

## From the Editors' Desks

Welcome to this, our third issue for the year and a special issue focussing on technology in legal practice. We call it a special issue not because it is outside our publication schedule but because it focuses on the other side of the computers and law dichotomy: the use of computers in law. Our recent issues have all examined the law of computers, and have kept you up to date with the current developments, through the addition of casenotes, and special comments. As part of our commitment to the other side of computers and law we will continue these special issues focussing on the technology in use in a legal environment. In time, and if there is sufficient interest, we may well organise separate subscription lists, for those who are interested in only one side or the other.

In this issue, our authors do not write about massive development

projects; the kinds of systems which cost hundreds of thousands, but rather they talk about the sorts of systems which all lawyers can use. The articles all discuss legal technology, but have their focus on litigation support. Litigation support is the next wave of legal support systems, following on the heels of wordprocessing and accounting systems.

Our contributors have a broad range of experience, and this is evident from their articles. David Levin of the Victorian Bar talks of the extremely advanced and effective use he and his team made of litigation support in the *Occidental* case. Perhaps the most salient point to note from his article is that the entire case (all three actions, thirty-five odd parties, hundred claims and tens of thousands of documents) was run with personal computers and off-the-shelf software. The lessons he

describes should be known and addressed by all litigation support managers.

Stephen McNamara of Litigation Management Consultancy Services then gives tips on how to purchase hardware and software for litigation support. He comments are equally valid for computer purchases outside the litigation field. Vicky Harris of Clayton Utz talks of how she sees litigation support in the 90s, and how it will develop. We conclude this section with some alternative uses for litigation support techniques written by one of our illustrious [and beautiful, don't forget beautiful-Ed] editors, Elizabeth Broderick.

As a special extra we have sub-theme to this issue: Alternative Dispute Resolution and Computers. We have two short articles on how to use the methodology of ADR in computer disputes.

Then we have a book reviews on legal technology. We have reviews of books for litigation support, advanced information systems and viruses. These books are a good place to start if your appetite has been whetted by the theme.

We finish with abstracts of recent journals of interest. We have actively pursued international journals, and have permission to print abstracts from a number of them. We hope that this will give you some indication of which journals are relevant to your practices. Over time we will add more.

We hope that you enjoy this issue. In future special issues we will look at those technologies which are being used by every day barristers and solicitors: technologies like typesetting, DTP, graphics, databases and document modelling. Let us know what you want!

**The Editors.**



### COMPUTERS & LAW

#### Editors

**Elizabeth Broderick**  
c/- Blake Dawson Waldron  
225 George Street  
Sydney 2000 AUSTRALIA  
Tel: (02) 258 6410  
Fax: (02) 258 6999

**Daniel Hunter**  
c/- Deakin University  
Geelong Campus  
Geelong 3217 AUSTRALIA  
Tel: (052) 271 277  
Fax: (052) 272 151

#### Layout & Design Virginia Gore

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