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TBJ ARTICLE

Tulsa firms respond to e-discovery needs

Stephen Hillman
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While the legal industry nationally and at the state level has put or is putting into place rules dealing with the complexities of e-discovery, the handling of electronically stored information has created a service industry of its own.

Tulsa firms Litgistix Business Solutions LLC and Avansic have grown their businesses to meet the increasing demand for ESI services.

In fact, Litgistix, which served the legal and business community for most of its 30 years as the The Copy Shop in downtown Tulsa, this year changed its name to reflect its expanded legal and business services, said Brian Grossman, co-owner and CEO.

Located in the historic McFarlin building at 5 E. Fifth St., the firm, which offers a range of services from traditional copying, binding and offset printing to high-end litigation support, scanning, e-discovery, trial support and video services, has found its ESI processing services and technical solutions to support the e-discovery process are the fastest growing segment of its business.

With a core customer base of law firms, representing more than 70 percent of sales, Grossman said when the current owners took over the business in 2002, they realized the traditional services were moving more into scanning.

"We implemented scanning right away," he said. "Now it has evolved from scanning into e-discovery. Scanning and e-discovery combined is probably 40 percent of our business today. We expect next year it is going to be more than 50 percent."

Based on the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure recognizing ESI in 2006, with similar rules due on a state level in November, ESI services range from



Brian Grossman, seated, co-owner and CEO, and Luke Harris, e-discovery analyst, said they see growing demand for e-discovery services at Litgistix LLC.

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preservation of data to converting electronic information into a format usable by attorneys (generally turning them into TIFFs or PDFs).

To meet the growing needs of its legal clients, Litgistix has bolstered its staff, hiring a certified paralegal and, in 2007, bringing on board e-discovery analyst Luke Harris.

"We could see it coming from the East Coast and the West Coast, and we knew it was moving into middle America so we could prepare for the tsunami of e-discovery that was headed our way," Harris said.

Grossman said Litgistix relies on strategic partners like Avansic, 401 S. Boston Ave., Suite 17011, and Houston-based Trial Solutions of Texas LLC, provider of litigation support software ImageDepot, to provide services outside its current scope.

The missing gap is a certified information technology forensics person, and that will probably be the next hire, he said.

Avansic, an e-discovery and digital forensics firm founded in Tulsa by President and CEO Gavin Manes in 2004, has also seen its business expand to meet the demand in the ESI industry.

"There have definitely been changes over the past few years regarding the relationship between e-discovery and digital forensics, and how lawyers use those services in the greater context of litigation," Manes said.

"We used to do mostly forensics, and now we do mostly e-discovery," said Manes, a University of Tulsa graduate and nationally recognized expert in the field. "Additionally, we have grown leaps and bounds in out-of-state business and regularly service the New Orleans, Dallas and Houston markets."

Litgistix has seen a growth in demand not only for services, but for ESI presentations, education and consulting.

Harris said law firms, especially small- to medium-size firms that don't have an internal IT staff to advise them, rely on Litgistix to provide them with options for dealing with ESI requirements.

"They are starting to lean on us for what they are supposed to do," he said. "We are seeing an uptick in more quotes, more education and more questions about how to handle this."

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