# Report #4

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REPORT NO. 4 - The Vendors and Other Techie News

This report is usually Report #1, but it took us longer than expected to gather up all the information we could from the vendors who were in the Exhibit Hall at Heckerling this year and compile it into this Report. In addition, it took us much longer than we expected to compile this Report. Due to these delays, we have been able to negotiate extensions of some of the special show deals and prices that were being offered by the vendors at Heckerling (**see further below re**).

We are indebted to **Jim Eidelman** of Eidelman Associates (President of the Company that markets the EP Expert software system that is built on top of his WinDraft system and Microsoft Word - further details on this product are below) and **Alan Rothschild**, the current Co-Chair of the ABA RPPT Sections Public Web Site Committee and former Chair of the PT Division's Technology Committee) for carrying the laboring oar on the below "Reports from the Exhibit Hall."

**First, a list of who was (and, interestingly, was not) there (in alpha order):**

BNA Software - www.bnasoftware.com
Brentmark Software - www.brentmark.com
Cowles Legal Systems - http://www.cowleslegal.com/
Crescendo Software - www.crescendosoft.com
CCH Inc. - www.tax.cch.com
Eidelman Associates - www.lawtech.com
Lackner Computer Group - www.lacknergroup.com
Leimberg & LeClair, Inc. - www.leimberg.com
ProBATE Software - www.probate-software.com
ProDoc Will Forms - www.prodoc.com
Schumacher & Co. - www.estplanning.com
TEdec Systems - www.tedec.com
US Trust Company of New York - www.ustrust.com
WealthCounsel LLC - www.wealthcounsel.com
West Group - www.westgroup.com
Zane & Associates - www.zanenet.com
ZCalc

**And among the missing (we were told) were:**

ACTEC Quicken Templates - www.actec.org - but then they still only sell this to lawyers according to their Web site
Advanced Logic Systems DPS - no Web site, but you can e-mail sales@dpsbyals.com
Appraise - www.appraisenj.com
Estate Valuations & Pricing Systems (EVP) - www.evpsys.com
FastDraft
Financial Data Service - www.financialdata.com
Lawgic Publishing - www.lawgic.com
The Technology Group, Inc.
Tiger Tables - www.tigertables.com **but** see further below

**Next, here is the Report that was filed by Alan Rothschild:**

Report on Current Technology at Heckerling Estate Planning Institute
by Alan F. Rothschild Jr. Esq.

The Institute again offered a broad array of technology vendors and products, from online research services to sophisticated document assembly and estate forecasting software. The major research services, such as **RIA & Lexis-Nexis**, had impressive exhibits of their latest product offerings—primarily online research services. Both were pushing their practice-oriented pricing plans at the meeting. Lexis also exhibited its limited, **state-specific Wills & Trusts forms**, which I think are the old Matthew Bender products.

**CCH's** primary focus was its newly redesigned **ViewPlan**, which is CCH's primary planning software today (it previously offered Vista as well). Initial cost is around $925, renewal $535. The new version appears to offer simpler interface and the ability to automatically adjust for new tax law or to manual insert exemption amount and tax rate. CCH is also in the process of merging some of its other planning programs and rolling out a new program in 2002. Although not exhibited at Heckerling, it is also pushing a product by an affiliated company called **ProSystem FX**. This is a new "tax compliance" package that will prepare Forms 706, 709, etc.

Some of the vendors that seem to have their regular exhibits included **Crescendo's Planning Giving** program (seems to be more oriented to development rather than attorneys), **Lackner's 6-in-1** system, and **US Trust's E-Plan** software and **Practical Drafting** series, both in hard copy and CD-ROM.

One trend that seems to be gaining ground is client communication and interaction via the Internet. **Connect2A.com** exhibited their site which boasts of such interactivity, while **PPC** and **ProBATE Systems** both marketed their new services which allowed online communication and/or information sharing with clients and other professionals on the planning team. This is either a trend to watch or an attempt to sell something that can be accomplished with a firm website and e-mail, we'll have to see.

**PPC** also exhibited its **Estate & Trust Consultant**, which for around $500 offers some very sophisticated estate planning research on CD-ROM, including material on preparing 706/709 & 1041, ILIT's and FLP's. A good value in the higher end products.

**Brentmark** and **ZCalc** were also present with their excellent forecasting and tax calculation products. Saw a new **Charitable** planning program that runs on ZCalc but did not get to review the details. Brentmark also said it had just come out with **College Funding** and **Stock Options** programs, but I did not review these either.

**Most interesting** was the **document assembly situation**. **ProDoc** was again present with its **Texas and Fla.** document assembly programs. Their president (Alan Schoolcraft Esq.) says they have over 4000 subscribers now and will be adding at least one more state this year, although sadly they have discontinued supporting the **Colorado Probate System** as of 2002. Perhaps **the really big news** from Heckerling 2002 was the **absence of** both **Lawgic** and **The Technology Group (Wealth Transfer Planning).** In prior years, these booths drew lots of attention and buzz. Both products ran into serious financial trouble in late 2001, and their futures are yet to be determined. I followed up after the conference with insiders from each of these entities, and there does appear to be both a commitment and a real interest in continuing these two fine document assembly programs somehow. However, for the time being, I understand that **Lawgic** is offering e-mail and web site support only, but is not issuing any new program updates while support for

**WTP** is now being provided by an independent contractor via the vendor's **LawOnTheWeb** Web site, which is finally back up and running again .

2002 will be a very important year for both of these products and document assembly software in general (see immediately below re the **EP Expert & WinDraft** and new **WealthCounsel** DAE software offerings).

**Next, a "virtual" report from your Editor himself from the snow-covered ski slopes of Keystone, Colorado, on some other "hot of the presses" document assembly news:**

**EP Expert & WinDraft:**

First, and although Jim Eidleman's EP Expert document drafting system is not really "new," as it has been around for some time now, there have been several recent improvements in it, and the law firms of Holland and Hart LLP in Denver and Joslyn, Keydel & Wallace LLP in Detroit (amongst others) have both installed this system recently, in one case to replace an ageing CAPS system and support the firm's permanent move from WordPerfect to Word.

EP Expert is not just a document production system - it is a practice system for estate planners that not only drafts trusts, wills, powers of attorney and related supporting documents, using either the system's model documents or the law firm's own documents and language, but it prints out an outline checklist and integrates with document management and other Windows programs. One drawback (for those of us who are loyal users of the Corel's WordPerfect software) is that this product is currently designed for use only with Microsoft Word, but one plus is that the assembled documents seamlessly end up in MS Word where they can be freely edited and revised. The underlying "engine" for this product is the Company'e proprietary WinDraft document assembly system, which can optionally integrate with DOCS Open or iManage and other document management software programs and uses an ACCESS database "under the hood."

Some highlights from the current versions are (1) a visual outline-structured dual-window front-end with wording and questions that can even be customized and allows the user to visually see all the available decisional choices, (2) the fact that favorite document patterns can be assembled and saved as a single form for later reuse, 3) its automatic handling of gender changes, and (4) its EPPeople feature that can be used for entering recurring data.

According to Jim, EP Expert is designed for use both in small firms **(see small firm show special below)** and on a network in a large firm with DOCS Open and iManage integration. The core forms that come with his system are now being supported by a reputable large "old-line" law firm [he didn't tell me who it is] and have been updated for the new tax Act. In addition, he is about to add a community property RLT for use in CP states.

Considering that Jim is considered one of the "grandfathers" of document assembly systems and technology in the ABA Law Practice Management Section, I think you can safely rely on Jim's expertise, knowledge and product development in this area.

**WealthCounsel**:

The newest, and probably most exciting, entry into the document assembly marketplace this year is the WealthCounsel Practice System. Although this Company came out with its Family Limited Partnership system in late November of 1999, and exhibited it at Heckerling in January of 2001, this system alone seemed to be very expensive for the price, and this was so even though the whole system is designed to work with HotDocs 5.1and above (HotDocs 5.3 is required for PCs running Windows XP). It too is programmed to output documents only in MS Word (97, 2000 or XP 2002), although, presumably, the resulting Word documents can then be saved out as RTF or lesser version WordPerfect documents and ported over to Corel WordPerfect for final touch up and printing without a whole lot of lost Word special formatting.

However, since the 11/99 introduction of their FLP system, WealthCounsel has since introduced (or will soon) five more practice systems, all of which function exactly the same, and all of which are sold as a single practice system for a single price that has made the relatively high price for this product seem much more reasonable. Those systems are for **Living Trusts** (4/01), **Irrevocable Trusts** (9/01), **Charitable Trusts** (CRTs in 9/01 - others to come) and **Wills** (11/01). The addition of a **Split-Interest** practice system that will do QPRTs, GRATs, GRUTs, Split-Dollar agreements, Private Annuities, SCINs, GRITs and Split-Interest trusts, is in the works now and is scheduled for release in the fall of 2002, all as part of this single one-price software package.

As for pricing, **for those who attended Heckerling, or those who order this product before the end of January of this year AND MENTION when they do that they heard about this offer on the ABA-PTL or the CBA-TES lists**, the costs is $7,000 annually payable either (a) $0 down plus $575 per month for 24 months, or (b) $1,500 down plus $575 per month for 12 months, or (c) $3,500 down plus $350 per month for 12 months, or (d) a one-time payment of $7,000. Otherwise, and after 12/31/01 for all other customers, the cost is $8,150 annually payable either (a) $1,675 down plus $675 per month for 12 months, or (b) $3,900 down plus $390 per month for 12 months, or (c) a one-time payment of $8,150. This annual fee gives you the software, technical support, any software additions, updates or improvements, and access to the **Knowledge Base** that is on the private side of the WealthCounsel Web site at http://www.wealthcounsel.com/ as well as discounted pricing on their periodic **Curriculum and Study Group** offerings. Although the annual fee for this system is high, it is my understanding (but don't hold me to this - ask them) that your annual fee thereafter will remain at the same level forever (presumably with the same monthly payment options) regardless of any future price increases for new subscribers.

I was privileged to be able to try out a beta version of the FLP system in December of 1999 (quite impressive once I got it up and running) and to see the updated version of this system in actual operation first-hand in mid-December of 2001 (also quite impressive). I picked up a free credit-card sized DEMO CD from them then, but I have not had the time to install and run it yet, so I highly recommend getting one of those demos and trying it out first before you buy. Since this program uses HotDocs to make it all happen, I sure am glad I have the Corel Legal Office Suite loaded, as it comes with HotDocs 5.1 already built in. Makes you wonder why this system can't be redesigned to output the finished documents in a modifiable WordPerfect or RTF format too. I am told this is due to some of Microsoft's proprietary format code programing that is used by and forms a core part of the proper functioning of this system.

**And here from Jim Eidelman and me (in no particular order) are some further random tidbits of useful vendor and software information:**

**The Technology Group [WTP]** - has unplugged its answering machine, but it's **LawOnTheWeb** Web site is back up and running again, and updates to WTP 2.4 can be downloaded from there. Discussions are currently under way to try and salvage this Company and/or its software.

**Lawgic (CA and FL Wills & Trusts - Promised to Add NY in 2001]** - you can't reach them by phone either, but we are told that tech support is answering e-mails, and license extensions of their existing products for current subscribers can be downloaded from their Web site. Here again, discussions are currently under way to try and salvage this Company and/or at least its estate planning and Delaware incorporation software offerings, as the Miami, Florida law firm of Holland & Knight has a substantial amount of time and expertise invested in Lawgic's **Florida Wills & Trusts** system and was going to help Carlyn McCaffrey [ACTEC President Elect] build the promised **New York** system.

**West Group [Bob Wilkins' DWTA]** - still there and still being updated and maintained, but it still runs in CAPS vs. HotDocs, and Bob wants to retire from this project (we don't blame him given all the years of time away from his law practice he has devoted to technology improvements for lawyers), so the DWTA system is UP FOR SALE to anyone who wants to buy and continue to maintain it, provided (last we heard) they keep Bob on as a consultant for few years and keep Joy employed on staff as a programmer.

**West Group [Don Kelley's IEP]** - a new and improved Version 4.0 was released in December of 2001. FYI, this product comes with its own customizable set of slides for use in building client and group presentations.

**CCH Inc. [ViewPlan & Vista]** - they have revamped the program, added Factuary to it, and started issuing it on CD's in 2001. One big problem with it is the rather novel way they chose to handle the repeal of the estate tax in 2010 and its re-enactment in 2011.

**Tiger Tables** - they did not have a booth this year, but the word on the Internet is that the author and sole tech supporter for this product, St.Louis attorney Larry Katzenstein, has just released a new version of his **Tiger Tables** calculation software. You can obtain a copy at http://www.tigertables.com/. Larry reports "I have put my interrelated estate tax calculator (**Intertax**) in the program as a utility, along with my amortization program. The program has a totally new look and feel, along with various additions and enhancements. For example, the self-canceling installment note will now figure the principal or risk premium for interest-only and equal principal notes as well as self-amortizing notes, and the CRAT and CRUT programs will calculate factors for a term of years or until the prior deaths of from 1 to 10 individuals." If you don't have this software program on hand, you are missing something you really need to have in your estate planning bag of tricks

**Client and Group Presentation Programs** - seems everyone is headed in this direction in one way or another, including attorney Matt Dana and his **Power Presentations** product that he was demonstrating in Miami. **Crescendo** similarly has a charitable gift planning presentation program, and their's even comes with built in audio. As was noted above, the West Group **IEP** product ships with a built-in set of over 100 presentation slides that can be individually or group selected for use in a specific client or group presentation, and you can even produce and add you own additional slides if you want to. **PPC** and **ProBATE** similarly have introduced client presentation and contact software products, and **ConnectA2.com**, which is "an application service that lets accountants, attorneys, financial professionals, and their clients, securely gather and share personal and financial information over the Internet during the planning, lifetime maintenance, and after-death administration of a client's wealth strategies plan," was back at Heckerling again this year for the second year in a row. **Leimberg & LeClair** and **Crescendo** also have several video and PowerPoint presentation products available for sale.

**Tax Return Preparation** - not a whole lot new here. The same all-in-one integrated software system players are still in business: **West Group's EPS**, **Zane & Associates**, the **Lackner Group (6-in-1)**, and **ProBATE**. **US Trust** still offers, in addition to their **Practical Drafting** quarterly publication that is edited by Richard Covey of NYC and is now available on a Folios-searchable CD-ROM, and their **Factors** tax calculation software, their **EPlan** software for doing sophisticated estate planning calculations and software that will prepare the **Forms 706 and 709**, but they still do not have a Form 1041 program, nor a fiduciary accounting program (but then, as a trust company, why would they develop one?). **BNA** similarly is still limiting themselves to software only for preparing the **Forms 706 and 709**, but new 2002 versions of their **Estate Tax** and **Income Tax** calculation and planning programs have just been released, and they have added many handy bells and whistles to these two long-standing programs over the years.

**Tax Calculations Software** - we have mentioned some of these already (see above), but we don't want to overlook **Brentmark Software** out of Orlando, Florida. Although this Company has been through a couple of ownership transitions over the years, they are solidly in business now under the able leadership of Greg Kolojeski, who is now ably assisted by none other than Jane Schuck. We just received their 2002 Catalog, and their offerings of estate planning, financial planning a retirement planning software products is quite impressive. New to their lineup of software product offerings in 2001are their **College Planning Tools** ($395), **Stock Options Risk Analyzer** ($695), and **RetireNow** ($349) programs. They also offer on-line retirement plan publications [ www.goldbergreports.com], three informational Web sites for ROTH IRAs [ http://www.rothira.com/], the new Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) rules [ http://www.newrmd.com/] and for ROTH 401k

[ http://www.roth401k.com/], plus a custom Web Page Design service (with license pricing for that service starting at $15,000, it had better be a pretty fancy Web site offering).

**NOW FOR SOME HECKERLING SPECIAL OFFERS:**

**Offer #1:** According to Jim Eidelman, **EP Expert**, which is designed for use both in small firms (1 to 5 users) and on a network in a large firm with DOCS Open and iManage integration, will be made available in the small firm version only for a show-special price of $2,495 until the end of next week **PROVIDED** you mention the 2002 Heckerling Reports when you order.

**Offer #2:** As was mentioned above, **WealthCounsel** is offering all of their WealthCounsel Practice Systems for the pre-2002 Heckerling show-special price of $7,000 annually, payable either (a) $0 down plus $575 per month for 24 months, or (b) $1,500 down plus $575 per month for 12 months, or (c) $3,500 down plus $350 per month for 12 months, or (d) a one-time payment of $7,000, **PROVIDED** you mention you heard about this offer on the ABA-PTL list (or, for those of you from Colorado, the CBA-TES list). Otherwise, and after 12/31/01 for all other customers, the cost has been increased to $8,150 annually.

**AND ANOTHER HECKERLING SPECIAL (a repeat announcement):**

**Offer #3:** Stephan Leimberg <steve@leimbergservices.com> has recently informed us that his Company [**Leimberg & LeClair**] is willing to offer a Heckerling Special for anyone who sees this announcement and subscribes to his **LISI Newsletter** service during the time the Institute is taking place and before the Final Report is issued. All you have to do is send an e-mail to service@leimbergservices.com and include the words HECKERLING DISCOUNT in the subject. Bob LeClair will get back to you and handle the sign-up. They will give those people a monthly price of $13.95 rather than the $14.95 regular price. You also can take a free look at the site and its many services by going to http://www.leimbergservices.com/ and clicking on the blue FREE TRIAL button on the top right.

**CONCLUSION:**

We are sure we have forgotten to mention someone or some new software product or some jucy bit of vendor news, and for that we apologize in advance, but your Editor is running out steam and way too late in getting this Report out today as previously promised, so we are going to call it quits here for now. If any other vendors or attendees at Heckerling have any information they want us to cover in later Reports, just e-mail it to us c/o jghodges@jghlaw.com in the next day or so.

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That is it for Report No. 4. The full text of all the Reports will be posted on the ABA RPPT Web site at http://www.americanbar.org/groups/real_property_trust_estate.html.

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**MIAMI INSTITUTE GENERAL INFORMATION:**

Inquiries/Registration:
Philip E. Heckerling Institute on Estate Planning
University of Miami School of Law
Center for Continuing Legal Education
P.O. Box 248087
Coral Gables, FL 33124-8087
Telephone: 305-284-4762 / FAX: 305-284-6752
==========================================
Headquarters Hotel - Fontainebleau Hilton, Miami Beach, FL
Telephone (305) 538-2000, FAX (305) 674-4607
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Joseph G. Hodges Jr. Esq., Denver, CO
ABA-PTL Discussion List Chief Moderator
jghodges@jghlaw.com