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## Chris Dale Lawyer Support

Comment on eDisclosure and other IT matters

### [Legal Technology Awards 2009](#)

I went to the [Legal Technology Awards](#) last night at the kind invitation of Nigel Murray of [Trilantic](#). Nigel disappointingly, turned up in black tie and not the lycra cycling gear which we had hoped to see (read [Murray to cycle across the Channel](#) if you find this reference obscure).

Trilantic emerged as Highly Commended in the category Electronic Disclosure Support / Service Provider of the year in this, its third year of being short-listed. The category winners were Merrill Legal Solutions.

This year's venue was the Royal Lancaster Hotel (so called, said Mock the Week's Hugh Dennis, because Lancaster is the nearest place to park). The food and everything was fine, but I suspect the architects muddled the floor plan with that of the underground car park - a long, low, dark space in which the apparently obligatory thudding music drowned out conversation. One of the reasons we go (and several hundred did) is to see people we know or want to know and to talk to them. I should have taken a torch and an ear trumpet.

I did track down the [Taylor Wessing](#) table in the gloom - I was a litigation partner at predecessor firm Taylor Joynson Garrett. They won the CSR/green IT initiative of the year award and were disappointed not also to get the team achievement award for City/national IT team of the year. Their claim to that was that they brought in three major IT projects in the year including an office move which came in at £1 million under budget.

I was the IT partner there who did the legwork eighteen years ago on a project to unify the several WP and other systems which were the legacy of a spate of mergers. Gordon Jackson, who was then Managing Partner, was at the Awards last night on his last day before retiring as a partner at the firm. Back then, the firm had no IT Director and we did all the specification and project planning for ourselves.

I particularly recall a long meeting with Gordon on 16 October 1990. I can date it so precisely because it went on for so long that I nearly missed the birth of my third son,



William, in Oxford that evening. Eighteen years on and Taylor Wessing has an IT director, Tim Hyman, with a staff of more than 20. He, like me, is off to LegalTech in New York tomorrow, as, indeed, is William (though unlike the rest of us, William does not have speaking commitments at LegalTech).

Eighteen years ago we still had partners who could not understand what was wrong with the old Olivetti typewriters and who queried the investment in all this new-fangled stuff. I still have a copy of the memo I circulated a little later suggesting that lawyers would soon communicate by e-mail, an idea of which Gordon Jackson was the only other proponent in the firm.

Now, he is retiring, and I am still urging lawyers to adopt new technology, now on a rather larger