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LAW: Confidentiality with clients now assured

Psst! E-mail secrets safe

By Jon Griffin

BIRMINGHAM Law Society is spearheading a pilot project which will put e-mail security at the heart of member firms' dealings with clients.

The society has joined forces with email encryption specialists Securecoms Ltd to trial a service which safeguards e-mail dealings between client and law firm, helping to ensure confidentiality.

The Law Society has guidelines for lawyers about e-mail security and recommends encryption as a means of keeping sensitive correspondence from prying eyes.

"While firms often go to great lengths to look at internet secu-

urity they invariably overlook their e-mail correspondence with clients," said Neil Lovell, of Securecoms.

"E-mail traffic has increased exponentially in recent years and is now the standard route for communicating with clients, yet most of the time the lack of security means lawyers might as well be sending an open postcard to their clients.

"A myth has built up that encryption is difficult and costly but, as Birmingham Law Society has seen, it is something that can be simple, easily achievable and cost-effective."

Birmingham Law Society has made it a priority to identify an e-mail security solution for members.

In joining forces with Securecoms it is able to offer members a free trial period using the company's encryption product.

If the trial proves successful, the city's Law Society and Securecoms will look at offering the service to the society's 300 members at a discounted rate.

Paul Farrow, chief executive of Birmingham Law Society, said: "E-mail is fundamental to our duty of client confidentiality and we wish to encourage best practice in this area.

"We have gone to great lengths to identify a solution, and believe that in Securecoms we have found a partner that delivers e-mail security simply and affordably."