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# Counsel on Call Steps Up E-Discovery Game, Acquires DSi

The legal services group is looking to update its business strategy to compete in the modern e-discovery industry.

Ian Lopez, Law Technology News

September 7, 2017

In effort to bolster competition in a changing e-discovery industry, Nashville-based legal services group Counsel on Call announced on September 6 that it has acquired e-discovery group DSicovery (DSi). The acquisition is Counsel on Call's first acquisition and its first move in updating its competitive approach in the rapidly consolidating e-discovery industry. The terms of the acquisition were not made public.

For the time being, each company will retain its respective name under the acquisition, as well as their current outside partnerships, client bases and operations. Counsel on Call, which offers managed review, process design and consulting services around e-discovery technology and workflows, will now offer DSi technology and services as an optional add on.

Barry Dark, CEO at Counsel on Call, told Legaltech News that DSi will basically run as a "line of business" within Counsel on Call, which will "kind of sit side-by-side with what we call our managed review services," which works closely with DSi already. The acquisition "gives us an opportunity to work together as one company when clients want this [service]."

Dark said that because the company had "only mainly been a people business in the past," it was important "get the technical DNA that [DSi] has to drive automation" for clients, as well as better leverage technology in legal services delivery.

For DSi, meanwhile, the acquisition provides wider access to Counsel on Call's client base, which Counsel on Call claimed in a release to include one-quarter of Am Law 200 firms and one-third of the Fortune 100. Prior to the acquisition, Counsel on Call and DSi had been partners for nearly ten years. Dark said Counsel on Call will continue working with its other technology partners in offering legal services, adding that he had discussions with them a day prior to the announcement.

"Generally, it's been okay. I think they realize DSi has a focus in certain areas," Dark said. He

added that Counsel on Call works with different partners in different geographic areas that are still preferred by clients, and the company wanted to let partners know that “they can still work with us on an independent basis.”

DSi will still continue to work with its partners, some of which are legal services providers. For the company’s hosting and technology partners, there’s “tremendous enthusiasm” for the acquisition, said John Burchfield, president at DSi. For those in competition with Counsel on Call, however, “they’ll be at best okay with it.”

“If you’re a competitor with Counsel on Call, the fact is that DSi is pairing with Counsel on Call is not good news for you. And while we will certainly work independently with those partners, it’s not what their preference would have been,” he added.

Burchfield will remain president of DSi, and there are no plans for employee moves at this time.

The move marks Counsel on Call’s first in what Dark called e-discovery’s “expanding in the datasphere,” where “there’s certainly compression on pricing basis” and clients “want more end-to-end” solutions.

Dark said he wouldn’t describe the acquisition as part of a broader acquisition strategy, but rather “reexamining the strategy of the business ... given the continued change in the legal services market.” He noted that there weren’t any future plans of acquisitions that he could discuss.

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