

Voice dictation tools helpful, but still have kinks



HI-TECH

**LUIGI
BENETTON**

Voice dictation tools are still working out a number of kinks, but they can prove helpful to time-pressed lawyers.

Ronald Morton, founding member of the Mississippi-based Morton Law Firm, PLLC, goes right for his handy voice dictation machine after client meetings.

"I pick up my digital dictating machine as soon as a client leaves. I dictate what we talked about and what the plan is. As soon as I plug the recorder into my computer, the file is saved," he said.

"I have the audio and I'll also transcribe it using Dragon (NaturallySpeaking)... I still have to correct it; it has some errors in it. But it's good enough for my purposes,

memorializing what a meeting was about."

Morton described two of the most popular uses among lawyers for software tools that respond to the human voice: voice recognition that helps people more quickly transcribe what they say and digital voice recording that replaces magnetic tape-based recording.

Productivity is, of course, the main attraction. But litigator Maxwell Kennerly discourages people from using traditional measures of productivity to evaluate these tools.

"If you simply ran a stopwatch and compared how long it took to dictate and correct a document versus simply typing it, voice recognition doesn't seem much faster and, indeed, is sometimes slower," wrote Kennerly of the Philadelphia, Pa.-based, Beasley Firm LLC in an e-mail. "The critical difference is fatigue. After I type a document, I usually feel tired

and unwilling to move on to my next task. Voice recognition software dramatically reduces that fatigue.

"The difference is often greatest at the end of the day. Instead of leaving your office with pain in your hands, wrists, and forearms, you leave feeling productive and ready to go back the next day."

Voice recognition has successfully been integrated in other devices, such as voice dialing on cellphones, for instance. But the

current state of the technology has yet to equate that portrayed in Star Trek.

The first caveat: transcribing a meeting where multiple voices speak is beyond today's technology. "It's only going to recognize the voice that it's trained for," said Morton.

It also will not perfectly transcribe the "trainer's" voice every time, though systems do improve over time. "MacSpeech Dictate can reach a 96 percent or better accu-

racy rate right out of the box, with only a few minutes of training," said Sacramento, Calif., litigator Randy Singer.

"Training" software to recognize one's voice usually starts with reading a prepared text to the system when first installed, then patiently and continuously correcting comprehension errors session by session. Yet digital transcription may never fully replace typing. "Even with a 99 percent accuracy rate, that means you have one error in every 100 words," Morton said. "That's still a lot of correcting to do."

Kennerly added the following advice: "For improving performance in daily use, the question is not if you can get 100 per cent accuracy, because you usually will not," he wrote. "But rather if you can adapt to checking and correcting the words on the page as they

“

Instead of leaving your office with pain in your hands, wrists, and forearms, you leave feeling productive and ready to go back the next day.

See **Dictation** Page 23

DAVIS | LEGAL ADVISORS
LLP | SINCE 1892

GROWING FAST!

Full Service Firm

Entrepreneurial Spirit

Exceptional Clients

50+ Traditional & Innovative
Practice Areas

Focused on Success

**WE ARE LOOKING FOR PARTNERS
FOR OUR TORONTO OFFICE
IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:**

- Corporate/Commercial
- Securities & Corporate Finance
- Insolvency
- Natural Resources/Energy
- Tax

Visit www.davis.ca/careers for current lawyer postings in all offices.

Robert A. Seidel, Q.C.
National
Managing Partner,
Edmonton
rseidel@davis.ca
780.429.6814

Samuel Schwartz
Managing Partner,
Toronto
sschwartz@davis.ca
416.369.5278

**NATIONALLY ESTABLISHED.
INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED.**

www.davis.ca

TORONTO MONTRÉAL VANCOUVER CALGARY EDMONTON WHITEHORSE YELLOWKNIFE TOKYO

CORPORATE COUNSEL, SECURITIES

While the name Tim Hortons is usually familiar to people, the TDL Group Corp. may not be. Across North America, the TDL Group Corp. employs more than 1,500 professionals in various functional areas.

We currently have an opening for a Corporate Counsel, Securities in our Legal Department. Counsel will provide legal advice to the Company's management and subsidiaries regarding securities, Board governance, complex commercial transactions, compensation plans and programs, and general contract matters.

Qualified candidates have 5+ years of experience practicing Canadian securities law, with a well-rounded and diverse general corporate background. Public company Board and Corporate Secretarial experience is an asset. Your communication, interpersonal, teamwork and organizational skills will ensure your success in this role. If you love challenge, if you take a positive "Can Do" approach to your work, and enjoy sharing success with your team, the TDL Group Corp. may be the place for you.

The TDL Group Corp. offers a comprehensive total rewards package that includes a competitive salary, incentive plan, pension plan, equity compensation, company paid benefits, career growth, and workplace programs to meet employee needs. We also provide health and wellness programs that include an on-site fitness facility, interactive workshops, a fitness resource library and one to one training.

Be a part of an amazing team. Visit our website www.timhortons.com for full position details and to apply.

TDL
GROUP CORP.

operators of
Tim Hortons

Dictation tools costly

Dictation

Continued From Page 22

appear, which you normally do not do when typing.

"For me, adaptation took about a week of frustration, after which I fell into a groove," he said.

Kennerly's experience led him to the following conclusion: "Voice recognition is not for the computer illiterate," he wrote. "You need some computer savvy to use it effectively, since your performance depends on your ability to quickly detect and correct errors, your ability to enable the more robust features of the program, and most importantly, your general comfort level with technology."

Singer, who also heads the 7,000-member MacAttorney User Group, had some disheartening news for Apple users. He said that Dictate is the only voice recognition and transcription software product for the Mac that is being actively developed and supported.

Getting started with voice recognition requires investments in both software and hardware. In software, Kennerly, Singer and Morton all mentioned Dragon Natu-

rallySpeaking. Although he doesn't use it, Singer wrote that MacSpeech is based on the Dragon speech recognition engine.

For hardware, a separate microphone with noise-cancelling technology improves the performance of the system. That performance also rises in a quiet environment.

Certain microphones plug directly into a computer's sound card, so better cards can help. Extra RAM is a must, since voice technology is, in Morton's view, "a pretty intensive memory hog."

Separate digital voice recorders let lawyers dictate away from their computers. Again, noise cancellation is indispensable in places like cars, where wind noise and air conditioning could make dictation unintelligible. As an alternative to recorders, software designed for smartphones like the BlackBerry and iPhone let lawyers both dictate and e-mail the resulting sound file to the computer where correction takes place.

Many lawyers will continue to send such files to transcriptionists, but Morton prefers to take them out of the loop. He gets his notes faster and "secretarial help can spend their time doing things that are more productive, more profitable for the firm." ■



TWO JUDICIAL VACANCIES ONTARIO COURT OF JUSTICE TORONTO

The Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee advises the Attorney General of Ontario on the appointment of Judges to the Ontario Court of Justice, and invites applications for two judicial positions in Toronto.

These appointments, while primarily criminal law positions, may also involve presiding over family law matters and could also involve travel within or beyond the regional boundaries as assigned by the Regional Senior Justice and/or the Chief Justice.

The minimum requirement to apply to be a Judge in the Ontario Court of Justice is **ten years completed** membership at the Bar of one of the Provinces or Territories of Canada.

All candidates must apply either by submitting 14 copies of the **current** completed Judicial Candidate Information Form in the first instance or by a short letter (14 copies) if the current form has been submitted within the **previous 12 months**. **Should you wish to change any information in your application, you must send in 14 copies of a fully revised Judicial Candidate Information Form.**

If you wish to apply and need a current Judicial Candidate Information Form, please contact:

Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee
Tel: (416) 326-4060. Fax: (416) 212-7316
Website: www.ontariocourts.on.ca

All applications, either sent by courier, mail or hand delivery, **must** be sent to:

Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee
c/o The Ministry of Government and Consumer Services
Mail Delivery
77 Wellesley Street West, Room M2B-88
Macdonald Block, Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N3

Applications must be on the current prescribed form and must be **TYPEWRITTEN** or **COMPUTER GENERATED** and **RECEIVED BY 4:30 p.m. on Friday, December 5, 2008**. **CANDIDATES ARE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE 14 COPIES OF THEIR APPLICATION FORM OR LETTER**. A Fax copy will be accepted only if 14 copies of the application or letter are sent concurrently by overnight courier. Applications received after this date **WILL NOT** be considered.

The Judiciary of the Ontario Court of Justice should reasonably reflect the diversity of the population it serves. Applications from members of minority groups are encouraged.

MAZIN ROOZ MAZIN

LITIGATION LAWYERS WANTED

We are a mid-size plaintiff personal injury firm located in the heart of North York. We are looking to hire 2 lawyers with a keen interest in litigation. Experience with insurance litigation, including accident benefits and torts, would be an asset.

If you have a genuine interest in hands on litigation you should consider joining Mazin Rooz Mazin.

We offer:

- hands on experience, including file management and client contact;
- opportunity to conduct trials and other hearings, not just assist senior counsel;
- opportunity to help injured plaintiffs and make a difference;
- fun and comfortable work environment;
- competitive compensation, commensurate with experience.

Please mail or fax your resume and transcripts to the attention of the Office Manager.

Mazin Rooz Mazin, Barristers & Solicitors
5000 Yonge Street, Suite 1401, Toronto, M2N 7E9
Tel. 416-665-0414 Fax: 416-665-0434



DEUX POSTES À POURVOIR AU SEIN DE LA MAGISTRATURE COUR DE JUSTICE DE L'ONTARIO TORONTO

Le Comité consultatif sur les nominations à la magistrature conseille le Procureur général de l'Ontario sur les nominations de juges à la Cour de justice de l'Ontario et invite les personnes intéressées à présenter leur demande aux deux postes de juge à Toronto.

Bien que cette nomination porte essentiellement sur le droit criminel, elle peut aussi porter sur des instances de droit de la famille et pourrait exiger des déplacements à l'intérieur ou au-delà des limites régionales, selon les directives du juge principal régional et/ou du juge en chef.

Pour pouvoir poser sa candidature à un poste de juge à la Cour de justice de l'Ontario, il faut, comme condition minimale, avoir été membre du barreau de l'une des provinces ou de l'un des territoires du Canada **pendant au moins dix ans**.

Tous les candidats et candidates doivent poser leur candidature soit, dans le premier cas, en présentant le Formulaire de renseignements sur le candidat/la candidate à la magistrature **courant**, soit en envoyant une courte lettre (en 14 exemplaires) si le formulaire courant a été présenté au cours des **12 mois précédents**. **En cas de changements à apporter à un formulaire déjà envoyé, le candidat ou la candidate doit envoyer à nouveau 14 exemplaires du formulaire de renseignements corrigé.**

Si vous voulez poser votre candidature et que vous avez besoin d'un Formulaire de renseignements sur le candidat/la candidate à la magistrature courant, veuillez contacter:

Comité consultatif sur les nominations à la magistrature
Téléphone : (416) 326-4060 Télécopieur : (416) 212-7316
Site Web : www.ontariocourts.on.ca

Toutes les demandes envoyées par service de messagerie, par la poste ou en main propre **doivent** être soumises à l'adresse suivante :

Comité consultatif sur les nominations à la magistrature
A/S Services de distribution du courrier du ministère des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
77, rue Wellesley Ouest, salle M2B-88
Édifice Macdonald, Queen's Park
Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1N3

Les demandes de candidature doivent être déposées par l'entremise du formulaire prescrit courant et **DACTYLOGRAPHIÉES** ou **CRÉÉES PAR ORDINATEUR** et **recues au plus tard à 16 h 30 le vendredi 5 décembre 2008**. **LES CANDIDATS ET CANDIDATES DOIVENT FOURNIR 14 EXEMPLAIRES DE LEUR FORMULAIRE OU DE LEUR LETTRE DE CANDIDATURE**. Une télécopie ne sera acceptée que si 14 exemplaires du formulaire ou de la lettre de candidature sont également envoyés par service de messagerie de 24 heures. On n'accordera **AUCUNE** considération aux candidatures reçues après cette date.

La magistrature provinciale doit refléter raisonnablement la diversité de la population qu'elle sert. Les candidatures de membres des groupes minoritaires sont encouragées.