

**Stibbe – A Leading Law Firm**

## *Working efficiently with speech technology*

Stibbe, a leading European law firm, is now using speech technology at its Amsterdam branch. And following consultation with the offices concerned, this technology should eventually be implemented at all Stibbe offices in Amsterdam, Brussels, London and New York. To achieve this, Stibbe is working together with G2 Speech, the market leader in the field of speech technology in the Benelux countries.

### **Enthusiastic reaction to innovation**

Professor Stef van Weeghel, a lawyer/tax expert and member of the Managing Board of the Amsterdam branch and the International Board of Stibbe, is very enthusiastic: "The people who are now using this system are very positive," he says. "We take pride in the fact that we are a kind of pioneer in this field". The G2 Speech technology is currently used by some 75 people in the Tax Law and ICT/Media practice groups. If everything goes according to plan, all lawyers and secretaries in the Amsterdam branch should be working with speech technology in six months' time. It is planned to implement the package in all Stibbe branches within a year, bringing the total number of users to 550.

### **Working more efficiently**

Stibbe wants to plan the work in the office more efficiently and digital dictation is the first step towards this.



*Professor Stef van Weeghel is enthusiastic about speech technology.*

"We are faced with the problem of good secretarial staff being scarce. That is why it is necessary to organise the work in the office more efficiently. We are trying to reduce the number of secretaries per lawyer, and speech recognition should make this possible. This will allow greater flexibility in the secretary pool and give considerable time savings," says Van Weeghel. "We want a solution that smoothly integrates with the lawyer's way of working without bothering him with technical issues. And the only party

offering the solution we are looking for is G2 Speech."

### **Speech technology as the starting point**

Professor Van Weeghel goes on, "Digital dictation offers a good starting point. It allows us to improve our quality and to work more efficiently. I think it is great that you can dictate a text at home, at a client's or while abroad and send the sound file straight to your secretary. She will have edited it for you by the time you arrive at the office the next morning". The sound files received



at the Stibbe office are distributed to a pool of secretaries. The first secretary that is available in the pool clicks on the file and deals with it. This has made the internal distribution a lot easier and it has increased the speed of service to external contacts.

### **Removing the fear of the unknown**

Speech technology is not always readily accepted by everybody in the organisation. Fear of the unknown plays a significant role here. This fear was also identified at Stibbe. Some people were afraid to become too dependent on computers, while some secretaries were afraid that they might lose their jobs. Both worries were removed by G2 Speech.

Stef van Weeghel explained, "If the network is down we can continue to work on a local PC. The application has been installed in such a way that you can also save sound files locally. An extra advantage of modern systems is that they improve an office's appeal to secretaries. The secretary's job gets a different and more modern character. Instead of spending most of her time typing she can now devote more time and attention to scheduling, managing the office, organizing meetings and coaching people.

We were able to deal with most objections by involving the works council in the project at an early stage.

In addition we had extensive discussions



*It is possible to dictate a text at the working room, at home, at a client's or while abroad.*

with everyone involved and as a result the introduction went smoothly".

### **Achieving the goal together!**

Customers always have their own views on projects and what they want to achieve. Stef van Weeghel's view is as follows: "A particular workflow is created when a lawyer dictates a text. He will get a document on his screen that has already been put into a document management system. The system has already awarded a number of properties to the document, such as document type, subject, author, file number and the file name. So the only thing the lawyer has to do is go through the document to give the final approval. Together with G2 Speech, we have created a very efficient way of working".

Dictation Direct Limited UK  
Solutions House  
411 Mile End Road  
London  
E3 4PB

Tel: 020 8981 0033  
Fax: 020 8981 0044

Email: [info@dictationdirect.co.uk](mailto:info@dictationdirect.co.uk)  
Website: [www.dictationdirect.co.uk](http://www.dictationdirect.co.uk)



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