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*Close-up: Patrick Conolly*

## Legal support provider trying to make name for itself

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*The Daily Transcript*

When it comes to naming their company, the executives at Teris have taken a page out of the Google play-book.

While they can only dream their invented word becomes as wildly popular as that of the search engine, Teris officials hope their name becomes synonymous with litigation support.

Founded in 1996, the firm was originally known as American Legal Copy, highlighting the company's trademark -- and essentially only -- service.

As the legal industry changed, moving away from traditional copying needs, ALC soon stood for American Legal Corp., and then ALC Legal Technologies. It eventually opened offices in Austin, Texas and Phoenix under two different names -- Duplex Legal Discovery Solutions and Digital Discovery Solutions.

Finally, firm officials wanted to bring all six of its offices under the same name and decided to make up a word to define its brand.

"Copying is only 25 percent of our business now, and we wanted to focus on our electronic services," said Patrick Conolly, managing partner of Teris' San Diego office. "Hopefully we can make our own brand."

In addition to a new name, Teris is trying to develop a marketing campaign that shows it's a full-service provider that does all of its work locally.

"If there's a company with e-discovery needs, we can handle it in San Diego," Conolly said. "If there are scanning needs, we can take care of it here. Nothing has to leave San Diego."

"A lot of competitors use a partner outside of San Diego for e-discovery or computer forensics."

The one-stop shopping can be

faster, more efficient and less stressful, according to Conolly.

"Dealing with a multitude of different companies can become problematic," he explained. "If something goes wrong, who do you turn to?"

Teris supplies electronic discovery, consulting and project management, repository/hosting, document imaging, traditional copying and digital forensics.

The company's e-discovery capabilities allow it to shrink huge files down to a manageable size, using specialized searches. According to its Web site, Teris can accelerate early case management from days to hours and lower processing cost and time by up to 80 percent.

It also can reproduce case information on a Web site, making it easier for attorneys in different offices or co-counsel from different firms to work on the same case.

Additionally, Teris officials collect data, on site, from computers, like deleted e-mails, passwords and encrypted files.

One of Teris' biggest challenges is keeping pace with a rapidly changing industry and constantly updated technology.

"There are so many different types of products in the market," Conolly said. "The challenge is trying to stay abreast of where the best solutions for our clients are and putting it in our repertoire, so we can bring our clients more than one solution."

For the most part, the company has been unaffected by the economic downturn since litigation is one of the few practice areas that is still doing strong business. Many of the areas that have been slowed by the sluggish economy -- transactional and corporate work -- are not handled by Teris.

"The biggest problem is accounts

receivable," he said. "It takes longer to get paid, which everybody's feeling."

Conolly has more than 10 years of experience in the document management and legal services industry, including eight with Teris.

He helped the company open facilities in San Francisco and Silicon Valley before moving into his current position in San Diego in 2004.

He termed opening the new offices "a real fun time," but also noted it was a lot of hard work.

"Watching something get built from scratch was very satisfying," Conolly said. "It's great to see our company grow, and we're doing well."

Teris hopes to expand by opening offices in larger markets like Los Angeles, Chicago, New York City and Washington, D.C., in the future.

"Having a great West Coast presence has been good for us," Conolly said. "Building an East Coast presence would help our West Coast firms grow also."

The company's clients range from big AmLaw 200 firms -- including some of the largest in San Diego -- to boutiques. Teris also works with corporations and engineering firms.

"Corporations are starting to pay a lot more attention to their litigation costs," Conolly said. "We feel, with a lot of technology we're offering now, especially in large data cases, we can offer more than one type of solution that can help cut costs."

The San Diego managing partner likes to stress how Teris is a regional company with a national reach.

"The biggest thing is that we're a regional company that can do everything that a large e-discovery company can do," Conolly said. "Our goal is to get folks to know that we can handle anything they can throw at us in San Diego."