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Express Wills major upgrade lowers risk of future Wills disputes

- Extensive explanatory client reports automatically generated

Sweet & Maxwell, the legal information provider, has launched a significant upgrade of its popular Express Wills software package.

Express Wills was originally launched to provide lawyers with a fully automated and cost effective way to produce bespoke Wills and Will trusts for their clients.

The new upgrade automatically produces a Commentary for the client on the Will that has been produced for them. As well as providing the lawyer's client with a clear and concise overview of the Will and its main features the Commentary will also run them through the more complex aspects of the Will.

Sweet & Maxwell is a Thomson Reuters business (NYSE: TRI; TSX: TRI; LSE: TRIL; NASDAQ: TRIN).

Comments Steven Warriner, Senior Publishing Editor, Sweet & Maxwell: "Will drafting has become an ever more complex area for lawyers but it is also an area where rates can be fiercely competitive so lawyers have been quick to see the advantages of automating this part of their work."

"This upgrade takes the automation of the Will drafting process a major step forward. Explaining a Will to a client through a written or verbal report can be the most difficult, involved and time-consuming stage of the entire process. Our new software creates that custom built easy to read client report as the Will is constructed. The user is also able to add further customisation to the client report by inserting from a menu of standardised paragraphs as they see fit."

The client report covers issues such as foreign domicile, circumstances which could render the Will void, the role of executors and guardians, insufficient provisions for dependants, jointly owned assets.

The upgraded version of Express Wills now contains over a thousand different Will precedents as well as trust precedents by leading experts in this area James Kessler QC, author of *Drafting Wills and Will Trusts: A Modern Approach*.

Express Wills uses a structured questionnaire format. Based on respondent's answers, the software builds a unique Will for every client. It also has a full range of supporting

documents such as Powers of Attorney, Severance of Joint Tenancy with Form RX1, and Advance Directive forms.

Adds Steven Warriner: “Wills keep on increasing in complexity. In part this is due to the more complicated structure of modern families brought on by remarriages and the fact that the size of the average estate is increasing. This increased complexity brings with it increased risk of legal disputes.”

“The advantage of a robust automation process for lawyers is that it can reduce the possibility of human error.”

According to Sweet & Maxwell, the new client report facility can act as a significant addition to a lawyer’s risk management processes.

Lasting Power of Attorney forms

One other significant upgrade to Express Wills is the addition of Lasting Power of Attorney forms.

Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) forms allow for the appointment by the donor of trusted individual(s) to make decisions on their behalf if they become unable to do so themselves. LPAs must be registered with the Office of the Public Guardian.

Comments Steven Warriner: “The new LPA forms are much lengthier and more complicated to fill in than the old Enduring Power of Attorney forms that were phased out last year. On many occasions this leads to them not being filled in properly and returned by the Office of the Public Guardian, causing further delays in setting up an LPA.”

“The forms' incorporation in the Express Wills software, streamlines the process, making LPAs much faster and easier to fill in. This results in lower error rates and rejections from the Office of the Public Guardian.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

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