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The CRIV Sheet

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The CRIV Sheet

Editor's Corner

This issue of *The CRIV Sheet* starts with a word from Nina Platt, CRIV chair, about the one constant in all of our lives: change. Ms. Platt looks at how legal information providers are moving toward enhancing content through context.

Following the chair's message is an article by Lorraine Busby, associate university librarian at the University of Western Ontario, about how library and information science students learn about vendor relations in her classroom. After reading about Ms. Busby's course development in the August 2006 issue of *Library Connect*, I contacted her to see if she would be interested in submitting something for inclusion in *The CRIV Sheet*. I'm grateful for her contribution on a topic that I know will be of keen interest to many of you.

This issue also owes a debt of gratitude to Julienne Grant, chair of the Chicago Association of Law Librarians' Committee on Relations with Information Vendors. Ms. Grant contacted me in June to inform me that the members of her committee had published a "Special Section" in their spring 2006 bulletin. She recommended four articles from that publication that would be of interest to the larger membership and suggested that they be reprinted here, pending the permission of the authors. I'm pleased to report that all of the authors readily agreed to extend those

permissions. The four articles are: "Hein's Monograph Changes," by Gail Hartzell; "Change at LexisNexis Flies under the Radar Screen," by Tom Keefe; "Update on LLMC-Digital," by Eugene Giudice and Julienne Grant; and "Loislaw and Versuslaw: Database Alternatives to Consider," by Therese A. Clarke Arado.

In addition to those four articles, the CALL group reported on a series of reverse site visits by CCH (now Wolters Kluwer Law and Business Division) in its region in early 2006. Three libraries participated in the visits: Allstate Insurance Law Library, IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law Library, and the Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP library. You can read about each of their experiences herein.

Finally, this issue closes with an interesting commentary by Joanne Beal. Ms. Beal identifies some dangerous misconceptions about access to information and articulates a common goal for librarians and information providers in the Internet age.

As always, I am indebted to all of the authors who contributed to this issue, to my assistant editor, Amy Eaton of Perkins Coie LLP, and to Nina Platt, CRIV chair, for her guidance and leadership. Your comments, letters, suggestions, and submissions are always encouraged. Please e-mail tracy.thompson@yale.edu or AEaton@perkinscoie.com.

Nina Platt Faegre Benson LLP, Minneapolis

From the Chair

As the calendar year starts, I can't help but think about what has changed or what is new in the information industry in 2007 and what the changes mean to those of us caught up in those changes. Looking at all the changes, I would say the most significant change is the move toward content in context by Thomson West and Lexis in their online services.

Thomson West introduced new features in Westlaw, including RegsPlus and Graphical Statutes. These tools provide the user with the information they seek but give context to that information as well. RegsPlus allows for discovery of how a regulation was created and how it has been used. Graphical Statutes shows the life of a statute from the time it is introduced through to how it was treated in the courts. Both

resources provide direction in how to find related information.

Lexis introduced Total Litigator and AtVantage. Both of these tools provide users with a task-driven interface, allowing them to use the information based on what they need to accomplish. Total Litigator allows users to accomplish various steps of the litigation process, including drafting, filing, and serving documents; planning and conducting discovery; researching legal issues; gathering intelligence; and tracking the docket of the case. AtVantage allows users to identify and qualify new clients, stay informed through alerts, monitor competition, and track market share. Within each task, users access the information they need to complete the tasks.

Content in context is not a new concept. It was introduced in ages past in the form of a book. Books do not present information without giving it context. CCH's and BNA's—along with many other publishers'—online services, having evolved from books, are great examples of providing information within context. In fact, Wolters Kluwer's new logo has a tagline of "Content in Context."

The new and most interesting result of the movement to providing context is how we can use these services to tell a story, online, which has not been possible with

the services until now. In the past, we would search, review our results, and discern the context around each piece of information. Now we can search and see the results in context without the additional work. We could do the same in opening a book, but the advantage of these online services is the ability they give us to tell different stories depending on our search. I can use RegsPlus to tell me the story of any regulation or AtVantage to do the same for any competitor.

I wonder what this year will bring us in the way of context.

Lorraine Busby University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada

Teaching Vendor Relations in the LIS Curriculum

When I went to library school (25 years ago), it was common to take a required course on library acquisitions. The buying and processing of library books and journals was a serious matter that required skill and management of resources and facilities. While the outcomes of purchasing are still critical to library operations, and the dollars spent can be huge, the actual processes of acquiring and paying for books and journals has largely been standardized and managed within an integrated library system.

The training of new professionals in these processes and procedures has largely devolved to the library and the supervisors of the staff performing the work. What is done and how it is done varies from library to library, but once established, the processes are well managed by support staff. What then becomes the role of professional librarians within this environment? Proper management of the acquisition budget is critical to our future. So what are best practices for today and tomorrow? A look at the past and how it impacts the future gives some clues worth noting.

Follow the Money

A review of the literature on "The Serial Crisis" demonstrates the magnitude of very large budgets that are used to purchase, lease, and access thousands of resources that make up a collection. While the quantity of materials that can be purchased within budget fluctuates depending upon price increases and currency exchange rates, almost all acquisition budgets increase each and every year.

By the early '90s, with no resolution in sight for "The Serial Crisis," I came to the realization that what others perceived as a "crisis" had in actuality become a standard way of doing library business—a frustratingly dysfunctional way of doing business, but a standard nonetheless. Today, few colleagues have

work experience prior to "The Serial Crisis," and those who do will readily admit the environment has so radically changed that earlier professional experiences bear little resemblance to the world of today. So how do we manage the large collections budgets entrusted to our care? How do we influence the future to ensure we have the resources needed by our users?

These issues influenced my decision to respond positively when the acting dean of the School of Library and Information Science at the University of Western Ontario asked me to develop a vendor relations course. It is my belief that the skill needed by new graduates to function in today's business environment is largely the ability to work with the business partners that sell the information we buy. There is a need for savvy librarians who understand purchasing processes, who can interact with company and product sales representatives on an equal footing, and who know what are (and are not) proper ways of doing business.

It is also critical to understand that we are in a business relationship with our vendors. As customers we have rights and should be able to direct our spending toward desired outcomes. In return, we must behave as good corporate citizens and be fair and honest in our dealings with the companies that serve our market.

Us versus Them?

Unfortunately, an unforeseen outcome of "The Serial Crisis" is deep distrust, suspicion, and antagonism by librarians toward corporations that produce and sell the information we buy. Mistakes were made during "The Serial Crisis" that haunt all of us, even though many of the players contributing to the original environment are no longer around to experience the consequences.

As I began teaching my course, I found that many students were already sensitized to the issue. They viewed for-profit companies as powerful and “out to get” library budgets. Through other courses they heard of specific companies with negative reputations—the evil empires of the library world.

With a mighty corporate machine backing the sales representatives, there was concern that the playing field was not level and that librarians would be at a disadvantage in any engagement. Perhaps it might surprise you to learn that some vendors also are upset and frustrated with librarians who either live with outdated images of their businesses and/or refuse to

hear that vendors have changed and are listening to their customers. My students, certainly, were surprised to hear the other side of the story.

All librarians need to think through our existing relationships with our business partners. What type of relationship do we want? Do we want our message to be the best price wins? Do we want to influence publishers and suppliers, or do we want only to have a contractual relationship of buyer and seller? Class discussions and assignments allowed the students to think through the possibilities and prepare them for exploring the relationship once in the working world.

Steve Jarrett General Counsel, University of Western Ontario

When to Call a Lawyer

There are, of course, two rather obvious views on this issue. The first, which the cynical might attribute to lawyers' lobby groups, is always, and the second, supported by those who are suspicious of lawyers' motives, is never. The answer, of course, lies between those two extremes and is not quite so easy to define.

Some General Principles about Using Lawyers

- **Use common sense.** Much of the advice a lawyer can give you is just common sense. Assess the situation and the amount of risk involved and have some faith in your ability to read and understand English.
- **If you don't understand, ask.** Whether you are looking at a contract or responding to a letter, if there are words or phrases that you don't understand or that don't make sense, find out what they mean before proceeding.
- **Lawyers aren't always the right people to ask.** Just as librarians are not (always) lawyers, lawyers are not (always) librarians, accountants, human resources specialists, or anything other than lawyers. Sometimes it gives people a false sense of security to say “our lawyer has looked at it” when the problem may be operational rather than legal.
- **Be careful when using Internet or generalized legal resources.** You wouldn't use the Internet to help you remove an appendix—don't do it as a cheap way to solve a legal problem.
- **Know the rules regarding seeking legal counsel.** Lawyers are expensive. Not all organizations have in-house legal counsel who can be consulted routinely. Most companies have rules regarding who has access to the company lawyer and in what situations they can be consulted.

When to Call a Lawyer

There are several situations in which warning signals may indicate that a call to a lawyer is advisable.

- **Contract Language.** Contracts often contain buzz words, which should alert you to potential problems. Words or phrases like “indemnification,” “limitation of liability,” or “consequential damages” should send you scurrying to the phone.
- **Intellectual Property Rights.** Intellectual property rights (patents, trademarks, and copyright) are often dealt with in contracts without either side really understanding what they are talking about. In fact, it is a specialized area of the law, and some lawyers don't know what they are talking about.
- **Oral Promises.** Sales people are prone to making promises that do not always find their way into a written agreement. If confronted and the response is, “Don't worry, we'll look after you,” worry.
- **Standard Form Contracts.** Any time you are told that the company you are dealing with has a standard form contract “and our lawyers tell us it can't be changed,” it is a warning that there is likely something that should be changed.
- **Non Performance.** Don't let little problems escalate. “We're short staffed, can we have an extra week?” or “We're just waiting for a payment from our customer” should be added to “The check is in the mail” as warnings that a business relationship is going bad. The stage at which you may consider calling in a lawyer depends a great deal on context—the nature of the relationship (long term?) the amount and risk involved—but at the very least, a lawyer can advise you of steps that can be taken at an early stage to protect yourself.
- **Self Help Remedies.** It is one thing to let problems go, it is another to try actively to solve them yourself. Before you (a) get yourself embroiled in a court case; (b) agree to assume any additional responsibility; (c) tell anyone in any format that the customer/client is a deadbeat; or (d) hire a hit man, a quick call to a lawyer may save you a lot of time and trouble.

The Legalities

When first approached about designing and offering the vendor relations course, it was obvious that the School of Library and Information Science expected negotiating and licensing of resources to be a major component of my course. In fact, the whole course started with the simple question, “Who negotiates licenses for the library?” Admitting that I was the negotiator suddenly elevated me to potential instructor status. Yet as I put the course together, I did not want to cover licensing issues that are covered elsewhere in the graduate program.

Our library school is fortunate to have a couple of experts with both library and legal backgrounds. When faced with thorny clauses and contracts, I consult these experts because I value and trust their knowledge. Yet sometimes I find myself in situations where the theory and best advice don’t achieve the outcomes I have been instructed or mandated to achieve. While my colleagues have the expertise on what should be done, I clearly had more practical experience on how to survive and thrive when the

theory wasn’t achievable.

I worked to integrate this reality and life skill into my curriculum. What do you do when you cannot negotiate the changes that your library school teachers insist are a “must” in the real world? How do you protect yourself and your users if you cannot get the terms and conditions that you want? How do you know if you got a good deal? The students embraced the practicalities of the course. And they happily accepted that there is no one right answer. The world will not come to an end if a perfect contract is not negotiated and if the lowest price is not achieved.

I am fortunate to work at an institution where the general counsel, Steve Jarrett, believes in the educational process and is supportive in sharing his knowledge and expertise. I asked him to provide the students with a short guideline on “When to Call a Lawyer” (see page 4). The students appreciated his sense of humor and his down-to-earth advice. His comments reflect much of my attitude toward vendor relations and librarianship in general.

Gail Hartzell Valparaiso University School of Law Library, Valparaiso, Indiana

Hein’s Monograph Changes

Dilemma: what do you do when a major supplier of monographs for your law library suddenly announces that it is getting out of the business of supplying monographs? This is what happened at the Valparaiso University School of Law Library in October 2005.

We received a letter from William S. Hein and Company stating it “will no longer service non-serial titles of other publishers that are not being advertised by our company.” Since Hein is considered a smaller agent, management reasoned that it could not compete with larger corporations and it could not maintain multiple distribution centers for faster deliveries and lower shipping costs. Hein would continue its service to the law library community as a standing order/continuation agent and would handle periodicals, microforms, Hein-published materials, Hein Green Slips, and materials distributed and advertised by the company.

We immediately ordered the Green Slips that we had on hand, as Hein would accept monograph orders for 60 days only. Then we went to work on a plan for ordering future monographs.

At the time, we had an approval plan with Midwest Library Services for university press publishers

according to a profile of all “K-KZ” classifications and a few “Js.” We had recently started receiving these Midwest Approval Plan (MAP) titles, both processed for technical services and with PromptCat cataloging.

I contacted the representatives of Yankee Book Peddler (YBP), which the Christopher Center, the undergraduate library at Valparaiso University, uses and Midwest Library Services, which we used to a much lesser degree for monograph orders. I asked many questions, including the following:

- Is there an online book selection tool?
 - Cost?
 - Ease of use?
- Slips
 - Print or online?
 - Profile for legal material?
- Approval plan
 - Profile by subject?
 - What publishers are included?
- Check for duplicates?
 - Monograph orders?
 - Approval plan orders?
- Are international publishers included in their coverage?

- Return policy?
- Work with Innovative system?
- What different types of media do they supply?

In addition, we wanted to determine if they could supply a list of Green Slip titles. From this information a comparison table of the services of YBP and Midwest, including discounts, was prepared.

The library director, technical services librarian, and acquisitions librarian all met to discuss the two vendors, YBP and Midwest. The decision was made to go with Midwest and to increase our volume of monograph purchases from them. We already worked with Midwest for the approval plan and PromptCat cataloging and had no major problems, including invoicing. In addition, we would not have new charges in order to set up ordering from YBP.

I had several conversations with the Midwest representative about the monograph problem and gave him information on the anticipated increase in spending. The same group then met formally with the Midwest representative, who gave us information on shipping costs and discounts on various publishers as a result of our increased ordering volume.

The result was a better deal to continue service with a proven provider. An additional benefit is Midwest's

New Book Selection Service. With this service, we can select by topic or set up a profile and e-mail the results to faculty. After solving some IT technicalities, we will be able to order online and receive processed material with PromptCat cataloging. Furthermore, we will be able to save money with new and increased discounts.

Hein is continuing the Green Slip program but will not supply monographs. Hein now has an electronic format for the Green Slips along with the print slips. We are not sure what the future will hold for Green Slips, print or electronic.

Hein's decision to exit the book agent monograph business greatly impacted our law library. Hein cancelled some monograph orders that were not yet published and were due after the close of its monograph department. These cancellations were few and were ordered from Midwest. The increased ordering from Midwest has resulted in a greater discount for material ordered. The more books received that are processed and have PromptCat cataloging will save labor and time for the technical services librarian. Online ordering with fewer errors in inputting orders and duplication will make it easier for the acquisitions librarian. Despite the changes in monograph ordering, the Valparaiso University School of Law Library will realize benefits from them.

Thomas Keefe The John Marshall Law School, Chicago

Change at LexisNexis Flies under the Radar Screen

August 25, 2005, seemed to be a typical dog day in the waning days of a Chicago summer. As the day progressed I had no occasion to notice the storm clouds brewing on the horizon. And then, as I reached to access my computer for one last "check" before departure, I received a fateful message from one of my favorite blogs. The headline stated, "West Headnote Numbers Removed from Shepard's."

"Well, this is it," I thought. The message seemed to portend the end of legal research as we know it, the destruction of all things good and holy. "How can any self-respecting law librarian possibly carry on?" I asked myself.

Fortunately, my world righted itself two weeks later when on September 12 I received word that LexisNexis had not discontinued references to West headnotes after all. As it turns out, reports that it was simply too expensive for LexisNexis to continue West headnote analysis were unfounded. LexisNexis had released a carefully worded statement noting that it would continue to provide West headnote analysis,

although the production of West headnote analysis was becoming "increasingly complex and difficult." I read this statement to mean that perhaps if the change had flown under the radar screen it would have been implemented.

My purpose in writing this article is not to lament the inevitable loss of Shepard's analysis of West headnotes or the inevitable loss of Shepard's in print altogether. These may be unavoidable realities that we will soon be forced to deal with due to the economics of legal publishing. My real purpose in writing is to draw attention to that part of the LexisNexis statement of September 12 that announced the real change—one that will truly affect the way many students, attorneys, and scholars conduct and teach research. I can say that this change did fly under the radar screen because I completely missed the first announcement in late June.

The sea change that LexisNexis announced was the integration of LexisNexis headnotes into its Shepard's citation services. I consider this a sea change because

it means that as of 2005, legal researchers have for the first time (for better or worse) two fully integrated case-finding systems. To understand the import of this change it is necessary to take a couple steps back, historically speaking.

For many years researchers had access to competing case-finding systems: the West system and the less well-known Total Client Services Library (TCSL), published by Lawyer Cooperative Publishing (Lawyers Coop). The West system in print tied together West's national reporter system, topic and keynumbers, legal encyclopedia topics, annotated statutes, and other secondary materials. The West system enabled one to move seamlessly from digests to cases to statutes and back to case law. Lawyer's Coop's TCSL connected many excellent secondary sources and case-finding tools like American Jurisprudence 2d, American Jurisprudence Proof of Facts, Trials, ALR, and ALR Federal to Lawyer Coop's primary sources of law, including USCS and the U.S. Supreme Court Reports, Lawyer's Edition.

Unfortunately, the economics of legal publishing and the push of modern technology combined to doom TCSL as a functioning system. West's purchase of Lawyer's Coop in 1996 meant that the two research systems no longer competed. Because of the growth of online legal research, West's real competition was LexisNexis.

The invention of hyperlinks and the growth of LexisNexis put a nail in the coffin of TCSL as a case-finding system. Once West had the technology to effectively integrate the West system online via the hyperlink in the late 1990s, the era of online case research had truly begun. LexisNexis was not ready to fully compete because it lacked an editorial system comparable to the West topic and keynumber system.

So LexisNexis sought to establish its own integrated online research system to rival the West system online. This system came to be known as the Lexis.com Research System. It had at its core a

classification scheme called "core concepts" and a search tool, SearchAdvisor. LexisNexis editors sought to improve upon the keynumber system by making Lexis' classification system more current and more flexible.

With a classification system in place, LexisNexis editors set out on the ambitious project of providing headnotes for all cases available on LexisNexis. As of 2004 LexisNexis editors had added more than three million headnotes.

Thus, by 2005 the Lexis.com Research System (now, ironically, called the LexisNexis Total Research System) has come to rival West system online in many important respects. As of 2006, there seemed to be only one thing missing: integration of editorial content into a citation service. Before summer 2005 a researcher could restrict a citation search to a particular West keynumber using either KeyCite or Shepard's; a researcher could not, however, restrict a citation search by limiting it to LexisNexis headnotes. All this changed last year when LexisNexis announced that it had finally integrated LexisNexis headnotes into Shepard's citation services.

What this means is that for the very first time LexisNexis and Westlaw are truly equal in terms of the mechanics of case finding and validation. Granted, it may be that limiting by headnote is a tool that is seldom employed. This is, in my opinion, a training issue. Anyone who has limited a citation search by headnote knows what a valuable and cost-effective tool it can be.

So it seems to me that all of the furor over the potential loss of Shepard's in print and the removal of West headnotes from Shepard's missed the mark. The more important change was the integration of LexisNexis headnotes into Shepard's. Twenty years ago researchers had two fully integrated case-finding systems in print. As of 2005 we now have two fully integrated case-finding systems online. We have finally come full circle.

An Update on LLMC-Digital

Eugene Giudice

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Has your library had to contend with any of the following issues: physically deteriorating volumes, increased replacement costs for older volumes coupled

with diminished use, and shrinking storage space? If yes, then LLMC-Digital is a resource that may be helpful to you.

Background

Since 1976, the Law Library Microform Consortium (LLMC), headquartered in Hawaii, has dedicated itself to "the twin goals of preserving legal titles and government documents on film, while making copies

inexpensively available either in microfiche format or digitally through its on-line service LLMC-Digital.” This means that libraries can ensure the continuity and depth of their collections, while at the same time recovering much needed space.

The depth of the consortium’s collection is impressive. According to the LLMC Web site, LLMC has filmed more than 7,700 titles (some 103,000 volumes) during its almost 30-year history, “building up, in the process, the world’s largest selection of legal literature and government documents on microfiche and one of the largest offered online.” A comprehensive list of what is available in microfiche can be found at www.llmc.com/microfiche_toc.htm, and a list of LLMC-Digital’s collections is at www.llmc.com/i_list_toc.htm.

LLMC-Digital, the consortium’s most recent project, was inaugurated on September 1, 2003. The project’s overall goal is to make all of LLMC’s fiche backfile, and any future filming, available online to subscribing libraries. LLMC-Digital is eventually expected to offer some 100 million page images. By mid-2004, according to the LLMC Web site, LLMC-Digital had been “adopted by 88.5 percent of AALL-affiliated American law schools, 75 percent of the Canadian law schools, and virtually every library serving units of the U.S. Federal Court System.”

Current Focus

According to Jerry Dupont, LLMC’s executive director, the consortium’s board of directors sets broad policy outlines for its digitization schedule. Because the board felt that most subscribers would have the greatest interest in U.S. federal and state material, LLMC has concentrated on digitizing those areas first. Hence, the current priority of scanning operations at LLMC headquarters in Kaneohe, Hawaii, is U.S. federal and state items.

Mr. Dupont is quick to point out, however, that digital materials flow from every one of LLMC’s 25 former fiche collections. Offsite scanners at three locations focus on the strengths of the host libraries’ collections, which include many different types of resources. For example, at George Washington University in D.C., the emphasis is on civil and canon law holdings, along with some U.S. materials that are too fragile or valuable to send to Hawaii. Within the next six months, an offsite scanner will also be set up at St. Louis University, which has paper copies of many of the titles in the “Civil Law II” and “Civil Law III” fiche collections. The former concentrates on Italian and Iberian materials, while the latter’s focus is on Austria, Germany, and Switzerland.

“The English Reports,” a well-known source of early English case law, is also being digitized. Users of LLMC-Digital may note that currently not all 178

volumes of the reports are available online. According to Mr. Dupont, however, LLMC is approaching the end of this project, and only about 30 volumes remain to be processed. The project has apparently been difficult because of the choice to scan from tightly rebound paper copies, rather than fiche. This choice was necessary due to the small print projected by the fiche, which precluded digitizing from that format.

User Interface

LLMC-Digital’s user interface is powered by a partnership with the University of Michigan. According to Mr. Dupont, LLMC has received a lot of feedback about the interface, and much of it has included requests to make it less “clunky.” As a result, Mr. Dupont says, “We’re listening! And we’ve been working with our partners at the University of Michigan to streamline things.”

Some improvements have already been made, although some are infrastructural and not very obvious to the casual user. Major changes, however, are forthcoming, and a “Citation Searcher,” which has been under development for more than a year, will hopefully be introduced soon. In addition, the LLMC board and its University of Michigan partners attended a two-day retreat last April to identify, prioritize, and schedule site and interface improvements that can be implemented during the next three to five years.

Usage

The University of Michigan compiles usage statistics for the site as a whole and for individual subscribers. Individual subscribers who are interested in checking their own statistics should e-mail llmc-digital@hawaii.rr.com for access instructions. When asked about use of the site as a whole, Mr. Dupont indicated in a January 26, 2006, e-mail that the LLMC-Digital site had 200,368 hits and 148,698 searches since inception. He predicted that use will proliferate as the site becomes better known and the quantum of content expands. In his aforementioned e-mail, he wrote:

... LLMC is aware that it has targeted many esoteric and/or historic subject areas where usage, even in those libraries holding the hardcopy, is traditionally low. So our sense of self-worth will have to be bolstered by the realization that we also serve other goals, such as enabling massive space recovery among our member libraries and providing content to libraries that never held the hardcopy. Nevertheless, there is at least anecdotal evidence that the increased access provided by digital sometimes translates into increased usage. If we manage to help that happen with regard to some of our offerings, we naturally will feel additionally rewarded.

Future Plans

After two years, roughly about 10 percent of the 105-volume fiche backfile was digitized, although not all is online due to a modest cataloging backlog. With the equipment base currently in place, LLMC expected to double its annual thru-put to about 10,000 volumes in 2006 and then increase that to 15,000 annually in 2007. At that rate, LLMC expects to be done with the full fiche backfile by about 2012.

Digitizing titles from the fiche backfile, however, is only part of LLMC's goal. According to Mr. Dupont, George Washington University will add several new

titles that fit into the "Civil Law I" collection area, which focuses on France. In addition, LLMC has received a number of requests to broaden the U.S. state collections to include session laws, compiled laws, and constitutional materials. The LLMC board is currently considering selecting those three categories as the next major subject area for content expansion.

More Information

Additional information on LLMC-Digital is available at the LLMC Web site at www.llmc.com. The LLMC-Digital Newsletter is also archived on the Web site.

Therese A. Clarke Arado Northern Illinois University College of Law, DeKalb

Loislaw and Versuslaw: Database Alternatives to Consider

Loislaw (www.loislaw.com) and Versuslaw (www.versuslaw.com) are two services many of you may not think about often, but every spring here at Northern Illinois University (NIU) we introduce our students to both. We do this in the spring semester of basic legal research (a year-long required course) during which we focus on online legal research.

When addressing online research, we do not limit our students' exposure to just Lexis and Westlaw. Of course the students have access to both the major services; however, we feel it is important to provide them some exposure to low-cost research alternatives. Loislaw and Versuslaw provide just that. Both services provide flat-rate database access. There are different rate levels depending upon your subscription.

Loislaw

Loislaw allows you to access its entire database or select just information from your state and a variety of subscription options in between. The cost for these services does not go much higher than about \$200 per month. The complete database provides access to 50 state (appellate and supreme), federal (district and circuit), and U.S. Supreme Court case law. The date coverage varies by jurisdiction for all case law. All federal and state statutes and administrative material are provided, as well as session laws and legislative acts. Additionally, jury instructions, court rules, and practice materials are available for most states.

While the plethora of secondary sources on Lexis and Westlaw are not available, there is a good collection of Aspen treatises for the researcher to access. Recently a search within a search feature was added, and a simple find by citation feature is available. Loislaw also provides a cite checking service, GlobalCite™, and a current awareness service titled LawWatch.

Searching in Loislaw is relatively simple. The search screens are template driven. The connectors used are similar to the other research services, but a few minutes are needed to orient yourself to order of processing and to remember that the "*" is the truncation symbol. Interestingly the "*" can be used at the beginning of a word in both Loislaw and Versuslaw. This can prove to be helpful to your search.

In size you cannot compare Loislaw to Lexis and Westlaw, but for the material Loislaw provides it is certainly a very viable low-cost alternative. The primary materials available may offer all the information a researcher needs. If you haven't looked at Loislaw in a while, it is definitely worth taking a look.

Versuslaw

Versuslaw is the other lower cost service to which we orient our students. It too has a flat-rate fee structure. According to the Versuslaw Web site (www.versuslaw.com), the monthly flat rate varies from \$13.95 to \$39.95 per month depending upon the plan you select. The standard plan contains only case law. Other features are added with the two other plans. The only statutory and administrative material available is federal, and it is only available in the professional plan (\$39.95).

While very little is provided in the way of secondary sources, if you are looking for primarily case law, Versuslaw is a source to consider. In the standard plan you get access to case law from all 50 states, as well as federal cases. The coverage varies by jurisdiction. A very interesting feature of Versuslaw is its coverage of tribal courts. Decisions are provided from 19 different tribal courts (date coverage varies by court). This coverage is significantly greater than any of the other online services.

When looking at your research options, Loislaw and Versuslaw are definitely worth considering. The amount of information available in these databases is much less than Lexis and Westlaw, but sometimes you don't need all that information, and a smaller

database may provide just enough of what you seek. They are both reasonably priced and provide a good service to their users. Take a few minutes and explore these sites when you have a chance. I think you'll find it was worth your time.

CCH Reverse Site Visits

In the fall of 2000, The Chicago Association of Law Libraries' (CALL) CRIV Committee sponsored four reverse site visits with CCH, a Wolters Kluwer business. Under the leadership of Chair Betty Roeske and member Lorna Tang, the committee organized visits to four CALL-member libraries—University of Chicago D'Angelo Law Library, Katten Muchin Zavis library, Allstate Insurance Law Library, and the William J. Campbell Library of the U.S. Courts. The visits were highly successful, as reported in the winter 2001 *CALL Bulletin*, available at www.aallnet.org/chapter/call/publications/callbull179.pdf.

Upon the suggestion of CALL 2005-2006 President Naomi Goodman, the CRIV Committee organized a new series of reverse site visits with CCH. The committee first identified three CALL-member libraries that were interested in participating—Allstate Insurance Law Library, IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law Library, and the Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP library. Then, with the help of CCH's Barbara Johnson, director of customer service account administration, the committee set up the visits, which took place in 2006. Two members of the CRIV Committee

participated in each visit, and four to six CCH representatives attended each of the sessions. (Note that the representatives are now technically part of the newly formed Wolters Kluwer Law and Business division, and refer to themselves as such. For purposes of this article, however, the more familiar CCH acronym is used.)

Prior to the individual visits, CCH asked each library to provide a list of discussion issues that could be addressed at the meetings. The CALL CRIV Committee also invited the general CALL membership to contribute issues/questions for CCH, although none were submitted. At the visits, participants discussed the previously identified issues, as well as others that surfaced during the sessions. The overall feedback from the participating libraries, as well as from CCH, was extremely positive. Below are summaries of the visits, as recorded by the CALL CRIV members who attended the meetings. CCH participants received pre-publication copies of these summaries.

-Julienne Grant, 2005-2006 chair, CALL CRIV Committee

Allstate Insurance Law Library

Julienne Grant

Loyola University School of Law Library, Chicago

Kathryn Hough

Wolters Kluwer North America, Riverwoods, Illinois

The Allstate Law Library participated in the reverse site visits back in 2000. At that time, CCH representatives and Allstate librarians discussed a variety of issues, including the advantages/disadvantages of claiming by phone versus the CCH Web page. In 2000, the Allstate librarians were also particularly concerned about how CCH's then recent acquisition of National Insurance Law Service (NILS) would affect the NILS service. Another point of discussion during the 2000 visit was Allstate's desire to have more CCH products available through standing order.

Prior to this year's visit, Allstate Law Library Specialist Corinne Roth forwarded us two issues she and her library director, Dahlia Saleh, wished to discuss with the visiting CCH representatives. The two specific issues were: (1) difficult access to CCH Internet products and how CCH's Help Line was not providing satisfactory assistance; and (2) Allstate's preference for a dedicated library representative, rather than several reps for several different products.

We, in turn, forwarded these two issues to the four CCH representatives who planned to visit Allstate: John Falk, acting director of customer service product support; Barbara Johnson, director of customer service account administration; Jerry Pruitt, vice president of customer service and operations; and

Sean Siczka, customer service Internet marketing manager. During the visit, however, the CCH participants and Allstate librarians addressed a variety of issues:

- NELS is now online. The Allstate librarians indicated that they were generally pleased with the self-administration aspect of the product. They specified, however, that they would like to see CCH insurance cases added to NELS. They also wondered how LexisNexis' forthcoming insurance product would compare to NELS.
- Allstate currently has three different representatives for CCH's E-Benefits, tax, and SEC products. The librarians clearly articulated their preference for one representative for all of these products.
- The Allstate librarians expressed their general frustration with CCH's Call Center. Ms. Roth indicated that calls fell through the cracks. A recent call had actually resulted in her inadvertently erasing all of her computer's "cookies." The CCH group recommended that Ms. Roth call Barbara Johnson directly for any account problems and John Falk's research group at the Peterson facility for any questions pertaining to pension, tax products, and banking. The CCH group also recommended the online "chat" support feature that has been available since November 2005.
- Ms. Roth and Ms. Saleh indicated they would like more proactive communication from CCH regarding product and branding changes. They said they would prefer to receive information via mail, rather than having to go to the Web site. The Allstate librarians also said that they generally preferred phone support to seeking help from the Web site.
- The Allstate participants said they liked having a single invoice for CCH products. They indicated, however, that they would prefer the invoice date to be the date that CCH actually runs invoicing, rather than the renewal date, because Allstate has a 45-day payment turnaround schedule. Ultimately, they would like to see a combined CCH/Aspen account. CCH's Jerry Pruitt stated that Kluwer's CCH and Aspen divisions might merge order entry systems, but the cost would be at least \$5 million, and the company wasn't yet ready to make that investment.
- The CCH group described the company's new online "My Account" feature, which had a projected summer 2006 launch date. "My Account" focuses on billing and unites current and archived bills. Individual IDs and passwords are available, and an administrator may designate different types of access. Demonstrations of this new feature were presented at the AALL Annual Meeting last July.
- As they did five years ago, the Allstate librarians indicated they would like to see all of CCH's products made available on standing order. They also stated that they would like to be notified when annually updated products are late or not in print. Ms. Roth brought up the example of *eBusiness and Insurance: A Legal Guide to Transacting Insurance and Other Business on the Internet*, a loose-leaf title that is supposed to be updated each year. The last update they received was in December 2004, but they paid an annual charge in 2005.
- The Allstate librarians are frustrated with the Internet Research Network. They find the interface cumbersome and difficult to search; they prefer the NELS design. Currently, there are different passwords for different products, but they would prefer one password. The CCH group indicated that major changes to the Research Network are forthcoming, and a new interface is in beta testing. Ms. Roth and Ms. Saleh said they would be interested in providing feedback to proposed changes to search functionality, page design, etc.

After an hour-long discussion, Ms. Roth and Ms. Saleh invited the group to the library for a quick tour. Ms. Roth also demonstrated some specific problems she had with CCH's online products. She explained, for example, that she was previously able to display newsletters in full, but now could only display separate stories. Several members of the CCH group directly observed these problems and agreed to follow up.

Overall, the session with Allstate was productive and a learning experience for all parties involved. Many thanks to Ms. Roth and Ms. Saleh, who agreed to host the visit and who were extremely hospitable to all of the attendees.

IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law Library

Thomas Keefe

John Marshall Law School Library, Chicago

Eric Parker

Pritzker Legal Research Center, Northwestern University School of Law, Chicago

CCH representatives visited the IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law Library (Kent) on February 23, 2006. The CCH representatives included the same four from the Allstate visit (John Falk, Barbara Johnson, Jerry Pruitt, and Sean Siczka), plus Karen Kirk, research specialist and content trainer. Kent was represented by JoAnn Hounshell, director of bibliographic services; Holly Lakatos, director of public services; Robert Martin, acquisitions manager; Lucy Moss, senior reference librarian; and Keith Ann Stiverson, director of the library. The meeting lasted for approximately three hours. Upon its completion, everyone agreed that it was a great success.

After a round of introductions, Jerry Pruitt began by announcing the realignment of CCH and Aspen Publishers under Wolters Kluwer's newly formed division: Wolters Kluwer Law and Business. The announcement raised a number of minor concerns among the participants: How will the realignment affect pricing of CCH products? How will the realignment affect CCH service to academic libraries? How will the realignment affect bibliographic aspects of library management like cataloging? How will the change affect reference (i.e., will patrons still be able to ask for and locate "CCH on Securities")? And, when will branding changes begin to appear on products?

Questions such as these permeated the entire discussion. CCH representatives explained that CCH would maintain titles relating to tax, while Wolters Kluwer would take over all other business titles. In addition, they suggested that they should have a product specialist return and examine the issue of how the realignment would impact catalog records and how such an impact could be dealt with. Beyond that, CCH representatives indicated that the realignment should have minimal or no effects on issues like invoicing, delivery, or editorial content of products.

From that point, our discussion revolved around a number of questions that the Kent staff had prepared for the visit.

1. OmniTax: At one time, we subscribed to this service, but cancelled. Our faculty did not find it a useful product. What changes have been made, and what benefit to a tax curriculum does the product offer now?

Though newer faculty may feel somewhat differently, many of the faculty at Kent who teach tax law did not incorporate CCH's OmniTax, but rather taught print-based research resources instead. Keeping the print products current is both costly and time-consuming. The Kent staff inquired whether the OmniTax product had been improved in a way that would make it worth revisiting a subscription.

The CCH participants noted that CCH has added quite a bit of archived tax material to OmniTax. At this point CCH estimates that, at most, only about 2 percent of CCH's tax content is not available via OmniTax; that 2 percent is likely to appear soon. CCH representatives suggested that a demonstration to tax faculty was in order.

At this point, the conversation moved into the realm of the relation between vendors and academic libraries, and in particular how academic libraries find it impossible to maintain the same content in multiple formats. The librarians indicated that financial pressures and the library-friendly pricing of Lexis and Westlaw, with their excellent customer service, make it difficult for academic libraries to justify subscribing to alternative services like OmniTax or Loislaw, especially for things such as treatises that are available in Lexis and Westlaw.

Librarians thought it likely that print (especially loose-leaves) would disappear soon, but CCH responded that its print business, including new sales, is fairly stable and is not likely to disappear entirely within the next 10-15 years. The stability of print sales is partly due to the readability of the computer screen as a delivery medium (the interface and software change). Much of CCH's print products are done on a print-on-demand basis, rather than having many copies done in a big batch job at a print facility and having to warehouse. This allows CCH to better control print costs.

At this point, Loislaw also came up as a topic. The librarians wished to know what plans Wolters Kluwer has for Loislaw. The product has little credibility with students, who have well supported access to Lexis and Westlaw, whereas Loislaw is incomplete and clunky to use. One particular concern was that the treatises available on Loislaw are too expensive and the expense does not justify canceling print subscriptions, especially since students and faculty cannot cite to the online version. At present, Loislaw only allows for printing one page at a time. Another concern was Aspen titles appearing on both Loislaw and CCH's electronic platform, since those titles might be duplicated. Finally, Kent expressed concern that there

did not appear to be a viable plan to support Loislaw in the long term. Would the Loislaw platform merge with CCH's? CCH representatives did not offer concrete plans to make Loislaw more accessible to academic libraries, but suggested that a Loislaw representative should have been part of the meeting.

In response to concerns about customer service, especially in light of the services provided by Lexis and Westlaw, CCH representatives noted that the company now provides customer support via online chat. CCH now makes this service available for all product support teams within its organization. The service is staffed only 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Central Time. CCH representatives noted that they originally had additional hours but demand, at this point, does not justify the need. They also suggested that the feedback they've received about this service has been positive.

CCH is also looking at providing self-service support for those who need it (or those who need help between 6 p.m. and 8 a.m.). This support will take the form of expanded FAQs, as well as self-service portions of their Web site (<http://support.cch.com>). The latter may be used to order an invoice, get information on IDs and passwords, order missing loose-leaf pages, etc.

2. The need to request additional binders for expanding titles, such as Partnership Tax Planning and Practice, while other titles have automatic shipment of additional binders. Is this related to how the standing order was initially set up?

It usually takes CCH six to nine months to plan for the addition of a new binder, since adding one involves having to check the entire resource and update all cross-references from one part of the resource to another. Overcrowding of binders sometimes occurs when a new piece of legislation is introduced, creating a sudden "slam." CCH has a 10-year rule, whereby it will replace binders once every 10 years for free unless the binders are damaged or completely worn out.

3. Like many academic law libraries, we would like

to use EDI for invoicing. Does CCH provide this service?

Electronic delivery of invoices (EDI) allows invoices to be sent electronically to the library, which can then load them directly into its library management system, thus eliminating the need for time-consuming and repetitive data entry. Kent has been trying to get a legal publisher to set up EDI for invoices with Kent. CCH does not presently support EDI, but representatives promised that they will look at it further.

When they've studied it in the past, they've felt that providing full functionality is the challenge. It's easy enough to provide the data that are in an invoice, but making sure that they all go into the right place within a library's management system is the real challenge. CCH Australia may already be doing some of this.

CCH wanted to know whether customers prefer e-mail or snail mail for updates on products. Most librarians prefer e-mail for this purpose. Kent wished to know, when a new subscription is added during the middle of the annual billing cycle, how difficult it would be to switch that product into the standard annual billing cycle. CCH indicated that this isn't really a problem for them to do. This change can be handled through the "My Account" feature on CCH's customer support site.

A client can use the "My Account" feature to view account information, including billing and invoicing information online. Using this feature a client can, for example, recognize and change an inadvertent standing order. A client can also track dates that reports have been and will be shipped. A client can also use "My Account" to immediately claim pages or reports directly through the CCH Web site.

A tour of both the bibliographic services department and a portion of the library was given to the participants. During the tour, CCH asked how Kent would feel about making newsletter portions of its loose-leaf products available in electronic format only. Kent thought it would be an excellent idea. At the conclusion of the tour, the meeting adjourned.

Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP

Gail Hartzell

Valparaiso University School of Law Library, Valparaiso, Indiana

Patricia Scott

Loyola University School of Law Library, Chicago

On March 14, 2006, Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP hosted a reverse site visit for CCH representatives.

Katten hosted a CCH reverse site visit in 2000 and was well prepared for the visit, which went very smoothly. CCH sent a total of six representatives: the same five from the Kent visit (John Falk, Barbara Johnson, Karen Kirk, Jerry Pruitt, and Sean Siczka) plus Stacey Caywood, vice president of the legal professional group. Katten's library was represented by its director, technical services librarian, and several

staff members who are involved with ordering and processing CCH materials. Prior to the meeting, they had compiled a detailed agenda of questions and issues about their account that they wanted to discuss with CCH. That agenda centered on four major areas of concern: loose-leaves, electronic products, annual paperbacks and special publications, and the integration of Aspen products with other Wolters Kluwer products. Within each of those four categories, a number of specific questions and scenarios were addressed.

Most of this visit's discussion took place in a Katten conference room, but a side trip to the technical services department was scheduled so that CCH personnel could get some first-hand insight into how their publications are delivered and processed at the firm. The side visit turned into a true hands-on experience for CCH's Sean Sieczka, customer service Internet marketing manager, who sat down at a department computer to demonstrate how to best navigate the CCH Web site to resolve delivery and ordering problems. That moment was just one part of a morning of fruitful discussion, during which the following specific issues were addressed:

- **Hand-delivery.** Katten praised the hand-delivery system for loose-leaf and other CCH materials. CCH instituted the hand-delivery option for many city zip codes after 9/11, when postal security procedures sometimes caused problems with deliveries. Katten particularly likes hand-delivery because it makes the delivery process more predictable. All copies of a product generally can be expected to arrive in the same shipment, thereby making missing items easier to spot.
- **Refunds/Cancellations.** Katten expressed an opinion that CCH's cancellation policy is harsher than other publishers' policies. If a firm's cancellation of an active CCH subscription, such as a loose-leaf subscription, results in a credit to its account, the firm must request a payout of the credit. Katten indicated a preference for automatic refunds. Katten also pointed out that law firm practice areas are fluid, and demand for a product can change. CCH explained that much of the cost of a product is incurred with the early shipments and that the initial costs of publishing a title can be high. Miscommunications about cancellations were also brought up. In one instance, CCH cancelled Katten's subscription to a title after the firm returned a duplicate of an update to it. CCH Director of Customer Service-Account Administration Barbara Johnson offered to look into how that problem occurred and the possibility of prorating charges for it.
- **Online Tools.** When items are missing from a delivery, Katten personnel prefer to call their contacts at CCH's 800 number to resolve the problems instead of using CCH's online customer service tools. Avoidance of the Web site tools is linked in large part to their feeling that, when they use the Web site, they never receive the publication that they have tried to claim. For example, when the firm tried to obtain tabs for a loose-leaf release, it received another copy of the release, but again, with no tabs. Such delays in obtaining materials result in down time for loose-leaf filers and the problem of attorneys looking unsuccessfully for new material that they have read about in CCH's newsletters. CCH personnel expressed surprise at these mix-ups because the online system used by those at the 800 number to input claims is the same as that which Katten personnel can access themselves. CCH Vice President of Customer Service and Operations Jerry Pruitt promised to look into how such problems occur and asked that specific examples be forwarded to him. Katten personnel also talked about their dislike for the mechanics of using the online tools because the lack of a cookies feature necessitates retyping a lot of basic information from one screen to another. During the field trip to the firm's technical services area, CCH's Sean Sieczka demonstrated how to use the online tools and discussed the added features of CCH's new "My Account" Web site. She promised to send Katten's library some documentation about what is available online.
- **"My Account."** Katten agreed to be a beta test site for CCH's new online "My Account" tool, a login/password-based account management Web site, which was released last summer. CCH expects that "My Account" will eliminate some of the drawbacks of the old online tools. For example, multiple account numbers and addresses can be associated with a single "My Account" set up, which will help firms that have multiple locations and multiple account numbers. A confirmation screen was also added so that libraries can confirm an order's details before finalizing it. Katten Technical Services Librarian Betty Roeske noted that a list of projected shipping dates for titles normally ordered by the firm would be a useful "My Account" feature; CCH sees the potential for that, but does not have a scheduled rollout for such a feature.

- **Standing Orders.** CCH acknowledged that release dates for standing order titles can become confusing. Customers get 60 days notification, via mail, of projected shipping dates for standing order titles, but production delays can interfere with those projected dates. Also, standing order notifications usually ask customers to verify the number of copies that they want, but Katten does not always have that information 60 days out. The feasibility of shortening the notice period was discussed, but CCH is hesitant to convert to a 30 days notice plan. E-mail notices were debated as an alternative to paper notices, which sometimes are misdirected within the firm. Katten Library Director Susan Siebers favors the e-mail option as long as she can specify to whom the e-mails are sent. CCH may use the new "My Account" tool to determine which customers would appreciate e-mail notifications. "My Account" also will allow customers to check on standing orders, but as of now it shows only the last shipped products, not expected dates for future products.
- **Annual Paperbacks.** Related to the standing order discussion was a discussion about how Katten can learn about annual paperback releases and the availability of special publications, such as special tax legislation materials. Katten needs to know when annual and special paperbacks will be released because it frustrates attorneys to wait for the firm to acquire a title that other firms already have or to expect an annual paperback that has been delayed in production. Katten expressed a desire to always purchase multiple copies of the first printing of new tax legislation products that are not part of a standing order set up. So CCH discussed at length the question of how to create a quasi-standing order approach for such titles. CCH recognizes the benefit of making it easier for firms to automatically purchase new products and agreed to continue the discussion internally to come up with a response to what all agreed is a complicated issue. On a positive note, Katten personnel noted that the notification process for annuals, such as the *Internal Revenue Code*, works well.
- **IDs for Electronic Resources.** CCH is preparing a new "ID Manager" tool that will make it easier for firms to obtain and assign IDs for accessing electronic products and to access usage reports that identify users by names instead of ID numbers. The new tool should help resolve some of Katten's concerns about the length of time that it takes to obtain IDs for attorneys who want to try a product. Currently CCH cannot issue an actual ID on short (24 hours) notice, so trial IDs are issued. However, trial IDs usually give a user access to more titles than the firm will end up purchasing, which creates problems with converting the trial IDs to permanent IDs and with familiarizing the attorneys with the products in the firm's subscription. A related discussion took place between the Katten and CCH representatives about the wisdom of including tabs for all products on the CCH Web interface, rather than just for those in the firm's subscription. Katten understands that there may be a marketing impulse behind that approach, but explained that users tend to become more frustrated with what they perceive as dead links than intrigued by the possibilities of the unseen products. At the conclusion of the ID discussion, CCH offered to give Katten's technical services librarian an administrator ID so that she can troubleshoot access problems without having to borrow someone else's ID to log in. That should make it much easier for her to recreate and resolve problems that attorneys in Katten's other offices encounter.
- **Aspen and CCH Relationship.** Katten's librarians recounted an instance in which a CCH representative said that Katten should have contacted Aspen for help, instead of CCH. CCH apologized for that confusion, and CCH Legal Professional Group Vice President Stacey Caywood explained the new relationships among CCH, Wolters Kluwer, and Aspen products. Wolters Kluwer now has five imprints: CCH, Aspen, KLI, Legal Education Group, and Loislaw. CCH will handle issues related to the CCH titles, and Aspen will continue to handle Aspen titles from Aspen's Maryland location. The imprint on the invoice that a customer receives will indicate the entity that the customer should deal with throughout the process. CCH's old corporate "helmet" logo is now gone; its new logo resembles a green, blue, and red "gem."
- **Law Librarians Newsletter.** Katten's librarians subscribe to a newsletter that the Wolters Kluwer Law and Business division publishes for law librarians. Visit <http://business.cch.com/lawlibrarians> to subscribe. Past issues of the newsletter, dating back to June 2005, are available at <http://business.cch.com/lawlibrarians/archive.asp>.

- **Multiple Account Representatives.** Although Katten is a national firm with multiple offices, it has not had a national CCH account representative. CCH reported that one of the representatives serving Katten's account now will have access to account information for all of the firm's offices. Both CCH and the firm expressed hope that this arrangement will improve communications about the accounts, particularly as buying functions become more centralized. Katten also stressed that, if an attorney contacts CCH's toll-free number to inquire about electronic access to a product,

CCH sales representatives should not contact the attorney directly. On a related matter, CCH assured the librarians that IDs available under Katten's subscription are not given out to callers who identify themselves as Katten attorneys.

As this summary suggests, the Katten and CCH representatives held wide-ranging and productive discussions during the reverse site visit. Thanks to thorough planning by Katten's Betty Roeske, and the Katten library's willingness to host and to participate so fully in the discussions, it was an informative session for everyone involved.

Joanne Beal Dayton Law Library Association, Dayton, Ohio

Two for the Road: A Member's Comment

For years it seemed that law librarians talked about how our profession was "publisher-driven." We accepted and worked with laws and legal information in whatever format vendors chose to deliver it, and it was mostly in print. With the information explosion of the 1970s we built academic law libraries the size of football fields, and in private firms the cost per square foot to house impressive collections was pulled out of the partners' pockets. We duplicated massive serial sets so that no one had to wait in line to access pertinent materials.

Issues relating to storage and access were the topics du jour at every professional gathering. The processes of microfilming and photocopying slowly led the way into the technological revolution. The birth and growth of the premier legal databases offered vendors the opportunity to reclaim some of what was lost with the photocopiers, as a fee could now be charged for every document accessed, every time it was accessed. Price negotiations had all the uniformity of a yard sale. Electronic databases could be reduced or enlarged according to need or packaged with print materials, and costs could be determined according to users, potential users, or the size of the population in a political jurisdiction.

So enter stage left the free Internet. Primary law now appears on government Web sites, non-profit Web sites, university Web sites, and peer-to-peer Web sites. This has become a boon for some and a bane for others. Restricted access to primary law due to the lack of availability has all but been eliminated. However, a carpetbagger of sorts has recently appeared in the image of a dollar-watching, number-crunching administrator or governing authority who simply but forcefully proclaims that, "Funding can be reduced or eliminated for the law library because

legal information is available free on the Internet." Many professional constituents want to believe this cry of the budget crusader and will blindly follow his lead into executive level meetings and legislative committees during which funds to support legal research facilities are mercilessly cut.

This leaves the professional law librarian and the legal information vendor very much in the same boat. That boat, the intellectual pursuit of the administration of justice, is listing badly due to a cross current of belief that all the legal information you need to have is available for free on the Internet. Is the lure of great quantities of primary law threatening the preeminence of carefully considered treatments of legal issues? Will the cost-saving aspects of plain, brown wrapper legal information undercut the authored, edited, and well-organized coverage of legal materials that are aptly categorized as "intellectual property"? Who will need the publisher or vendor or the law librarian acting as a conduit bringing the products to the end user?

Possibly the future of CRIV is in addressing a larger issue than the mediation of price and billing disputes. Perhaps CRIV should serve more as a vehicle by which law librarians and vendors may join forces to counter the pervasive misconception that due to the availability of law on the Internet, maintaining quality legal information in whatever format is a luxury that need no longer be supported by the practicing bar and bench.

Law librarians came of age in the shadow of the legal profession as information specialists and as such we really don't want to see the lofty pursuit of scholarly legal research go "Googling" down the drain. Authoritative and value-added materials should continue to serve as the foundation of any law library.