

Connecting...

The Newsletter of Computing Services SIS
American Association of Law Libraries



Connecting...

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Staffing Your IT Department Cheaply, but Effectively

by Eric W. Young, Northern Kentucky University College of Law Library
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There aren't many of us that can say, "No thank you. I am already staffed to the hilt," when confronted with the question of adding more personnel to your IT staff. Most of us would scream, "Yes, give me, give me, give me." There is always more that could be done. Better service could be offered, yet it is difficult when only one or two individuals comprise the entire IT department. Often the prospect of adding additional staff is not feasible due to financial restraints or other institutional hurdles such as the process of establishing a permanent staff position. There are ways, however, to address your staffing needs that do not require lots of money or the creation of permanent positions.

The Law Library at Salmon P. Chase College of Law (Chase), Northern Kentucky University (NKU) is responsible for all technology within the Law School. This includes hardware and software issues relating to over 125 staff/faculty/student organization PCs and several Macintosh workstations, a 30 workstation computer lab, approximately 15 laser printers and numerous ink jets, a Windows 2000 server, an HP CD server, numerous other peripherals,

and also the design and upkeep of both the Law School and the Law Library's web pages. The Assistant Director for Systems Management [ADSM] (a full-time tenure track librarian position, who reports to the Associate Director of the Law Library) manages these responsibilities. A Lab Manager/Technology Specialist (TS) reports directly to the ADSM.

Primary duties of the TS include: maintaining the computer lab housed in the Law Library; addressing all hardware and software issues that arise throughout the Law School; coordinating purchase plans and upgrades with the Assistant Director and the Associate Director; communicating with the campus IT department concerning technical issues (e.g., network problems); administering the Windows 2000 server; and supervising several student technology assistants.

The ADSM's duties include: staffing the reference desk approximately twelve hours a week; supervising the TS; coordinating purchase plans and upgrades with the Associate Director and the TS; serving on Law Library, Law School, and campus-wide committees (including a campus-wide technology committee that addresses technology issues across campus); recommending purchases of electronic resources to the Law Library's

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SPECIAL SECTION !!!

TAKE ME TO THE ANNUAL MEETING!

A GUIDE TO THE 2002 ANNUAL MEETING IN ORLANDO

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Staffing IT

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Collection Development Committee and, once ordered and received, implementing those new electronic resources; maintaining the Law Library's CD-ROM server (to which 8 public workstations and 30 workstations in the computer lab connect); assisting professors with the implementation of technology into their classes (e.g., TWEN and other electronic classroom delivery systems); maintaining the Law School and Law Library's web pages; providing library tours and special instructional sessions; teaching one section of Legal Research to 1Ls; and fulfilling the requirements of a tenure-track library position.

As the ADSM, I realized quickly that we were understaffed. The TS' maintenance of 125 PC workstations and a 30-workstation computer lab, all of which ran off a Windows 2000 server was,

ago from someone in the campus IT department.

In addition to the time constraints that the TS was experiencing, I found myself unable to address the web pages at a level that was satisfying. Updates need to be made on a weekly basis. Professors and administrators become excited about implementing a new service via the web page and expect immediate implementation. I, myself, become excited about a new feature, but need several days to familiarize myself with the skills needed to implement the new service. There is never enough time.

Besides the problem of finding adequate time to maintain the web pages, I lack the skills necessary to produce visually pleasing graphics (i.e., Adobe Photoshop or similar graphics software). I always believed the Law School and Law Library's web pages were lacking aesthetically and this was a constant point of concern. It was also an issue brought to my attention by several colleagues working in other li-

"Although establishing a permanent position was not a viable option, we did have the money available to create a highly paid student worker position, a temporary staff position, or both."

in and of itself, enough to fill a 40-hour workweek. On top of this, the TS was handling technology service requests for the entire Law School. It is amazing how often professors, administrators, or staff need assistance with some type of computer problem.

Generally, the service request is a simple software issue (e.g., "How can I make Microsoft Outlook do X?" or "Why are my footnotes numbered incorrectly in this WordPerfect document?"). Yet, even the simplest of questions can turn into an hour-long service call. There are also the more serious problems such as a dead hard-drive, a 3.5 inch floppy jammed inexplicably in a professor's floppy drive, or a network printing issue. These service requests take time and before you know it, the week is over and you've neglected the student technology assistants, you've been unable to read-up on some issues that cropped up concerning the server, and you still haven't returned the telephone call you received two days

braries. I sorely wanted to be able to improve the aesthetic appeal of our web pages.

It was clear that help was needed. The TS and I were overwhelmed. The overwhelmed sensation led, at least on my part, to a lowered job satisfaction. I had good ideas and good intentions, but I didn't have the necessary staff to accomplish half of what I envisioned. I was frustrated.

Yet, securing additional permanent staff was not a viable option. Money was tight and even if the money were available the creation of a new permanent staff position required more than just dollars. Approval by several individuals along the university bureaucratic chain would be required. Then a full-fledged search for a candidate would be in order. All of this takes time and I desired an immediate solution to my staffing problems.

Fortunately the library has a decent IT budget. All

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students at Chase pay a certain dollar amount for every credit hour they are enrolled. These dollars are deposited in the "Learning and Technology Fee" account. Expenditures can be made from this account for technology related items that benefit the students. Although establishing a permanent position was not a viable option, we did have the money available to create a highly paid student worker position, a temporary staff position, or both. These positions, administratively, would be easier to create, as they would not require the series of "approvals" needed to create permanent staff positions.

First, I contacted the department heads of the Computer Science (CS) and Information Systems (IS) departments at NKU. I explained my dilemma to them. I indicated that I was looking for one individual to work approximately 25 hrs./week assisting the TS with computer/software issues, server issues, and other general technology needs. I emphasized the position's significantly higher pay (compared to other student positions on campus) and the opportunity to learn firsthand from the library's TS. I asked if they would be willing to advertise the position to their undergraduate and graduate students.

Through this approach, five students contacted me concerning the opening. Three were graduate level students (one in the CS program and two in the IS program) and the remaining two were undergraduate students, both in the IS program. All five students brought differing backgrounds, years of experience, and levels of knowledge. Of these five candidates, one in particular stood above the rest.

This particular individual was an undergraduate student in the Information Systems program. He was an older, non-traditional student who was A+ and MCSE certified. He had worked for almost seven years in the computer industry

and had decided to return to school to complete his college education. He was looking for a part-time position with flexible hours and a convenient location. We were able to offer him just that.

Our "Assistant Technology Specialist" (ATS) has been working with us for almost one year. He has proved indispensable. We have been able to significantly raise our level of service. Both the Library Director and the Dean have recognized the added service that this position provides and have approved a \$1.00 raise beginning this new fiscal year (the position will now pay \$11.00/hr.) and have discussed the possibility of seeking the funding necessary to convert this position into a permanent, half-time staff position.

"Extra time may be required ... to establish an effective co-op experience [,but] ... the rewards are worth ... the extra effort."

The ATS filled one need, but another remained open - namely, the need for assistance with the Law School and Law Library's web pages. Funding was available to pay someone \$9.00/hr. 25 hrs./week. However, I was not confident that an individual versed in Adobe Photoshop, Adobe LiveMotion, Adobe Premiere, Microsoft FrontPage, HTML, and other programs could be located for only \$9.00/hr.

I tried the same route I used to locate the ATS, but I had no inquiries. I began to think that this need would remain unfulfilled. I came upon the solution, however, while socializing with an old high school friend of mine. This friend was a graduate of the Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning (DAAP) program at the University of Cincinnati (UC).

DAAP is a nationally renowned program and its graduates are some of the most successful in the country. He suggested that I contact DAAP and inquire about obtaining a co-op student from their Digital Design (DD) program. UC is well known for their co-op programs. I left that social event hopeful that I would be able to obtain a co-op student.

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The next day I contacted a co-op coordinator at UC and explained my needs. He was excited about my offer (he indicated that UC is always looking for co-op positions) and told me that he would investigate to see if any students were available that fit my requirements. I asked specifically for a student experienced in web page design and one who had knowledge of image editing programs (i.e., Adobe Photoshop).

Several days later the co-op coordinator called back. A student in the Interior Design (ID) department with a strong background in web page design and graphical work was currently looking for a co-op position. However, there were two problems. First, co-op students at UC are required to work full-time during their co-op terms. The library only had funding for 25 hrs./week.

"Finding adequate staff and the funding to support that staff is always a difficult proposition."

Additionally, since this student was an ID student and not a DD student, the co-op coordinator wanted the student to get more design work than my proposed position would offer. I am not a designer and the library did not have any need at the time for design work (e.g., remodeling a classroom, ordering new furniture, applying new fixtures, etc.).

I wasn't about to give up. I contacted the Architecture and Construction Services Dept. at NKU. I spoke with the Director of that department and explained that I was interested in obtaining an ID student from DAAP to assist me with graphical issues on our web pages. I reiterated the co-op coordinator's desire that the co-op student obtain some actual ID work in addition to the work I planned to have the student do for the library. I asked if the Architecture and Construction Services Dept. would be interested in sharing the costs of a co-op student. They were, thankfully,

very interested.

After several more phone calls with the co-op coordinator at UC, we were able to establish a co-op experience that would satisfy the requirements of the co-op program. My co-op student arrived about a week later and I quickly put him to work. I was amazed at his level of competence in both graphic design and web design. I was able to make immediate aesthetic improvements to our web sites. The experience has been rewarding for me and I believe for my co-op student. For approximately \$225.00/week (\$9/hr. x 25 hrs./week), I was able to employ a competent individual who was excited about the project of redesigning the Law School and the Law Library's web pages.

As this current co-op student's term nears its end, I am already in contact with the co-op coordinator at UC to begin looking for another student to employ on a temporary basis. I have secured support from my superiors to possibly employ a co-op student for a full workweek. This will eliminate the need to share the student with another department on campus and will provide me with a lot of additional personnel time in order to accomplish tasks. This time around, since I am inquiring early enough, I will be seeking a DD student.

Finding adequate staff and the funding to support that staff is always a difficult proposition. Even if the money is available, the needed institutional support may not be present for creating new permanent staff positions. Highly qualified and motivated employees can be obtained, however, by finding students from other departments at your university and also by establishing co-op experiences for students at other universities that have special programs that more exactly fit your needs.

Extra time may be required at the onset to establish an effective co-op experience. Calls will need to be made and accommodations made. Furthermore, there may be some reluctance to create a highly paid student employee position, as the possibility exists that other student workers may feel underappreciated.

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However, given the added responsibilities of this student position, the higher pay can easily be justified.

Yet, the rewards are worth all of the extra effort. The whole library benefits from the presence of young, talented individuals. You actually learn from your new employees (I've learned quite a bit about Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Premiere already). You establish relationships with professionals from different departments at your own university and other local universities. Best of all – you staff your IT department cheaply, but effectively.

Eric W. Young is Assistant Director for Systems Management and Assistant Professor of Library Services at the Salmon P. Chase College of Law Library, Northern Kentucky University.

Computer Humor

New Virii?

Titanic virus.....

Makes your whole computer go down

Disney virus.....

Everything in the computer goes Goofy

Mike Tyson virus.....

Quits after one byte

X-files virus.....

All your Icons start shape shifting



Look Out Florida, Here We Come



From: JokeDepot.com — Warning: Lots and lots of pop-up window things for casino gambling, security alert downloads, optimizing your computer, and all that other stuff we've grown to hate (IMHO). /Sandy

Reading Code*

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*Mr. Email Does the Macarena. JokeDepot.com's Reason #173 to Fear Technology.

CS-SIS ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEW OFFICERS 2002-2003

The Computing Services Special Interest Section is pleased to announce the results of its 2002 election and welcomes these members to the Executive Board:

Vice Chair/Chair Elect: Don Arndt, University of Toledo Law Library

Member at Large: Kris Niedringhaus, Georgia State University College of Law Library

Don and Kris join these other members of the 2002-2003 CS-SIS Executive Board:

Chair: Liz Glankler, St. Louis University Law Library

Past Chair: James E. Duggan, Southern Illinois University School of Law Library

Secretary/Treasurer: Dominick Grillo, Hofstra University Law School Library

Member at Large: Susan Boland, Northern Illinois University College of Law Library

Congratulations to these CS-SIS members and best wishes in their new offices!

Special thanks to the CS-SIS Nominations Committee, **Sheri Lewis** (Chair), University of Chicago Law Library; **Ken Hirsh**, Duke University School of Law; and **Mark Folmsbee**, Washburn University Law School for their outstanding work in putting together such a fine slate of candidates. The Committee thanks all those who served as candidates.

GRANT RECIPIENTS

CS-SIS Grants have been awarded to:

Brandi Ledford, Technical Services Librarian at Preston Gates & Ellis LLP

Tisha Zellner, Collection Management Librarian at the National Center for State Courts

Resa Kerns, Educational Technologies Librarian at the University of Missouri School of Law Library

A special one-time grant for CONELL registration was

awarded to **Daniel Bell**, Reference/Technology Law Librarian at the Mabee Legal Information Center of the University of Tulsa College of Law.

For the third year, the CS-SIS offered grants to attend the annual AALL conference. Several articles were published and numerous emails sent to alert all AALL members of this opportunity. The Grants Committee received 8 applications, and committee members had a tough time making decisions. All grant applicants were more than deserving and we wish we could have provided something for everyone. After some agonizing, decisions were made by Grant Committee members **Susan Boland** [Chair] (Northern Illinois University Law Library), **Sandy Braber-Grove** (Vanderbilt University Law School), **Theresa Clark** (Northern Illinois University Law Library), and **Liz Glankler** (St. Louis University Law Library).

Three grants have been awarded and each will cover the cost of the program registration fee for the upcoming AALL Annual Meeting and Conference in Orlando. The grant recipients have been asked to contribute to the CS-SIS, either by writing an article for this newsletter or by active participation in the SIS at the Board and/or Committee level.

Many thanks to CS-SIS for providing the funding for these grants. The hard work of the Grants Committee is much appreciated. All AALL members are encouraged to apply for a grant next year when the Annual Conference will be held in Seattle. Check the CS-SIS Website for the grant application and other details.

- submitted by Susan Boland with input from Sandy Braber-Grove

Articles, Articles, We Want Articles!

Liz Glankler and **Sandy Braber-Grove** [CS-SIS Newsletter Co-editors] are always looking for articles. Want to get something off your chest? Dying to ask a bunch of questions and see who will answer? Send us your troubling tech. questions and we'll find answers. Share with us your tech. nightmare—you're probably not alone! Have you solved a tech. mystery and are willing to share? Write for the CS-SIS newsletter. Any and all articles, questions, etc. can be submitted via email to either of the co-editors. The articles we seek don't have to be the traditional 'scholarly' pieces—although we do want them to be well-written.

glankler@slu.edu or sandra.braber-grove@law.vanderbilt.edu

SPECIAL SECTION—TAKE ME TO THE ANNUAL MEETING!

Breakfast, Business, Karaoke, Oh My!!!

Breakfast with Jim Milles

You are cordially invited to attend the 4th Annual CS-SIS breakfast at the upcoming AALL Meeting in Orlando this July. This great program is underwritten by CS-SIS and only costs members \$10 to attend. Please be aware that you must sign up to attend when completing your AALL annual meeting registration form. Deadline was June 10th — hope you remembered to register!

This year, the CS-SIS is pleased to have Jim Milles, Associate Dean and Director of the Law Library at the University of Buffalo, as our guest speaker. Jim's topic will be: "Career Paths - From Computing Services to Library Director." As far as he can tell, Jim is still the first and only law school library director to reach this position from the Computing Services track rather than Public or Technical Services. It's likely he won't be the last. Jim's talk will focus on the opportunities and challenges for law librarians coming out of a computing services background, and some of the tradeoffs, such as giving up a lot of hands-on technology involvement in return for being in a position to set directions and get bigger things done. Jim will also talk about becoming law library director (and member of the law faculty) as a career change.

It's clear that Jim will provide us with practical information, as well as much food for thought (... to be consumed along with breakfast...). The breakfast meeting provides an enjoyable forum for networking with your fellow CS-SIS members. Please join us and enjoy the food, along with a great educational and networking opportunity.

CS-SIS Creates Connections for the Annual Meeting

The Computing Services SIS invites all interested AALL members to attend our annual **Business Meeting on Sunday, July 21st, from 5:30 to 6:30 pm.** New(er) AALL members curious about the CS-SIS will find this an informative way to learn more about us, as well as how easy it is to become involved. Don't miss out!

All interested members are also invited to attend the **Educational Program Planning Meeting on Tuesday, July 23rd, from 5:30 to 6:30 pm.** New suggestions and ideas are always welcome, and this meeting, too, is a great way to network with your colleagues.

The CS-SIS is once again holding a **Joint Reception** with the TS/OBS/RIPS SISs on Saturday evening, **July 20th, at 6:00 pm** in the Orange County Convention Center. Sponsored by Innovative Interfaces, this is a nice way to kick-off the conference, greet old friends and make new acquaintances in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. Hope to see you there!

—Submitted by Jean L. Willis

Sing for Your Supper?

At the annual meeting you will not have to sing for your supper, but we invite you to sing after supper, or just listen to others, at the CS-SIS Karaoke outing. Since the 1997 meeting in Baltimore a small group has found a Karaoke bar and listened to at least one of the group attempt a song or two. Last year the event became officially sponsored by the section and there were 25 in attendance, several of whom sang their own rendition of familiar songs. For those of you not familiar with Karaoke, in Japanese it means "without orchestra," or at least that is what web sites and urban legend say. The singer reviews the venue's selection list, picks out the song he or she wants to attempt, and waits for the turn to play pop, Broadway musical, or opera star while the music and lyrics are provided by a karaoke machine. Well, maybe not opera. Without consulting any reference sources beyond my own memory, I can tell you the concept first became popular in the U.S. in the 1980's, faded for a little while, and has been enjoying a resurgence here since 1994. If you need a primer, rent the video of "Duets," the 2001 movie starring Huey Lewis and Gwyneth Paltrow. The pair teamed up on "Baby Let's Cruise," earlier a hit for Smoky Robinson as "Cruisin." But one need not be as talented as that star duo. Karaoke singers range from the truly great, who regularly enter and win contests; to the truly awful, who enjoy singing in front of an audience and who equally enjoy an audience who is relaxed - or slightly intoxicated - enough to not object to any and all comers.

So join us after the Academic Law Library reception on Tuesday, July 23. Location of karaoke will be announced at the CS-SIS Business Meeting on July 21st.

—Submitted by Ken Hirsh

Join us for the CS/TS/RIPS/OBS

joint reception on July 20th

at 6:00 pm at the Annual Meeting.

TAKE ME TO THE ANNUAL MEETING!

Road Map to Computing Services SIS Events at the 2002 AALL Annual Meeting in Orlando

Compiled by Sandra Braber-Grove with assistance from James Duggan

Saturday, July 20, 2002

If you are in Orlando this day, start your CS-SIS Road Trip by joining us at the Joint Reception with TS/OBS/RIPS. The reception begins at **6:00 pm** and promises to be a fun-filled event. Meet new friends, catch up with your 'old' friends, and have **FUN!**

Sunday, July 21, 2002

Support the CS-SIS members who are bringing us **B-1 Do You Need an Intranet?** The program is from **1:15 pm — 2:30 pm** and is coordinated and moderated by **D.R. Jones** of Case Western Reserve University Law School Library.

Save time — and energy — for the **Business Meeting** which begins at **5:30 pm**. As stated elsewhere in this issue, there is a very **HOT, HOT, HOT** topic to be discussed and your input is important to us!

Monday, July 22, 2002

While there are no CS-SIS sponsored events this day, continue your Road Trip by stopping by **D-5 Creating Connections with the Courts: Electronic Filing (10:15 am)**. Learn your role in assisting your organization with electronic filing and demonstrate the ability to access court documents electronically.

Tuesday, July 23, 2002

Start today's Road Trip by having **breakfast with Jim Milles** (*See Page 7*) at **7:30 am**. Continue with one of the thought-provoking **Roundtables at 12:15 pm** ably led by **Dominick Grillo** and **Kris Niedringhaus**. Then stop by either **I-3 Creating Quicker Connections** coordinated by **Hadi Amjadi** of Santa Clara University or **I-6**

Judges are From Venus; Technology is From Mars coordinated by Mark Folmsbee of Washburn University School of Law Library. Conclude today's trip by attending the **Educational Program Committee Meeting at 5:30 pm**.

Wednesday, July 24, 2002

Support the CS-SIS members who are bringing us **K-1 Peek-a-Boo, I See You!** coordinated and moderated by Vicky Szymczak of the Brooklyn Law School Library.

Throughout the Annual Meeting, be sure to stop by the CS-SIS table in the Activities Area — we have the coolest give-aways!

See you in Orlando!

CS-SIS Roundtable on Technology Competencies

In March of 2001 the AALL Executive Board approved Competencies of Law Librarianship (see <http://www.aallnet.org/prodev/competencies.asp>). How should we define those competencies in the technology area? How can we educate ourselves and our colleagues to meet these competencies? Bring your lunch, questions, and comments and join the Roundtable on Technology Competencies.

**Tuesday, July 23
12:15pm to 1:30pm**

CS-SIS Roundtable on Web Design and Maintenance

Following up on last year's successful roundtable, we will be discussing not only the technical aspects, but even more the procedural and political aspects. Should there be a "gatekeeper" for all, part, or none of the site? What assumptions will you make about the browser capabilities of those visiting your site? Come with your questions and opinions and hear what others, and us, have to say.

**Tuesday, July 23
12:15pm to 1:30pm**

TAKE ME TO THE ANNUAL MEETING!

THE LAST OF THE ANNUAL MEETING NOTES

2001 Business Meeting Agenda

If you missed the 2001 Annual Meeting (or didn't get a chance to attend the Business Meeting in Minneapolis), this was the agenda:

- I. Call to Order and Welcome: Sheri Lewis
- II. Introductions of the 2000-2001 Executive Board: Sheri Lewis
- III. Approval of the minutes from the 2000 Business Meeting of July 16, 2000: Don Arndt
- IV. Financial Report: Don Arndt
- V. Annual Report to Membership: Sheri Lewis
- VI. Committee (and other) Reports: Committee Chairs or their Delegates
- VII. Old Business (Format/Distribution for Publication of Connecting...; Report of RIPS Newsletter Taskforce; CS-SIS Membership survey data)
- VIII. Introductions of the 2001-2002 Executive Board: Sheri Lewis
- IX. Introductions of the 2001-2002 Committee Chairs: James Duggan
- X. New Business (Joint Meeting of CS-SIS Executive Boards [2000-2001 and 2001-2002]; CS-SIS Strategic Plan [2001-2003]; AALL Strategic Initiatives; CS-SIS Events at AALL Annual Meeting; CS-SIS Brochure)
- XI. Announcements (CS-SIS Schedule for 2001 Annual Meeting; Recruitment of Committee Volunteers)

Meeting was adjourned by James Duggan.

For the complete agenda and the 2000-2001 Annual Report, please visit the CS-SIS Website, now hosted by AALLNET, at <http://www.aallnet.org/sis/cssis/>

ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

You will recall that the 2000-2001 Publications Committee made the following recommendations to the CS-SIS Executive Board concerning the Section Newsletter:

1) That **Liz Glankler** (St. Louis University) and **Sandy Braber-Grove** (Vanderbilt University) serve as co-editors for the newly revised newsletter (both have kindly consented to serve), and that the new newsletter have both online and printed versions. Liz and Sandy will produce and edit both versions, with assistance from other interested CS-SIS members.

2) That CS-SIS start with two printed issues during July 2000- June 2001, with one to appear in early to late fall (after the name contest is decided), and include reports from the annual Meeting, educational programs proposed/accepted, and other issues; and the second issue to appear in the early/late Spring and include previews of upcoming educational meetings; committee work/activities, and other news.

The 2001 Publications Committee has been very busy tackling other issues. At this year's Business Meeting (Saturday, July 21 in Orlando) there will be a very **HOT** issue being discussed — don't miss it! Your opinion matters, come share with us.

2001-2002 Publications Committee

Jean Willis [Chair], San Diego County Law Library; **Sandra Braber-Grove**, Vanderbilt University Law School; **Liz Glankler**, St. Louis University Law Library; **Will Haines**, Emory University Law School; **Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson**, Legislative Librarian/Montana; **Darcy Jones**, Mercer University Law Library; and **Lyonette Louis-Jacques**, University of Chicago Law Library.

How Graduate/Professional Students Use the Internet to Select a Degree Program

by Cyndi Dean <DEAN@law.unm.edu> and Pat Trainor, PhD (University of New Mexico School of Law)

The purpose of this study was to understand the process a student goes through in using the Internet and web pages to select a program of study. If we are able to isolate significant factors, then we will be able predict, to a certain degree, what the contents of a web page should include. This, then, would assist institutions in designing a web page to target specific populations.

Eleven graduate and professional schools par-

With regard to the first question, 68% of the respondents used the Internet to obtain information about a school's programs. Only 32% of the respondents did not use the Internet for various reasons. It is interesting to note that 25% did not use the Internet because they were geographically close enough to visit the school. The study showed that students who did not do Internet research because they were geographically close enough to visit are attending second tier schools more frequently than expected. Therefore, it is significant to note that more students attending second tier schools chose the school because it was close.

"...[D]aily users of the Internet, users who found web sites helpful, users who requested information from the web, and students at top-25 schools are more likely to use an on-line application."

ticipated in the study. Of the 11 schools, two were ranked as top 25 schools. One thousand one hundred fifty-seven surveys were distributed; 638 surveys were returned for a return rate of 55%. Pearson's Chi-Square formula was used to test for significance. Chi-Square tests the hypothesis that the row and column variables in a given table are independent of each other.

The statistical analysis focused on four areas of interest:

1. Did you use the Internet to research information about graduate/professional programs?
2. If an on-line application was available, did you use it to apply?
3. Rank the top three reasons you selected your school.
4. Rank the top three most important items to find on a school's web site.

Nine variables were tested against Internet research for significance: age, gender, frequency of Internet use, year in school, top-ranked schools versus second tier schools, overall software skill level, Internet skill level, ethnicity, and owning a PC. Of the nine variables, five were significant: age, year in school, computer and Internet skill, frequency of Internet use, and school ranking. In summary, younger students, first-year students, expert computer users, daily computer users, and students from top-25 schools frequently perform Internet research.

The second area of interest dealt with the availability of an on-line application and whether or not the students used it to apply. Twenty-nine percent of the respondents reported that they had applied on-line. The survey also asked, "Had an on-line application been available, would you have used it?" It is important to note that 60% responded "yes." Considering that 68% of the respondents reported conducting Internet

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Degree Program

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research to investigate their school, if an on-line application had been available, the 29% reporting that they had applied on-line would have increased to approximately 50%. The variables that tested significant for use of an on-line application were Internet frequency, a helpful web page, ease of requesting information from a web page, and school rank. In summary, daily users of the Internet, users who found web sites helpful, users who requested information from the web, and students at top-25 schools are more likely to use an on-line application.

The third question attempted to determine why a student selected a particular school. The respondents were asked to rank their top three most important reasons for choosing a school from a list of 13 choices. The hypothesis was that students enrolled in highly ranked schools selected their university for different reasons than students enrolled in lower ranked schools; therefore, we tested based on ranking. The hypothesis was supported. Students from top-25 schools selected their school based on (1) the school's national ranking, which was shown to be the most important criteria; (2) the type of financial aid package available; and (3) the reputation of the faculty. Students from second tier schools selected their school based on (1) geographic closeness to family, (2) tuition and fees, and (3) in-state tuition.

The final question focused on important items to find on a school's web site. The respondents were asked to rank their top three most important items from a list of 17 choices. Again, students from top ranked schools selected different items than students attending second tier schools, although there was some overlap between the two groups of students. Students from top-25 schools ranked (1) degree programs provided, (2) curriculum information, (3) and contact information (ways in which to contact the faculty). Students from second tier schools ranked (1) curriculum information, (2) admissions deadlines, and

(3) tuition and fees. It is interesting to note that students at top-25 schools were not interested in tuition and fees, although they noted the financial aid package available as one of the reasons for selecting a school.

In surveying the respondents' use of on-line research techniques, students were asked how they found a school's web site and were asked to select one of three choices. The three selections were a college directory site such as Princeton Review or GradSchools.com, a general search engine such as Yahoo or Google, or direct access to the school's web site. Forty-five percent of the respondents went directly to the school web site, closely followed by 44% using a general search engine, while only 11% used a college directory site. No college

"Knowing that almost 60% of the respondents found the web site an effective marketing tool should be important when requesting additional resources, ..., for web design."

directory site had more than a 4% usage. Although the use of a college directory was low, it is important to note that the information found at these sites comes directly from surveys completed by a school. Therefore, it is important that the information be accurate and up-to-date.

The survey tested for the importance of graphics on a school's web site. Sixty-eight percent reported that graphics were very or somewhat important. The jury students pointed out, however, that although graphics are important, a page that loads quickly is also critical. They stated that if a page took too long to load, they simply "bailed out" and did not wait for the whole site to download. Therefore, the size and percentage of graphics must be gauged with the amount of time it takes to load a site.

Another question asked, "Did the school web sites have easy to find information?" Sixty-three percent

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Degree Program

(continued from Page 11)

of the students said that more than 75% of visited sites did have information that was easy to locate. Comments received from the jury members indicated that navigating more than three levels (three “clicks”) to find information resulted in their bailing out and not continuing to research that school. Over half of the respondents who did Internet research (59%) said the school’s web site was “very helpful” or “helpful” in assisting with the selection of their school. Knowing that almost 60% of the respondents found the web site an effective marketing tool should be important when requesting additional resources, either for staff or budget, for web design.

On the basis of our findings, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Prospective graduate and professional students are skilled at Internet use. The probability that they will go directly to a school’s web site for information is high. Thus, more resources should be appropriated towards creating a good web page design and maintaining an accurate and up-to-date web page.
2. Students seeking information on graduate and professional programs tend to be younger. The study also showed that as the age factor went up, computer use went down dramatically. Therefore, printed materials continue to be important in promoting a school’s programs, but in the near future, printed materials will play a lesser part as a marketing tool, and may even become obsolete.
3. A school’s web site homepage should be designed so that information about curriculum, degree programs, admission deadlines, tuition/fees, and contact information is easy to locate, with no more than two “clicks” to find the subject matter.
4. Every school should have an on-line application (on-line meaning an application that can be sent electronically).
5. The size and percentage of graphics must be gauged with the amount of time it takes to load a site.

Part two of this study will appear in the December 2002 issue of *Connecting ...* and will deal with specific web page design in relation to the results of this study.

Cyndi Dean is the IT Manager and **Pat Trainor** is the Law School Registrar at the University of New Mexico Law School.

NOTE: This article was published in the *NNLSO* journal and is based on a presentation Cyndi did at CALI on how grad/professional students use the Internet to select a school.

CS-SIS COLUMNS

ON THE FRONT LINES

by Ken Hirsh <ken@law.duke.edu>

Looking through Binoculars

Life has its schedule and rhythms. Each of our lives has its own cadence, but often, even inevitably at times, we share common experiences that give us a nearly universal "life calendar." Holidays, birthdays, television seasons, ecclesiastical calendars; all help us mark the passage of time and bring a regularity to our lives that make it seem to have more sense. For those of us at academic institutions, the school year guides much of what we do. In the fall we welcome an entering class. Having feverishly prepared for them during the late summer, we spend hours orienting and training our new 1Ls. Those of us who teach put the finishing touches on our course syllabus and head into the classroom. We attend a variety of meetings, with our own staffs or across campus. After fall break the real holiday season rears its head and students buckle down for final exams. Before we know it the holidays have passed and we are starting second semester, where in rapid fire order we face cold weather, more meetings, spring break, another round of exams and the end of the school year.

I don't mean to suggest this is a monotonous routine - far from it. The faces change every year, and events that punctuate each year make it different from the one before and the one to come. A reunion, a family member's graduation, a death, or a true earth shaking catastrophe, such as happened last September 11, make each year unique. My true point is that if we let the years seem too similar and assume we can keep up the same routine, we can lose sight of how we can make things work better. This is really a column on strategic planning.

Recently I participated in our institution's strate-

gic planning retreat. I'd last been involved in such an endeavor more than ten years ago, when I worked in the law library. Since forming our computing services department nine years ago, computing services has not had a strategic plan. That now changes, as the library, computing services and educational technologies work together to meld our three units into a team that shares its goals, albeit with objectives and strategies that many times will be tailored for each department. I'm not a font of knowledge about strategic planning, and I too enjoy it when Scott Adams skewers the concept in

"My true point is that if we let the years seem too similar and assume we can keep up the same routine, we can lose sight of how we can make things work better."

"Dilbert." I too can come up with a host of catchy word-pair slogans. But I don't claim to have a list of techniques that will help you. Indeed, our library has used outside facilitators in the past and we successfully used one again to kick off this strategic planning cycle. I think a fresh eye is very useful in seeing how we can set our goals and then work toward them.

Beyond using a facilitator, I will offer a piece of advice. When we think of planning, we often imagine we are using binoculars or a telescope to peer into the future. Binoculars work great when you want to focus on a single point and bring it closer. But in so doing, you lose your peripheral vision, and with it your ability to see what is coming at you from other angles. So when you put on your planning binoculars, look at them through the wide end instead. The future may be a little harder to put in focus, but you'll be more likely to get the whole picture.

Ken Hirsh is Director of Computing Services and a Senior Lecturing Fellow at the Duke University School of Law.

CS-SIS COLUMNS

ASK THE GURU!



OK — the Guru must admit that he's just a slacker at heart, while fully recognizing the unfairness of such behavior to you, our loyal readers. Last issue we used the 'on vacation' line to explain the absence of the Guru's column from the Newsletter. This issue, we have no better line to offer except to borrow one from this issue's lead article, "there just isn't time" to adequately research the issues raised in some of the questions.

So, we're using this issue to solicit volunteers to stand in and take the role of "Guru" and help us out.

Here are some questions from last year's (!) [June 2001] issue:

1. Ruth Harrison, Texas State Law Library asks:

Hey Guru! I want to have a shortcut to an internet database that automatically logs the user onto the service. We have a subscription to Shepards on lexis.com and to a service on bender.com. We have tried remembering the passwords through Internet Explorer but the problem is that if a user logs in with his/her own password, ours is erased. Any suggestions?

2. Marilyn Harhai, Barry University School of Law (Orlando, FL) asks:

Hey Guru! I have a Web page form created using FrontPage 2000 that I would like, on submit, to carry out two tasks: 1) send an email message and 2) submit the data to an Access database. It doesn't matter if the solution is from the Web-page side or if Access can automatically generate an email message when it receives the data submitted from the Web (or any other way). Thanks for any help!

3. Jan Oberla, U.S. Dept. of Justice Main Library asks:

Hey Guru! We have been holding off on putting many URLs into our online catalog for fear of the major updating headaches—changes, broken links, etc. Now we have to bite the bullet and jump in with both feet—mixing metaphors a bit. I have not heard of any really impressive software recommendations for helping with this process. We surely can't do it manually. Any success stories?

Any and all responses are welcome! Please send to sandra.braber-grove@law.vanderbilt.edu or glankler@slu.edu.

CS-SIS COLUMNS

FROM THE CHAIR

by James E. Duggan <duggan@siu.edu>

It's almost traditional for the chair's year-end column to begin with "well, the year's certainly flown by." Well, the year's certainly flown by. Although CS-SIS has been involved in many activities this year, the tragic occurrences on September 11 have overshadowed nearly everything, and made us grateful for the opportunities we have not only in our homes and cities, but on a national basis, as well. I am pleased that so many CS-SIS members participated in activities this year, both in the section, at CALI, and within AALL.

I am particularly grateful to many people who have made this year so easy for me to be chair. I cannot think of anyone better to follow as past chair than **Sheri Lewis**; her advice and gentle prompts helped me on a daily basis. Sheri also

a number of web items this year. **June Liebert** and her recruitment committee have come up with exciting CS-SIS brochures and give-aways for the Annual Meeting, and **Don Arndt** and his Job Descriptions Committee expanded the databank. **Mila Rush** coordinated plans for the "alphabet" reception for CS-SIS, and **Jim Milles**'s Bylaws committee made sure we're following our rules. **Kris Niedringhaus** and her committee coordinated the roundtables this year, and co-chaired the Strategic Plan Committee with **Mark Folmsbee**. **Ken Hirsh** headed the Technology Competency Committee, as well as making sure that we have karaoke in Orlando.

My thanks also go to the many people who submitted program proposals this year under the CS-SIS banner, including **Mark Folmsbee**, **Hadi Amjadi**, **D. R. Jones**, **Susan Boland**, **Victoria Szymczak**, **Will**

"Although CS-SIS has been involved in many activities this year, the tragic occurrences on September 11 have overshadowed nearly everything, and made us grateful for the opportunities we have not only in our homes and cities, but on a national basis, as well."

chaired the Nominations committee.

Liz Glankler brought her enthusiasm and friendliness to the vice-chair position, and continued, with **Sandy Braber-Grove**, the ongoing work with *Connecting...*, our revitalized newsletter. Both editors are to be commended for their excellent work. Board Members **Jean Willis** and **Susan Boland** helped in innumerable ways (Jean chaired the publications committee and helped out with a number of news releases, and Susan chaired the Grants Committee). **Dom Grillo** conducted a nearly flawless election this year, and made sure the bills were paid. **Darin Fox** has long been the best SIS webmaster, and revamped

Haines. We are indeed fortunate to have such talent within the SIS.

What's ahead for CS-SIS? We will be looking at the proper venue for our newsletter (print or online), expanded roundtable opportunities at the Annual Meeting, a possible new award given by CS-SIS, and a streamlined budget. I know incoming Chair Liz Glankler has lots of ideas for continuing the SIS's objectives, and I look forward to working under her leadership.

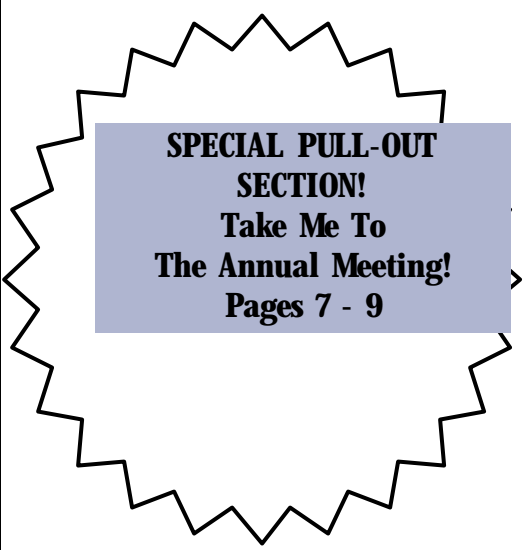
Thanks again for everyone's participation this year.

James E. Duggan is 2001-2002 Chair of the CS-SIS and Professor and Director of Information Technology at Southern Illinois University School of Law Library.

Connecting...

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**SPECIAL PULL-OUT
SECTION!
Take Me To
The Annual Meeting!
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