[30]Kilgour, F. (1972) Evolving, Computerizing, Personalizing in American Libraries, Feburary 1972. Taken from OCLC Report – Sharing, Privacy and Trust in our Networked World, 2007, p.162.

Biographies

Nicola Wakefield is the Law Librarian at the University of Salford. Having worked in academic law libraries for eight years she has spent the last eighteen months designing, creating and opening a law library to support the newly created University of Salford Law School.

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Books and Bytes Together: Print and Electronic Resources at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies Library

Abstract: Lesley Young analyses how the acquisitions process has altered in an academic law library with a huge international collection of both hard copy and electronic resources, following the increasing introduction and use of electronic sources of legal information.
Keywords: academic law libraries; acquisitions; law books; online services

Introduction

The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies Library acquired Lexis, its first full text online database, in 1981 and has steadily increased its electronic resources ever since. However, in 2007, the Library is still very obviously a "hybrid" library with extensive print collections over five floors and 42 public PCs providing access to numerous electronic resources from individual titles to major databases. In some cases, electronic and print content duplicate each other but are meeting different requirements, in others the Library holds unique content in each format. The overriding aim is to provide access to the widest range of legal research materials possible by making the best use of available resources.

Selection decisions are more complex than they were 25 years ago and this article looks at how the IALS Library has taken advantage of the rapid development of online legal resources in the context of its particular role and also how it has dealt with some of the challenges.

Background

The IALS Library has a wide remit: funded as a national research facility, it promotes academic legal research within London, the UK and internationally, caters for the needs of its own researchers and postgraduate students, provides research resources to practising lawyers including the judiciary and supports other law librarians in their

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professional needs. The collections cover the UK, the EU, Europe, the Commonwealth, the US and international and comparative law across all subjects. Meeting the needs of a diverse community and maintaining collections across a wide field has always been a challenge. With electronic resources now an integral part of the collections, the task is even more complex since many more factors must now be taken into account, not least who can access particular resources.

We have always made use of collaborative partnerships both within and beyond the University to help us to provide legal researchers with as wide a range of print resources as possible and it continues to maintain and develop these relationships in the digital world. The high cost of the major databases and the advantages of remote access mean that collaborative acquisitions can be even more effective.

Resource discovery

The Institute Library attaches as much importance to the discovery of legal resources as to the provision of the full text material itself. The development of tools to assist in the identification, location and evaluation of resources is a major part of our work. The Library makes use of the most current technology available to disseminate this information as widely as possible from publishing printed union lists and its own card catalogue to articles and web databases.

The opac is the main access point for the library's resources regardless of format and some bibliographic records are quite complex as we supply details of all copies in all available formats along with details of who can gain access. We also maintain an alphabetical list of major databases on the website with links and brief descriptions of content.[1] In addition to giving details of our own integrated collections, we provide legal researchers with information on resources available elsewhere. The opac permits searches of selected external resources and the Library hosts web databases such as FLAG[2], detailing foreign law holdings throughout the UK; FLARE[3], which concentrates on the more specialist area of European official gazettes; and BAILII[4], the British and Irish member of the family of Legal Information Institutes around the world providing full text primary legal materials freely over the web.

Library staff publish guides to legal literature for particular jurisdictions or legal topics in printed leaflets, books and articles and on the website which it also links to web guides produced elsewhere.[5] These demonstrate the growing importance of web resources over print for current legal research, as they increasingly concentrate on providing details of electronic sources. We identify and evaluate free web resources on Eagle-i[6] and the national Intute[7] service and also provide CALIM[8], a service for law librarians which draws on the current awareness column in BIALL's own *Legal Information Management* and its predecessor, the *Law Librarian*, and a resource I made use of in preparing this article. The Institute's newest project is its e-repository, utilising open source software to provide access to full text articles produced by IALS staff and fellows[9].

Managing the collections

If the development of technology has had a major effect on the way in which the IALS Library guides researchers to what is available and useful, it has had an even greater effect on the way we develop and manage the collections. The Library faces similar challenges to other research libraries but its national role, with the British Library relying on it for the provision of some foreign law, and its requirement to maintain permanent access to legal research materials for a wide user community means that it meets those challenges in a different way. While its electronic resources are increasing, it will always maintain a large print collection.

Improved access

The impetus behind our collection development policy is to improve access to legal research resources and to meet the demand for easy access to electronic resources by steadily increasing the number of PCs and providing secure wireless access throughout the reading rooms. Once an electronic subscription has been set up, new content is available immediately avoiding the inevitable delays involved in making large amounts of print material available for use. For jurisdictions where it is difficult to obtain print material reliably through the post, electronic subscriptions can sometimes be the answer: an online subscription to *Sabinet* helped to solve our difficulties in obtaining current South African legislation. When taking out electronic subscriptions, we negotiate a licence permitting remote access wherever possible and we take the lead in providing several major databases to law academics and postgraduate students of the University. Our unique national role has frequently caused difficulties in acquiring the type of access we need, since publisher pricing models are often based on the number of institution-based academics and students.

Space

Pressure of space is often cited as a major driver in the switch to electronic resources and the Institute Library is certainly no different. However, our requirement to ensure permanent access to legal resources means that we cannot necessarily regard electronic collections as a space-saving alternative to print, since perpetual digital access cannot yet be guaranteed and print collections are therefore maintained. This situation improves as

publishers develop strategies to make their back files permanently available, for example by participating in LOCKSS or Portico, or by allowing their titles to be loaded onto databases such as HeinOnline and JSTOR. We have identified a few opportunities to alleviate space problems on the open shelves by withdrawing limited amounts of print material and storing non-current serials, including those replaced by an electronic alternative, in compact storage either in the basement store or off-site in the University of London Depository Library. Volumes in closed access storage can be retrieved for use in the Library as required. The availability of foreign law databases allows us to share responsibility for maintaining current print collections and so free up resources. Currently the IALS Library is working with its FLARE partner libraries on law reports for the United States and Canada.

These strategies allow us to continue to develop our print collections appropriately and to use some of the newly available space differently to accommodate current legal research requirements. The general concourse area near the Library enquiry desk, which once housed the card catalogue and a large print collection of reference material, was reconfigured to accommodate 31 PCs providing access to the opac and our full range of electronic resources, an electronic training room for legal research and a core print collection of general reference material.

Resources converted to online

We have identified a number of categories and formats of material where access can be improved by providing online access as an alternative or a replacement, and where space can be saved and used more efficiently.

Reference material, digests and indexes

Increasingly we are subscribing to online versions of general reference material which have never been permanently retained in print, and also to resources which are essentially finding aids and which few, if any, researchers now elect to use in print. These include large foreign digests, such as the *Canadian Encyclopaedic Digest*, and indexes to journal articles such as *Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals* and *le Doctrinal*. In most cases, we have cancelled the print subscription but retained the print set as it stands. Currently for the IFLP this is essential because the electronic version starts 25 years later then the print. The change from print to online is not applied universally however and each title and jurisdiction is considered individually. For example, in addition to providing a quick reference tool, digests provide a detailed statement of the law on particular topics. Therefore we continue to acquire several of these in print, even if we have an electronic version, particularly the UK and the international family of Halsbury's encyclopaedias. Evidently,

LexisNexis sees a market for the print and continues to add jurisdictions to the collection and, from comments on Lis-law, many law librarians appear to agree that their users prefer print for some purposes.

UNTS and Official Gazettes

Another category which we regard as appropriate for converting to online are collections of primary legal resources which are published in numerous loose parts and are difficult to use because they are often incomplete, and poorly indexed. We cancelled our print subscription to the *United Nations Treaty Series*, subscribed to the official online collection and sent most of the volumes to offsite storage. We are also gradually reducing our print subscriptions to European official gazettes. In this case, we are relying on more user friendly print versions of legislation together with online subscriptions to the official source or a link to the free official website. We also help to improve access to the older print collections of European gazettes not available electronically. We have transferred volumes from our incomplete sets to the British Library to create a combined complete print collection held at the BL under a trust deed. This ensures that a secure permanent collection will continue to be available to researchers.

US journals

Another opportunity to save space without compromising the value of the academic collections is afforded by the extensive and reliable coverage of United States law journals on HeinOnline. We reviewed our print holdings of general US journals in 2003/04 and, after research and consultation with several academic constituencies, identified a core of titles to which we will continue both a print and electronic subscription. It was also decided that a further group of titles could be maintained in electronic format only, using HeinOnline as the alternative source, and the print set transferred to closed access storage.

Multiple copies

We are gradually decreasing the number of print copies of individual journals and law reports where they are also available electronically from the first volume. We have reduced the three current print subscriptions to many of the major UK, EU and foreign & comparative academic journals down to one and we continue to monitor the online availability of other titles so that we can take similar action. We withdraw most of these duplicate print serials and offer them to the various overseas law libraries with which we have close connections, assisting them in developing their collections.

We currently provide multiple copies of books which are in high demand from LLM and MA students, for whom special provision is made, and we are investigating providing these additional copies as ebooks.

Lesley Young

Large historic collections

From a different perspective, the Library also benefits from the availability of major online collections of historic or foreign primary resources to acquire material it would not otherwise have the space for. In the past the library would acquire historical legal collections, such as the pre-National reporter US state reports, in microform. However, this format is difficult to use and the quality of reproduction can be variable. In the last few years there have been several major projects to digitise such material, notably LLMC digital, HeinOnline and Gale's the *Making of modern law*. In addition to subscribing to some of these collections, the Institute Library itself supports the widening of access to foreign historical material through its charter membership of LLMC digital and will be assisting in its continuing digitisation programme by scanning some unique historical print material from its own print collections.

CD ROM and loose-leaf

In addition to looking at specific categories of legal material, we are also converting resources on CD ROM and in loose-leaf to online since neither format offers the permanence of the printed bound volume. Although the CD ROM does have the benefit of better searching capabilities, it has never been popular, requires more onsite maintenance than online and is vulnerable to developments in software and hardware. Most of the indexing databases have now been converted from CD ROM to online.

Loose-leaf has always been a problem resource for libraries to manage, with missing pages and the inevitable filing delays, and we are moving selected foreign and international books to online by publisher. To date we have converted the major Juris Classeur encyclopaedias and selected titles from Beck and the International Bureau of Fiscal Documentation. Large foreign loose-leaf consolidations are also difficult to manage, although only a limited number of these are yet available online. For South African legislation we have adopted a mixed approach: cancellation of subscriptions to the 42 volume loose-leaf consolidation and the unreliable print gazette and new subscriptions to the online gazettes and to an annual six volume paperback set of laws. In this way the Library has improved currency, introduced better searching capabilities, provided a permanent consolidation and reduced the amount of time consuming loose-leaf filing required.

Complexity of the acquisitions process

Maintaining a research collection in multiple formats is expensive, since there are limited opportunities to make savings, even with the strategies outlined above. There is also the need to maintain separate systems for dealing with print and electronic formats, including an infrastructure of servers, PCs, printers and software.

Initial decisions to acquire electronic resources are more involved than with print, since prices are often not fixed but depend on a complex set of variables, such as the chosen mix of content, preferred method of access, or the number of users. We are not always able to select exactly the material needed because the required content may be bundled with unwanted material. In order to acquire some foreign and international databases, it is necessary to negotiate directly with overseas providers, even though most are owned by one of the major global law publishers with a subsidiary in the UK. Many more staff need to be involved in the process, including law librarians specialising in IT. The Library has a separate electronic resources group to make recommendations and it now meets much more frequently than the main acquisitions committee to which it reports.

Duplication

Since we need to be sure that we can provide permanent access to our resources, we will often hold titles in both print and electronic formats. We have a print plus online subscription to most academic law journals, unless the cost is prohibitive where print only may be subscribed to. Such duplication has the additional benefit of helping to prolong the life of older more fragile print material by reducing handling. This is particularly important if the material is rare but in greater demand because its existence is more widely known thanks to improved discovery tools. However, there is also much inadvertent duplication of electronic resources. Some journals are available from several sources; we have the *International & Comparative Law Quarterly* in four electronic versions in addition to the print. Some major primary legal resources are duplicated in several databases: the *English Reports* are now available on at least four databases and we have three of them. While we are reducing the number of print copies, we are acquiring multiple copies of electronic resources! Of course, this can be helpful if one database is unavailable.

Stability of content

It is necessary to monitor the content of large databases since providers do not always maintain material which they perceive as little used, and publishers will occasionally withdraw material from a database provided by a third party if they wish to market the content separately.

Content is licensed not owned

A major issue for the Library is that it no longer owns all of the resources it subscribes to. Licence restrictions prevent us from making all electronic resources available as widely as we would like, while some categories of registered library user cannot use electronic resources at

all and must rely on print. We are no longer able to make all our resources available to all users.

Training needs

The Library has always offered training for researchers when required. The *Canadian Encyclopaedic Digest* could not be used easily by someone without help. Electronic resources require much more training, particularly with so many interfaces and layers of content to deal with. Several of the major databases present a UK interface on the opening screen so simply navigating to the foreign and international content can be a challenge. We conduct frequent and popular hands-on sessions for different groups of readers according to need.

Conclusion

This article has looked at some of the issues facing the Institute Library in developing its collections to meet the current and future needs of legal researchers. The Library's strategies are directed towards improving access to resources, making the most efficient use of limited space and finding the best ways of dealing with the increased complexities of maintaining a legal research collection in a range of formats. Not all of the problems have been solved but good progress has been made. The development of digital technology in all its guises has not changed what we do, but it has enabled us to do it better and more efficiently and to disseminate it more widely.

Footnotes

[1] http://ials.sas.ac.uk/library/eservice/elibrary.htm
[2] http://ials.sas.ac.uk/library/flag/flag.htm
[3] http://ials.sas.ac.uk/flare/flare_fog_unionlist_europe.htm
[4] http://www.bailii.org/
[5] http://ials.sas.ac.uk/library/guides/research_guides.htm
[6] http://ials.sas.ac.uk/eaglei/eagle-i.htm
[7] http://www.intute.ac.uk/socialsciences/law/
[8] http://193.62.18.232/dbtw-wpd/textbase/cadquery.htm
[9] http://sas-space.sas.ac.uk/dspace/handle/10065/37

Biography

Lesley Young has worked in academic law librarianship for most of her career. After working in the History and British Government Publications sections of the University of London Library, she moved to the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies Library in 1983 to work with serials. She is currently Information Resources Manager responsible for the selection, acquisition and management of the collections and is a member of the FLARE group and the Institute Library's senior management team.