

Editorial

Welcome to the first issue of Legal Information Management (LIM) for 2012. This edition of the journal largely focuses on matters connected with the commercial sector of our profession with particular reference to the controversial subject of *outsourcing* – which forms the designated theme for this, the Spring copy.

I am, as always, enormously grateful to all contributors as well as to members of the LIM Editorial Board for their guidance and input; and also to Sue Perkins, Production Editor (Journals), at our publishing house, Cambridge University Press.



David Wills

OUTSOURCING

The process of outsourcing of legal information units, knowledge services, I.T. functions and other processes within law firms has proved to be a controversial subject over recent years. Presentations at conferences and discussions amongst legal information professionals, both in public settings and in private, have spilt opinion. Whilst some see outsourcing as a positive, natural progressive step which makes good commercial sense at a business level, others see a threat to the integrity and value of the work, expertise and commitment of the legal information professional and the very existence of the law librarian. The aim of this issue of LIM is to present a number of papers that reflect the issues and the arguments on both sides of the divide.

The first piece, authored jointly by Mary Lacity (of the University of Missouri) and Leslie Willcocks (of the London School of Economics), takes an academic approach to the subject and offers a scene-setting, research-based article outlining the concepts and practices associated with outsourcing in business with reference to I.T. services and legal process outsourcing. Loyita Worley gives a helpful overview of the current position in the legal sector with explanations of the terminology. Kate Stanfield, representing Integreon, and Edward Gill, of Evalueserve, write from the standpoint of their respective outsourcing companies whilst Susan Alcock and Dunstan Speight view matters from the perspective of the legal information profession. Susan's article was based on a survey of views from within the industry, the results of which expressed much concern from those law librarians working, as it were, in-house at prominent law firms. Should these papers excite further interest, debate and response, then the editor of LIM would certainly be willing to publish additional articles in the future.

Although there was no Guest Editor appointed for this theme, I am particularly grateful to Dunstan Speight and Loyita Worley for not only being willing to write articles, but also for their advice in developing the theme to include a range of view points.

CURRENT TOPICS

This section benefits from five articles on a number of topical matters. Firstly, there is a piece on knowledge management and cultural resistance, written jointly by Elana Zeide (a former journalist who is currently studying at New York University's School of Law) and Jay Liebowitz (University of Maryland University College). Beverley Woolfon discusses the worrying modern phenomenon of information overload and Natasha Choolhun addresses legal information literacy, a subject that was raised for discussion at the last BIALL Conference during the members' forum (aka the 'Have your say' session). James Mullan, currently the President Elect of BIALL, writes on emerging technologies and Nadine Fathers advises about finding information on pending appeal cases.

CHECKLIST

Jackie Fishleigh, a regular contributor and former President of the Association, offers some helpful guidance on, and a blueprint for, making intranets work, with particular emphasis on engaging users and ensuring they remain 'on-board'!

CURRENT AWARENESS AND BOOK REVIEWS

As always, much gratitude goes to Katherine Read and Laura Griffiths for their Current Awareness section. This issue also includes two book reviews relating to *The IALL International Handbook of Legal Information Management* and *The Walking Guide to Lawyers' London* (2nd ed), both published in 2011. These reviews were written by Katherine Jackson and Mandy Webster respectively.

David Wills
Editor