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Organisation of SA Law Libraries

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"OSALL aims to link and support everyone interested in Law Librarianship in South Africa"

EDITORIAL

The May issue of the OSALL Newsletter has many interesting articles. Diana Riley's article on the role of the corporate library in information provision is most informative for us as fellow law librarians, and we would do well to take note of her findings.

The new website that has recently been launched by the Constitutional Court is a wonderful resource for all of us. Merle Ruff has contributed an article, sharing with us all about the website and the library.

Lydia Craemer gave me an article from Connie Crosby, of "Blogspot" , which has useful guidelines for those who are on the job hunt. The newsletter has a new section – "Questions and answers", which was suggested by Salome Vranas, and I will include this section when there is an interesting topic.

Thank you to Nico Ferreira for his valuable, ongoing contribution, which informs us of interesting journal articles and books. I have added two new wonderful websites that Mary Bruce and Meryl Federl passed on to me. Thank you too to Charmaine Bertram for her ongoing assistance with the newsletter.

Enjoy

FROM THE CHAIR

Our firm took part in the "take a girl child to work" day on the 26th of May, and after spending some time with our candidate attorneys, I encouraged them to spend some time in the library, where I showed them the ins and outs of being a law librarian. After listening very attentively to what I had to say, they looked at each other and then one of them said to me that it seems that being a law librarian is more complicated than being a lawyer! Well, I laughed, but I'm sure there's truth in that observation. They were most interested to learn more about what was to them a new field. I hope that more firms will take part in this excellent scheme and that librarians will encourage the younger generation to enter our profession.

NEWS

The Corporate law library's role in information provision

Diana Riley, Bowman Gilfillan, Cape Town Office

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This contribution reports on the results of a study, which was carried out to investigate the information needs of the attorneys in a large South African law firm. The study sought to investigate why the attorneys need work-related information, what type of work-related information they require, which sources and systems of information they use and what the factors are that influence their information-seeking behaviour. As a law librarian, the researcher also investigated the role of the law librarian and library in the provision of work-related information to the attorneys and this contribution comments on this particular aspect of the study.

Attorneys' primary role is to act as their client's legal representative and attorneys require a great deal of information to be able to provide a legal service to their clients. As such the legal profession is an information-intensive profession and law libraries an important source of information to attorneys. In a law firm the user group consists of a relatively small group of busy and frequently demanding fee earners. Therefore law libraries exist to provide information support to the professionals of the law firm and the law librarian needs to ensure that the information needs of the attorneys are met. Whilst the contents of a law library are traditionally made up of primary and secondary sources of law, law libraries are also increasingly called upon to provide an information service covering any topic attorneys request information on, including non-legal information.

A review of the relevant literature revealed that various studies have found that attorneys regard law libraries, staffed by qualified librarians as an important source of information and the findings of this particular study confirmed that attorneys rate the law library as very important in the satisfaction of their work-related information needs. The importance of the library was further illustrated by respondents who indicated that a lack of relevant library resources has the potential to delay their flow of work and could have cost implications due to time-delays. However it should be noted that the study found that attorneys also regard their colleagues (other attorneys) as an important source of information and rated consulting their colleagues and the law librarian and library equally important.

Attorneys use a law library or consult a law librarian for a number of reasons, including, to locate a specific publication, find specific information, find a few "good" journal articles, do legal research or keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments. The respondents were therefore asked to consider the purpose for which they most often consulted a law librarian or used the library. The attorneys indicated that they used the library or consulted a librarian most frequently to find specific information and rated this their most important reason for using the library. The attorneys also often used the library or consulted the librarian to locate a specific publication or do legal research. Although the attorneys indicated that they did not often use the library, or consult the librarian to keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments or to find journal articles, they rated the use of the library to keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments an important function of the library. As attorneys' most important information need is to keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments, it is hardly surprising that they rated this an important function of the library. Therefore the current awareness services function of the law library should be an important service of the law library, as its purpose is to keep attorneys up-to-date with the latest developments in the legal field. The attorneys in this study indicated that they most often keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments through discussions with other legal professionals.

The American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) has defined a set of competencies for law librarianship, thereby defining the profession of law librarianship and its value to the legal field. The AALL competencies are therefore an indication of the skills and knowledge required by law librarians to serve their users well. The respondents in this study were thus also asked to rate law librarians' attributes, including knowledge of the law, knowledge of information sources, electronic searching skills, legal research skills, the ability to assist users with legal research, the ability to train users in the use of legal resources in print and electronic format, an understanding of specific areas of the law and keeping attorneys up-to-date with the latest legal developments. Respondents rated the law librarian's knowledge of information sources and electronic searching skills their most important attributes. As the respondents indicated that a lack of knowledge of electronic information media had a negative effect on their ability to use electronic sources of information, the high rating afforded the ability to provide training in the use of legal resources in various formats is hardly surprising. Also highly rated were the law librarian's ability to assist users with legal research, legal research skills, the ability to keep attorneys up-to-date with the latest legal developments and the ability to provide training in the use of legal resources (print and electronic). The above-mentioned attributes are included in the AALL set of competencies that law librarians should have. The law librarian's knowledge and understanding of the law was not rated an important attribute. This appears to be in contrast to the position of the AALL, which includes knowledge of the legal system and legal profession as one of the core competencies of law librarians. Based on the knowledge obtained from

working as a law librarian, the author is of the opinion that a law librarian should in fact have a basic knowledge of the legal system in order to be an effective law librarian.

The attorneys were also asked to indicate their most frequent and important method, that they used to access the resources and services provided by the library. It is interesting to note, that the attorneys do not necessarily visit the library to access the resources and services offered by the library, as respondents indicated that they most often use their desktop PC's to access the library's resources, and rate this the most important method of access to the library's resources. During follow-up interviews, attorneys indicated that electronic access to information, via their office PC saves time as it obviates a visit to the library. This is hardly surprising as people tend to seek information that is easiest to access and closest to hand. However personal visits to the library and consulting the librarian were also highly rated. Age, position and years' experience also appeared to influence respondents' use of the method that they used to access the library's resources and services as the younger, less experienced respondents in junior positions rated access to information via their desktop PC higher than their older, more experienced colleagues.

As mentioned, attorneys require a vast amount of information to be able to provide a legal service and the law librarian and library are clearly regarded as an important source of information. However it is imperative that law librarians know the information needs of their users (the demanding fee earner!) to ensure that the information service (and library collection) meets the information needs of the attorneys. This will in all likelihood lead to a reduction in the marginality of the law library, and lead to a possible increase in the use of the law library.

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Constitutional Court launches new website
Merle Ruff, Constitutional Court
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The New Constitutional Court website at http://www.constitutionalcourt.org.za was launched in February this year. The new site is intended to be a focal point for legal research in the fields of Constitutional, Public and International and Human Rights Law. It will be directly relevant to courts (judges, magistrates, prosecutors, and law clerks), legal researchers, librarians, legal practitioners and the public. Visually impaired users

will find the separate text-only section designed to meet their needs.

Court Information and Constitutional documents
The website includes information about the Court's history, its role and work, landmark judgments and the constitution-making process. There is a virtual tour of the Court's new building and art collection. The public may access information on human rights, as well as identify and link to organisations (other than the Court), that can assist them in the protection of these rights.

In addition, users will have direct access to downloadable electronic copies of Constitutional documents, including the interim constitution, the updated constitution in English, the Constitutional Court rules and original versions of the Constitution in all the other official South African languages.

Judgments database
The website contains a full text database of all Constitutional Court cases handed down since the first hearing in 1995. This means that users will be able to search for judgments by case name, case number, year of judgment and subject. Documents available for viewing, printing or downloading include full judgments, summaries of judgments as well as heads of argument, pleadings and documents. Users may register on the website to receive new Court judgments, as soon as they are handed down, and receive notification about the new court roll (forthcoming judgments).

There is a section on landmark judgments, that contains details of the cases that tested some of the significant sections of the constitution. Users are able to browse through the judgments or go directly to specific rights, such as socio-economic, women's and workers rights.

The next phase in the development of the judgments database will be to build a web-based database of South African Court Judgments. The Constitutional Court Library Committee has already received permission from the Supreme Court of Appeal and several other High Courts in the country to analyse and index their judgments. Researchers and librarians will benefit from being able to search for judgments across multiple South African Courts using basic and advanced search tools.

Library Catalogue
The Constitutional Court's library catalogue made its first appearance on the Internet, with the launch of the

website. Visitors can now search the catalogue of books, journals and law reports in the fields of Constitutional, Public and International and Human Rights Law.

As a result of an initiative with an overseas publisher, the catalogue has been enriched to include Tables of Contents from the text book collection. Librarians and researchers will be able to identify the precise book, that contains a specific article required. They will also be able to view the contents of a text book, in order to ascertain whether it is suitable for purchase. The Library intends increasing the percentage of enriched contents for South African materials in the future.

The Library has been fortunate to have obtained permission to convert the manual index, to the South African legal periodical literature, developed at the Johannesburg Bar Library. The project is soon to be completed and will result in the index being searchable online via the website.

Recently the Library was declared an Official Publications Deposit Library. It has since started to build its collection of official publications which will be available on the web-based catalogue.

Links to the Legal Web
Links to relevant legal websites with free online collections can also be found on the website. The links have been divided into Legislation, Case law and General Legal Information, and users can specify either South African material, or material from a list of important foreign jurisdictions. In the future, a new search tool that enables integrated searching across electronic information on websites and databases is to be introduced. The tool allows the user to enter a single search statement that will retrieve data across electronic resources in pre-defined categories.

Public Reading Room
The new public reading room will become fully operational during the current financial year. The public reading room is accessible to specific categories of users. The list of users that may use the Reading Room, is available on the website in the section "About the Library".

The Court Library is a reference Library and therefore only accessible to primary users and members. Users will be able to search the Library catalogue and access selected electronic resources, from workstations in the Public Reading Room. Site licenses have been negotiated with some commercial vendors for use only within the public reading room.

Inter Library Loans
The Library participates in the National Inter-Library Loan system. The copyright implications of providing a document delivery service are currently under investigation.

The aim of this website is to create a source of legal information in the public domain ensuring access to relevant, free legal information on the Internet. In building

the site, the Court Library hopes that legal librarians and researchers will benefit from the Virtual Catalogue, Links to the Legal Web and the Judgments database.

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Connie's top ten ways to find a law library job (for students and new librarians)
Connie Crosby, Library Manager, WeirFoulds LLP
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Blog address: http://conniecrosby.blogspot.com

This afternoon I attended one of the "teas" held at the Faculty of Information Studies (FIS) at University of Toronto. The focus of this tea was alumni contact with students, and I was playing for the alumni team. 8-)

It put me in mind of some things a library student or someone just finishing a library degree might do to network, and hopefully bag a good starter position. Here is my "top ten" suggestions, in no particular order:

- **Join associations related to your area of interest.** Some have student or new member rates. This will open up some further opportunities for you (see below). For law, Canadian students should join the Canadian Association of Law Libraries (CALL/ACBD) and local association if there is one, such as Vancouver Association of Law Libraries (VALL) or Toronto Association of Law Libraries (TALL). Read their e-mails and newsletters about the latest changes and trends in your industry. Take advantage of member directories when targetting resumes. Attend social and educational events.

- **Write an article.** You might rework a course paper or ask a newsletter editor for an assignment. This will get your name known among association members.

- **Join a committee.** If, as a student, you can't become a full committee member, they will still likely love to take you on as a volunteer. This will help put you more in the centre of the industry, and make you better known at least among

committee members and the association executive. Not too shabby for contacts.

- **Read and post to listservs.** Read the lists for job openings and changes to the industry. Also, you might be able to put your educated opinion in now and then. People will remember someone who has said something particularly intelligent or helped infuse some tasteful levity into an otherwise dry discussion. Take care not to dominate the conversation when others want to speak, or to make off-colour comments.

- **Attend conferences in your area of interest.** You may be able to volunteer to obtain free admission, and some associations even provide some funds for attendance at conferences for students or worthy members.

- **Contact a library or librarian and ask for a "behind the scenes" library tour or informational interview.** Cold-calling is difficult, but librarians are usually open to networking and assisting colleagues. You might say something like: "This is Mary Smith. I am a library student at FIS and am interested in law librarianship. I am wondering if you would be willing for me to meet you and have a tour of your library?" Don't be put off if you get turned down--for every one librarian who turns you down, there will be others who would be pleased to meet you. A phone call works better in this case since many people distrust e-mail with spam being so prevalent.

- **Apply for positions, even if you don't have the exact qualifications.** If you don't get an interview, invite the employer to pass your resume along to other organizations that may be interested in you.

- **Watch the job "domino effect" to anticipate where jobs will be coming open.** That is, watch who fills a position since their last job will come open, which then will be filled by someone who may have come from somewhere....you might be able to time your resume to be in the right place at the right time.

- **Attend events that involve alumni.** Mingle and get their wisdom. When you finish school, you will be a member of the alumni association yourself.

- **Some work is better than no work, especially if you don't currently have experience specific to your field.** Accepting a part-time or contract position is a great idea. This will give you a feel for the industry, whether it is really what you want to do. As well, these positions sometimes turn into permanent full-time work, especially if you impress your employer.

You can mix and match these approaches to what suits you. Some people are more comfortable cold-calling, and others are more comfortable writing and sending e-mail. The more you do, the more contacts you will gain and the better you will become at networking. And it may not seem like it when you are first starting out, but this can actually be fun!

Cheers,
Connie

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS…..

Lucy Graham, FirstRand,
(lucy.graham@firstrand.co.za) posed the question below to the OSALL Listserv recently. The answers, supplied by law librarians, may be of interest to our readers.

"I had a query yesterday about
a) whether Constitutional Court rulings are included in the electronic databases that I subscribe to, and
b) if no date is mentioned in the ruling, on which date would the ruling become effective ?"

Reply from Alison Smith, Manager of Sabinet's Netlaw
Alison@sabinet.co.za

It is documented (once published as a government notice in the Government Gazette) by adding a note under the relevant section to the effect that the section/certain phrases in the section has/have been declared unconstitutional by the CC, until such time as that section has been amended by an Amendment Act.

Reply from Sheryl Luthuli, Constitutional Court
luthuli@concourt.org.za

1. When this Court makes a declaration of invalidity they do so in terms of s172 of the Constitution. If it is retrospective in application (in terms of 172(1)(b)) then

this would be specified in the order, if it's from the date of judgment, or any other date then the order of the Court would specify as much. If however, the Court is silent on the date of operation of its order, then the effective date would be the date in which the final Constitution came into force. I think that the actual judgment and order needs to be looked at, when one needs to confirm the date of operation of such declaration of invalidity.

2. In terms of Rule 4(7) of the Court's new rules: Whenever the Court makes an order declaring or confirming any law or provision thereof to be inconsistent with the Constitution under section 172 of the Constitution, the Registrar shall, **not later than 15 days after such order has been made**, cause such order to be published in the Gazette and in the relevant Provincial Gazette if the order relates to provincial legislation.

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WEBSITE USABILITY
Paula Murdoch,
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www.freepint.com

How often have you thought: "I'm not using that site again, I hate it!" Often I'd guess. But how often do we consider why we dislike certain sites? One of the reasons could be to do with how usable it is. This article is aimed at newcomers to usability and will attempt to highlight the main issues and approaches to take regarding website usability, testing and design.

What is website usability?

Usability, in general, assesses how easy it is to use a product by looking at how efficiently users achieve their goals and how satisfying that process was. Or, put simply, whether it does what the customer expects, does it well and does it quickly. This is the essence of what designers should be striving for.

There are some key concepts for consideration when addressing usability in websites, namely:

* Functionality: What is the purpose of the site?

* Learnability: How easy is it to learn?

* Efficiency: How quickly can users perform tasks?

* Memorability: Once learnt, how quickly can someone remember how to use it?

* Errors: Does the site design cater for the mistakes users will make?

* Satisfaction: Perhaps the most subjective, but worth considering in the design.

These have been taken from the well-known usability expert Jakob Nielsen and his writings can be found at his equally well-known website <http://www.useit.com/alertbox>.

Good and bad design in usability

In my experience, the best way to learn about usability is to look at some really bad designs! An excellent site for this is the infamous 'Web Pages That Suck' site that was created to supplement a book of the same name written in 1996. The author of both site and book has conveniently written a review of the best of worst design in 2004 available from <http://digbig.com/4cqrg>. Richard Eskins has also written on this subject and he provides useful tips on how to design your web pages well <http://www.freepint.com/go/n66#feature>.

Essentially though, here's just a tiny slice of what you should be looking out for:
Accessibility is paramount to effective usability for all. I would suggest that accessibility can be split into two main concepts - technical applications and people with disabilities. Much has been written on accessibility from a disabled access point of view, for example, Bill Aschen's excellent article on web accessibility. <http://www.freepint.com/go/n169>.

However, the technical aspects of accessibility should not be overlooked. The size of a user's screen or the speed of internet connection can cause severe accessibility problems especially with the increased use of mobile phone technology and PDAs. Think of children using 'hand-me-down' computers (this is apparently a problem in schools) and you can imagine the impact that inaccessible sites – with slow downloading or excessive scrolling across pages - may have on internet usage. Think also about the colour schemes you choose for colour-blind users or those with dyslexia. A site should also be navigable through the use of the keyboard to aid accessibility, and non-text material (i.e. images) should ideally have a text alternative. Consider the language or cultural issues surrounding your site too.

Sites need a purpose and to help this (and general navigation), the home page should show all major options available on the site. Equally, an obvious link back to the homepage should be shown on all pages. A site map is also a useful addition.

Think about your target audience. Tailor all aspects of the site to them, but bear in mind the people who may visit your site that you are not targeting - does the site cater adequately for these people too?

The text used on the site must be consistent, resizable and written for the medium in which it is displayed, e.g. short, scan-able sections of text.

Links are vital to usability as they can cause huge navigation issues. They need to have meaningful labels and be made obvious. Users also need to know where they will be directed to. Once a user does click a link, it needs to change colour so they know where they've been. Embedded adverts, via links in the text, prove hugely unpopular and may actually hinder navigation. Splash pages and pop-ups, whether advertisements or not, are almost universally ignored and as such are best left out of most aspects of design.

Search options are important on websites, especially larger ones. A bad or very limited search could be a hindrance, for example if the site search cannot cope with obvious spelling differences or plurals.

Finally, all pages of a site should be small in physical size on the page and in the time they take to load. The latest guidelines are that pages must load in less than a second for good usability (See Jakob Nielsen's 'Top Ten Mistakes in Web Design' <http://www.useit.com/alertbox/9605.html>)

This is by no means an exhaustive list but does give a good introduction to looking at websites from the perspective of usability. For more information, go to <http://www.usabilitynews.com> or <http://www.useit.com/alertbox/20030825.html>.

Usability testing - why do it?

If a site proves difficult to use in any way for any person, then you have a usability issue. It may be difficult to acknowledge that a site requires testing; after all, every site makes sense to the person who created it.

With the web growing as fast as it is, the importance of making your site easy to use is becoming evermore important. If there are a plethora of other sites offering the same information, service or product, why should a user struggle to use yours? When considering this in the context of e-commerce, this could mean the difference between a successful business and an expensive mistake. A company in the FTSE 100 cannot afford for their website to score badly. It may also make sense to measure how well your website fulfils user needs by looking at what a direct competitor does, particularly if they are doing a better job.

It is much more difficult to assess the overall satisfaction of a site, for instance the 'look' or 'feel' of it and how pleasant it is to use. User testing can give a broad opinion but this has always been notoriously difficult to measure. So what kinds of tests are there? How do we perform these and make reasonable, unbiased assessments?

Types of usability tests

There are many ways to carry out usability testing on your site. A useful starting point is via Usability First: <http://www.usabilityfirst.com/methods/index.txl> but there are several other sites that are equally authoritative. Essentially, depending on resources available, you can use evaluation criteria/checklists, field studies, interviews, observation, prototyping, heuristic studies and automated evaluation. This last type of study is about using technology to test technology. Some useful starting points are the free automated tools like Dr HTML <http://www.fixingyourwebsite.com/drhtml.html> and others from Optiview <http://digbig.com/4cpnm> but again, there are countless other tools available.

In isolation, automated evaluation may not give an entire picture of how usable a site is, but it could be a swift way of testing an early site to remove obvious issues before setting up user testing. It is widely recognised that observation is one of the most effective tests. This is especially true for companies with limited resources, because as long as impartiality is maintained, you can clean highly valuable results from observing people performing specific tasks on your site. Microsoft appears to agree with the notion that user testing is fundamental to usability testing, as they use approximately 750 people in testing both software and websites every month <http://www.microsoft.com/usability/lab.htm>.

Remember that testing a new site or a problem site already in existence is not where the story ends. When the changes required have been implemented, reviews should ideally be maintained.

What do I do now?

As Information Professionals, the importance of getting a message across in a clear, accurate and effective way is close to all our hearts. We have seen the ways in which information on a site can be blurred due to inadequate planning and implementation at the design stages and insufficient attention to the factors which influence effective usability.

There is no denying that trying to ensure a website is 100% usable is almost impossible. But there are many authoritative guidelines available today that give site designers the tools to address usability in ways that may not have been considered as little as five years ago. This in itself is an important point as there is certainly still some way to go.

So, what do you do now? Hopefully, this article has provided a basic introduction to why and how you should perform usability testing and has highlighted some of the good and bad in website design. Try using some of the links - another good general resource is Usable Web at <http://usableweb.com> - and perhaps the next time you find a site that you decide never to go back to, you might at least learn how not to design a site; I know I do!

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WHO GOES WHERE

Jean Nell (Jean@sabinet.co.za) has moved from the Constitutional Court Library, and started working at Sabinet from the 25th of April 2005. Jean is working in the legal products Division, and is mainly involved with Netlaw.

Lynette Miller (miller@concourt.org.za) has taken over Jean Nell's position, as Acquisitions Consultant at the Constitutional Court, as from 1 May 2005.

Diana Riley (d.riley@bowman.cpt.co.za) has been awarded a distinction, for her dissertation on the information needs of attorneys, in a large South African law firm. She investigated why attorneys need information, the type of work-related information attorneys require, the sources and systems of information they use as well as the factors influencing their information-seeking behaviour. The study also included an investigation of the role of the law librarian and library in the provision of work-related information to attorneys. The dissertation was required in partial fulfilment of her M.Bibl degree from UCT. The coursework component of the degree consisted of an essay on the role of the law librarian in knowledge management.

Congratulations, Diana.
(Submitted by Olwyn Garratt, Fairbridges
info@fairbridges.co.za)

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Contributed by Nico Ferreira, UNISA
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WEB ADDRESSES NOTED

Rave status
http://www.answers.com/

The best Internet innovation in years - 7 February 2005 Answers.com is a new approach to Internet search, but make no mistake : It is not search. With one click Answers.com delivers instant information, not Web links, laid out cleanly on one page.

How cool is this results' display?
Run the same search by typing in "onamatopoeia" - not only does it automatically correct the spelling,
it automatically correct the spelling, it returns results under the headings (in order) 'Dictionary', 'Thesaurus', 'Encyclopedia' (no spell-check on that one), 'Obscure', 'Poetry Glossary', 'WordNet', 'Wikipedia' and 'Mentioned In'
Submitted by Mary Bruce, KwaZulu-Natal Law Society, mary@lawsoc.co.za

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http://www.easil.org

EISIL has been developed, with the support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, by the American Society of International Law (ASIL), a scholarly association that has been a leader in the analysis, dissemination and development of international law since 1906.

ASIL's goal is to ensure, through EISIL, that web searchers can easily locate the highest quality primary materials, authoritative web sites and helpful research guides to international law on the Internet. To this end, EISIL has been designed as an open database of authenticated primary and other materials across the breadth of international law, which until now have been scattered in libraries, archives and specialized web sites.

Submitted by Meryl Federl, Wits School of Law

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DID YOU KNOW??

Release courtesy of National Library of SA.

PRESS RELEASE Pretoria, 1 April 2005

The well-known and unique 10-digit identifier for books, International Standard Book Number (ISBN), is going to change to a 13-digit number. This takes effect 1 January 2007. Every system * electronic and manual * will need to accommodate the ISBN-13 by 2007. Publishers, distributors, retailers and libraries are the main user

groups affected by the change. The change impacts on software such as automated ordering systems, inventory control systems, point-of-sale software and library databases. The main reason for changing the ISBN was to increase the numbering capacity of the ISBN system. As a result of electronic publishing and other changes in the print industry, the numbering capacity of the ISBN system is being consumed at a much faster rate than was originally anticipated in the late 1960s. Changing to a 13-digit number will prevent the system from running out of numbers. With the inclusion of the 3-digit 978-prefix that identifies the book industry, ISBN-13 will be identical to the EAN 'Bookland' bar code. Two prefix ranges * 978 and 979 * will double the numbering capacity of the ISBN system, as was explained by Michael Healy, convener of ISO TC46/SC9/WG4 in his October 2004 address to the ISBN-13 in SA task team.

Other changes recommended to accompany the adjusted 13-digit ISBN include a specified ONIX-compliant metadata set, permission to charge for ISBNs and establishing a new international ISBN organisation which is owned, funded and governed by local ISBN agencies. The new standard has gone through the applicable voting stages, and it is envisaged that the new standard, also the most important supporting document ISO 2108: Information and Documentation * International Standard Book Number (ISBN), 4th ed., will be published during the first quarter of 2005. A transition period of two years will follow. The International ISBN Agency's Guidelines for implementation, and its Users' Manual are two supplementary sources to consult during this time. General software programmes to assist with ISBN conversions will be available, as well as software releases from various system vendors to accommodate both 10-digit and 13-digit ISBNs.

In South Africa the responsible body for ISBN-13 is the national ISN Agency at the National Library of South Africa, Pretoria. A task team, ISBN-13 in SA, was convened during April 2004. It meets on a bi-monthly basis, consists of representatives from the book publishing and related industries, and will guide the South African implementation process. For relevant, important information sign on to the official ISBN-13 web site: http://www.nlsa.ac.za/isbn13.html The National Library of South Africa is the national depository of the published output of the country. It holds the key collections of the South African documentary heritage, and makes these accessible through its work as the national bibliographic agency, done according to international and national standards. For further information regarding ISBN-13 in South Africa, please contact Tienie de Klerk: tienie.deklerk@nlsa.ac.za.

Submitted by Salome Vranas

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A final thought –

An optimist….

"An optimist is one who takes the cold water thrown upon his idea, heats it with enthusiasm, and uses the steam to push ahead."

Source: These Times, Copyright (c) July 1956, Pacific Press

Submitted by Danielle Heij, Brink Cohen Le Roux

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Who's office looks the busiest?

Ps. Don't you dare think disorganised!!!!

Please send your votes to the editor via email.

Contestant Nr 1: Our Chairman

Contestant Nr 2: The Marketing & Liaison officer