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The Newsletter of the Computing Services SIS
American Association of Law Libraries

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On the Front Lines

Are You a Librarian? Am I?

Ken Hirsh

These questions would seem to be simple to answer. Most readers of this column work in a law library. Most have the word librarian in their job title: Reference Librarian. Catalog Librarian. Director of the Law Librarian. Electronic Services Librarian. I am always suspicious when I hear that last title: what reference or circulation librarian today can do his or her job without using electronic services?

What exactly does a librarian do? Are librarians "place bound?" That is, must there be a library present for a librarian to do the job? Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, Ninth Edition (1989), not the latest edition from Merriam-Webster but the one on my shelf, says a librarian is a "specialist in the care or management of a library." It defines library

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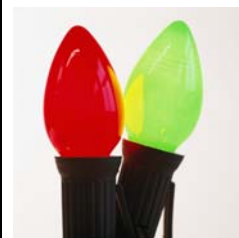
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On the Front Lines (continued)

first as “a place in which literary, musical, artistic, or reference materials (as books, manuscripts, recordings or films) are kept for use but not for sale.” Dictionary.com, citing The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition (2000) says a librarian is “a person who is a specialist in library work” or “a person who is responsible for a collection of specialized or technical information or materials, such as musical scores or computer documentation.” Citing the same source it gives substantially the same definition of library as does my sixteen year old Webster’s.

Why ask these questions? For reasons grand and not so grand. We are all keenly aware of the changes wrought by the Internet in general and Google, Amazon.com, Lexis-Nexis, Westlaw and Yahoo in particular. Now add to that iTunes, which puts a huge music library at your finger tips, and upcoming services that will do the same for motion pictures, television shows and video/computer games. What impacts have we felt so far, and what will we feel? This is not a scholarly treatment, so I won’t be giving meaningful answers, if any answers at all. However, each of us must answer these questions to find our continuing way in our careers and in our profession, and to help new recruits to our profession find their way as well.

We must also ask our professional association, which in reality is ourselves acting as a body politic, how it and its members are to adapt to the changing world. A few years ago AALL considered whether to modify its definitions of eligibility for membership to be more inclusive of information professionals who do not work in environments that meet the traditional meaning of the term “law library.” There were well stated arguments on both sides of the issue, and in the end the association voted not to be more inclusive.

Below I reprint the current active membership eligibility requirements and I leave you with these questions: Will the people we want to be in the association be able to actively participate in its affairs? Are we afraid to embrace the future?

Categories of Membership.

Members -- Active and Retired.

Active: Any person who is interested in the objectives of the Association and works with legal information in a library or information center or provides library services on an independent contract basis.



Ken Hirsh is Director of Computing Services and a Senior Lecturing Fellow at Duke University School of Law in Durham, North Carolina.

—■—
“Will the people we want to be in [AALL] be able to actively participate in its affairs? Are we afraid to embrace the future?”
—■—





Computing Services SIS Grants Program

Jim Gernert

While the AALL Annual Meeting in St. Louis may seem a long way off, it is not too soon to start thinking about how you might pay for attendance at the meeting, especially if funds are short (or non-existent!) at your place of employment. Grants to cover the cost of registration are available from a number of sources, including your very own Computing Services SIS. Since the year 2000, CS-SIS has awarded at least three grants each year to members of the SIS for Annual Meeting attendance (and some years, including 2005, we have been able to make available an additional grant for CONELL registration as well).



According to the official statement of purpose on our website, "the purpose of the AALL CS-SIS Grants Program is to provide financial assistance to librarians who hold promise of future involvement in the law library profession, especially those who are directly involved in providing technology support of any kind within law libraries." Applicants must demonstrate financial need, and preference is given to newer members, and those who haven't received a grant previously (although only those who have received a grant within the past two years are barred from receiving another grant). For

more specific information about the AALL CS-SIS Grant Program, and a copy of the application, go to the CS-SIS website, located at <http://www.aallnet.org/sis/cssis/> and click on "Grant Program."

Applications are generally due in April (April 15th last year, but check the website for the deadline, in case it changes), and are considered by a committee of CS-SIS members. This year I have the honor of being the Chair of the Committee. Other members serving on the Committee are: Irene Good, Robert Jacoby, Judith Kaul, Cynthia Lewis, Melissa Serfass, Bonnie Shucha, and Eric W. Young. We encourage anyone who thinks they might be in need of a grant to apply.

Please feel free to e-mail me at jgernert@ubalt.edu with any questions.

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Jim Gernert is Information Management Librarian at the University of Baltimore Law Library in Baltimore, Maryland.

How you can be considered for a CS-SIS Grant

- Download a copy of the application from the CS-SIS website
- deadline is in April
- preference given to newer members
- If you have received a grant within the last two years, you must give someone else a chance.





Computing Services SIS Grants Program (continued)

Thanks, CS-SIS!!!

Eric W. Young

In August 2004, after approximately seven years, I left my job as Assistant Director for Information Technology at the Salmon P. Chase College of Law, Northern Kentucky University, for a new job. However, not only did I leave my job, I also left a profession that I loved. Don't get me wrong, my current job is great. Clerking for, in my opinion, one of the best federal district court judges in the country is exciting, challenging, and rewarding. And, I took the job fully expecting to return to the law library profession upon the completion of my two-year clerkship. Yet, from the first day I left my old job I missed it terribly. It didn't take long for me to realize that being a law librarian is the best job in the world. For those of you who haven't experienced anything else, take my word on this and be happy every day for the job you have!



Unfortunately, my new employer would not pay for me to attend the AALL Conference in San Antonio, especially since I wasn't even a law librarian anymore (at least not on paper – now, in my heart, I was never anything but). Federal law clerks make decent money, but when you add up a school loan payment, a mortgage payment, car payment, etc. that monthly check disappears quickly. Without outside financial support to attend the Annual Meeting, there was no way I would make attend. It would be the first missed meeting in seven years. Fortunately, CS-SIS came through for me. Sure, I had to fill out an application and explain why I deserved the CS-SIS Annual Meeting Grant, but ultimately it was CS-SIS's generosity that got me to San Antonio. CS-SIS is an awesome special interest section. The members are great and the services/information they provide are unparalleled. Thanks a bunch, CS-SIS!

Eric W. Young is a clerk for the Hon. S. Arthur Spiegel, United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio.





Call for Nominations: **Kenneth J. Hirsh Distinguished Service Award**

The CS-SIS Awards Committee (Don Arndt, James E. Duggan, Chair, Jim Gernert, Judith Kaul, Sheri Lewis, Jean Willis, and Eric W. Young) invites nominations for the Kenneth J. Hirsh Distinguished Service Award.

This award honors a CS-SIS member who has made outstanding contributions to the SIS, to AALL, and who is well regarded for their service to the profession. The inaugural award recipient was Ken Hirsh, for whom the award was named.

Criteria

- Outstanding leadership through committee work, service on the executive board, involvement in special projects or other activities.
- Participation in professional development activities in furtherance of the section and its interests, including educational programming planning and presentations.
- Involvement with mentoring activities to foster interest and participation in the section and its activities.
- Evidenced commitment to the section, its purpose, and its role within the association in furtherance of the law library profession.

To be eligible for the award, a nominee must be an active or retired member of the section.

Section officers are not eligible for this award during their term of office.

Submission Procedure

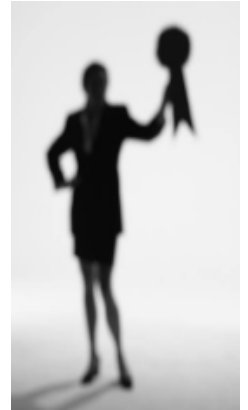
Nominations must include:

1. A letter of nomination, including the candidate's full name, title, and institution name and address. If the candidate is retired, include name, home address, and most recent former employer;
2. A narrative supporting the nomination, to include a discussion of the candidate's contributions to academic law librarianship; and
3. The name, e-mail and phone number of the nominating party.

Nomination materials may be sent electronically or in paper to:

James E. Duggan
CS-SIS Awards Committee Chair
Southern Illinois University School of Law Library
1150 Douglas Dr.
Carbondale, IL 62901
duggan@siu.edu

Deadline: All nominations must be received by **March 17, 2006**.





AALL Education Summit Report

Susan M. Boland

The AALL Education Summit took place on September 23-24, 2005 in Oak Brook, Illinois. Representatives from the AALL SISs, Chapters, Executive Board, Headquarters' Staff, and AALL members with educational and career planning experience met to discuss the roles AALL, SISs, and Chapters should take over the next three years in professional development. The discussion focused on general roles, not specific programming. The session was designed and facilitated by Cate Bower, principal partner of Tecker Consultants, LLC.

Due to the three-year time frame, it was crucial that a limited and "doable" list of priorities be developed. After much debate, the following roles were listed:

AALL's role/responsibilities

1. Act as a clearinghouse and calendar for professional development and create a speaker's bureau
2. Provide grants and other incentives for development of programs
3. Provide technical assistance and support for the development and distribution of SIS and Chapter programs outside or beyond the annual meeting
4. Repackaging and distribution of Annual Meeting materials to members who are unable to attend

SIS roles/responsibilities

1. Develop content and programs relevant to special interest section
2. Market our expertise and programs to Chapters and other special interest sections
3. Monitor and convey to AALL the education needs of the special interest section

Chapters

1. Provide local and timely content and programs
2. Partner with local experts and specialists
3. Provide AALL with information about local and individual member needs

In response to the Education Summit, the AALL Executive Board created three implementation task forces for the summit recommendations on roles/responsibilities. The general charge of the three task forces is to create a structured approach and framework on how to provide an integrated Continuing Professional Education program for the next three years that supplement the Annual Meeting programming.

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Susan M. Boland is Research & Instructional Services Librarian and Webmaster at the David C. Shapiro Memorial Law Library, Northern Illinois University College of Law in DeKalb, Illinois.



“This is an exciting opportunity for our SIS to promote our expertise and our great content development skills. . . . The more educational opportunities for CS-SIS members and the rest of AALL the better!”





AALL Education Summit Report (continued)

Action Task Force #1, chaired by our own CS-SIS member and past chair (1999-2000) Lyonette Louis-Jacques, is working on the creation of a clearinghouse of national and chapter programs, with a calendaring system populated by the chapters and other entities and a speakers' bureau. The Calendar and Speakers' Bureau is tentatively scheduled to go live on January 4, 2006.

Action Task Force #2, which includes CS-SIS member and past chair (2001-02) James Duggan, is responsible for (1) fleshing out the roles of AALL, Chapters, SISs, Committees, Caucuses, and other interested parties; (2) developing a model for staffing and technology infrastructure; (3) developing implementation plans for repackaging elements of the annual meeting; and (4) creating implementation plans for grant funding.

Action Task Force #3, which includes CS-SIS member and AALL past president (2004-05) Tory Trotta, is working on models for funding.

This is an exciting opportunity for our SIS to promote our expertise and our great content development skills. We won't be limited to the annual meeting but can officially offer and market our ideas for local programming. The more educational opportunities for CS-SIS members and the rest of AALL the better!





RSS: It's About Time¹

Bonnie Shucha

There is a certain measure of time between when you first hear someone rave about a new technology to when you hear about it so often that you feel guilty for not having investigated it yet. Are you there with RSS yet? If so, it's high time that you spend a little time learning about this incredible tool. Believe me, your efforts will be rewarded in time saved down the road.

What is RSS?

Depending on who you ask, RSS stands for either "rich site summary" or "really simple syndication." And, frankly, it doesn't really matter as long as you know what it does: RSS makes the Internet "subscribe-able."²

RSS is probably most often associated with blog content, although it does have a much broader application. For the purposes of initial explanation, it is useful to start with blogs. There are two ways to read blog content.³ The first is via the native Web interface accessed by typing in the URL for the blog into your web browser. Using this method, you must visit the site daily to check for updates. That can easily and quickly consume a lot of time if you read multiple blogs.

The second, and much more time efficient method to read blog content is via RSS reader.⁴ Each time a blog is updated, content will automatically be delivered to one central location, your RSS reader. To set this up, simply click on the orange XML button on the blog to get the URL for its RSS feed. Then, subscribe to the feed with an RSS reader, which displays the new blog content in a readable format. Repeat for each blog to which you wish to subscribe. Multiple RSS feeds can be delivered to a single RSS reader.

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1. This past July, I had the pleasure of presenting at the AALL Annual Meeting for the session *Beyond the Blog: RSS, Wikis and Blikis*. This article is an expansion of the RSS portion of that presentation. I would like to thank CS-SIS for generously providing me with a grant to attend the meeting.

2. I first heard this definition from Rick Klau at BlawgThink 2005. Rick is the VP of Business Development at *FeedBurner* (<http://www.feedburner.com>).

3. OK, technically, there are three ways. Some blogs offer an email subscription option, but it is best not to rely upon it since most bloggers don't offer it.

4. RSS readers are also known as RSS aggregators, news readers, and news aggregators.





RSS: It's About Time (continued)

Email message
(information)



RSS feed
(information)



Email application
(reader)



RSS Reader
(reader)

Illustration 1

As shown in Illustration 1, an RSS reader functions like your email application. With email, you receive information from an email server in the form of an email message. You cannot interpret that information without the aid of a reader -- an email application such as Outlook. The same is true for an RSS feed. You receive blog information via RSS feed post. But you cannot interpret the information without an RSS reader, such as *Bloglines*.

RSS has some distinct advantages over email. First, a lot of great content simply isn't available via email. Generally, it is easier for content providers to publish new content via RSS rather than via email. Second, RSS content is usually delivered faster than email. As soon as new content is posted, the RSS feed is automatically updated. This is not always practical if content is delivered via email. If content is added frequently, it is impractical for a content provider to send out a new email message for every update. Subscribers would be overwhelmed with too many email messages.

Another significant advantage of RSS over email is that you do not have to delete content that does not interest you. Content is only displayed in an RSS reader the first time you view it -- unless you act to save it. I subscribe to about 150 RSS feeds. That may sound like a lot, but it really doesn't take me very long to skim them. And since I only save about 3% of the content that comes to my RSS reader, I save a great deal of time not having to delete the other 97%.

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RSS: It's About Time (continued)

RSS Readers

There are two types of RSS readers: Web-based and installed software applications. Web-based readers can be accessed from any computer with an Internet connection. This is ideal for users, like me, who play musical computers throughout the day. As a reference librarian, I float between my office and the reference desk and need to be able to easily access my RSS feeds from both computers.

One such Web-based RSS reader is *My Yahoo* (<http://my.yahoo.com/>) which, if you are only interested in following a few RSS feeds, is a good place to start. If you already use *Yahoo* for your email or calendaring, then you already have an account.

Bloglines (<http://www.bloglines.com/>) is undoubtedly one of the most popular Web-based RSS readers. You can use it to read RSS feeds as well as email listservs. Another option is *Pluck* (<http://www.pluck.com/>) which offers plug-ins for both *Internet Explorer* and *Firefox*.

There are also RSS readers which you install as separate software applications on your computer. Examples include *FeedReader* (<http://www.feedreader.com/>), *FeedDemon* (<http://www.bradsoft.com/feeddemon/>), and *RSS Bandit* (<http://www.rssbandit.org/>). This type of RSS reader works well for someone that primarily works on one computer. With this software, a traveler or a commuter with a laptop computer can read his or her RSS feeds off-line.

Drawbacks of RSS?

Although the blogosphere is often described as an open forum for the free exchange of ideas, in reality most blogs are inherently one-sided. As a publishing medium, a blog is designed for an author, or perhaps a small team of authors, to generate the bulk of the conversation.

To allow public dialogue, many blogs offer a comment feature so that readers can respond to posts. It is important to note, however, that when a reader subscribes to a blog via RSS feed, the comment feature is usually not available from inside the RSS reader. In order to comment, the reader must link out of the RSS reader and then into the blog's native Web interface.

Additionally, with most blog publishing applications, comments made about posts are not distributed via the blog's RSS feed. While most bloggers prefer it this way, it does put a damper on the free exchange of ideas theory.

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RSS: It's About Time (continued)

Another potential drawback of RSS may be, as I mentioned above, that content received via RSS is not automatically saved. In my opinion, this is one of the biggest advantages of RSS. However, if you aren't aware of it, it could be a disadvantage. To save content, you have three options: 1. mark it as new, 2. save it to a clippings folder, or 3. email it.

Librarians are not alone in recognizing the value of this technology. Marketers and hackers are starting to take advantage of RSS as well. Advertisements are already creeping into some RSS feeds and some predict that spy ware and other nasty things will not be far behind.

Other Uses of RSS Feeds for the Researcher

In addition to the feeds available from blogs, RSS has many other applications for law librarians, especially for legal research. Many traditional news media are now offering content via RSS which allows subscribers to receive news as quickly as it is reported. Some newspapers offer topical feeds so that you can subscribe only to topics that interest you. See the *New York Times* (<http://www.nytimes.com/services/xml/rss/>), for example.

Both *Feedster* (<http://feedster.com/>) and *Google News* (<http://news.google.com/>) offer customized alerts. You choose the keywords and subscribe via RSS. When matching content is indexed by these search engines, the search results will be automatically sent to your RSS reader. There are many potential research applications for this technology: learn what is being said about your clients, your partners, your faculty members, or yourself; follow news stories about topics that interest you; find out what people think about your client's products; etc.

RSS can also be used to track legal information. Some courts, such as the *North Dakota Supreme Court*, are beginning to offer dockets and recent opinions via RSS (<http://www.court.state.nd.us/>). *GovTrack* (<http://www.govtrack.us/>), an outstanding site that tracks the status of federal legislation and the activities of your senators and representatives, also offers customized RSS feeds. For more law related RSS feeds, see *TVC's RSS News Feeds for Law* (http://www.virtualchase.com/resources/rss_law.html).

Some libraries are also able to offer RSS content from subscription databases and OPACs. *ProQuest*, for example, has begun offering RSS feeds on selected topics (<http://www.il.proquest.com/proquest/rss/>) and is developing customizable feeds for keyword searches. Representatives at both Westlaw and LexisNexis also report that they are attempting to incorporate RSS technology into their alert services.

“Marketers and hackers are starting to take advantage of RSS as well. Advertisements are already creeping into some RSS feeds and some predict that spy ware and other nasty things will not be far behind.”



*RSS: It's About Time (continued)*

Since most subscription database providers don't yet offer this capability, however, David Walker, Web Development Librarian at Cal State San Marcos, has developed a tool called *RSS Creator*. *RSS Creator* leverages SFX and Metalib to create RSS feeds for any journal or newspaper indexed and abstracted in a library's subscription databases. (<http://public.csusm.edu/dwalker/rss.htm>)

For RSS feeds based on law journal content, see *Current Law Journal Content* (<http://law.wlu.edu/library/CLJC/>), developed by John Doyle, law librarian at the Washington & Lee University School of Law Library. *CLJC* indexes articles from current law journals using RSS feeds. With this free service, you can view tables of contents for law journal issues, keyword search article citations & abstracts, and link from an article citation to the full text in Lexis, Westlaw, BEPress, SSRN, and other databases (passwords may be required). Dynamically produced RSS feeds of law journal contents pages are also available.⁵

Innovative Interfaces is leading the way in bringing RSS technology to OPACs. According to press releases, their product, *Feed Builder*, allows libraries to create RSS feeds based on any Boolean query. The Lillian Goldman Library at Yale Law School has partnered with *Innovative* to bring this technology to their patrons. In addition, their new *My Record Feeds* product will deliver patron-related information through RSS, such as holds placed or available items, in real time.⁶

It's About Time

It's been said that 2005 has been the year of the blog and that 2006 will be the year of RSS. According to Cindy Chick, in her excellent *LawLib Tech* RSS tutorial, "anyone who needs to monitor current news on a regular basis will need to understand and use RSS in some form going forward."⁷ RSS is definitely a technology whose time has come. So if you haven't already discovered RSS, it's about time that you give it a try.



5. For more information on creating RSS feeds for law journal contents in *CLJC*, see the instructions I posted on *WisBlawg* at <http://wisblawg.blogspot.com/2005/08/current-law-journal-content-adds-rss.html>.

6. *Innovative Press Releases*, June 22, 2005 at http://www.iii.com/news/pr_template.php?id=256 and December 5, 2005, at http://www.iii.com/news/pr_template.php?id=268.

7. *LawLibTech* RSS Tutorial: What Is RSS, at <http://www.lawlibtech.com/archives/000098.html>.

"Anyone who needs to monitor current news on a regular basis will need to understand and use RSS in some form going forward."

-- Cindy Chick





Mapping Your Mind with Open Source Software

Eric W. Kistler

Back in October, Rich McCue, from the University of Victoria, posted to Teknoids a list of his favorite Open Source software packages for law students. I became intrigued by an item near the end of his list called "FreeMind." In Rich's words, FreeMind "is a mind mapping software that is great for brain storming, and organizing projects, or your thoughts . . . Give it a try, it is a wonderful product."

A "mind map" is a graphical representation of a complex system. Tony Buzan is credited with developing the concept of "mind mapping" in the late 1960s. By using keywords and graphic symbols, the visual nature of the graphic mind map aids in understanding, memorization, and review of a topic. According to Buzan and his adherents, each main branch should consist of a single word or picture that stimulates the memory. These main thematic branches radiate from the root. Details radiate from the branches. The branches form a connected, non-linear, nodal structure. This nodal map allows one to see connections that are not apparent in a standard linear outline.

For example, Illustration 1 shows the main branches of a root subject we are all familiar with. Note the main topic, "getting dressed," forms the "root" of the mind map. Each branch, or "node," connects to the root. The small open circle at the end of a node indicates that there are subparts, or sub-branches, or "child nodes," collapsed within.

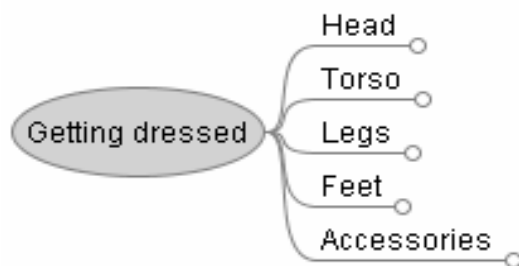


Illustration 1

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Eric W. Kistler is Head of Access & Technology Services at the Ehrhorn Law Library, Liberty University School of Law in Lynchburg, Virginia.

How can I try FreeMind?

1. Make sure you have Java installed. <http://www.java.com/>
2. FreeMind software is available from <http://freemind.sourceforge.net/>





Mapping Your Mind with Open Source Software (continued)

Illustration 2 displays the fully expanded “uncollapsed” map view. Graphics may be added to branches to aid in memory and for emphasis. Connections between nodes are easily inserted.

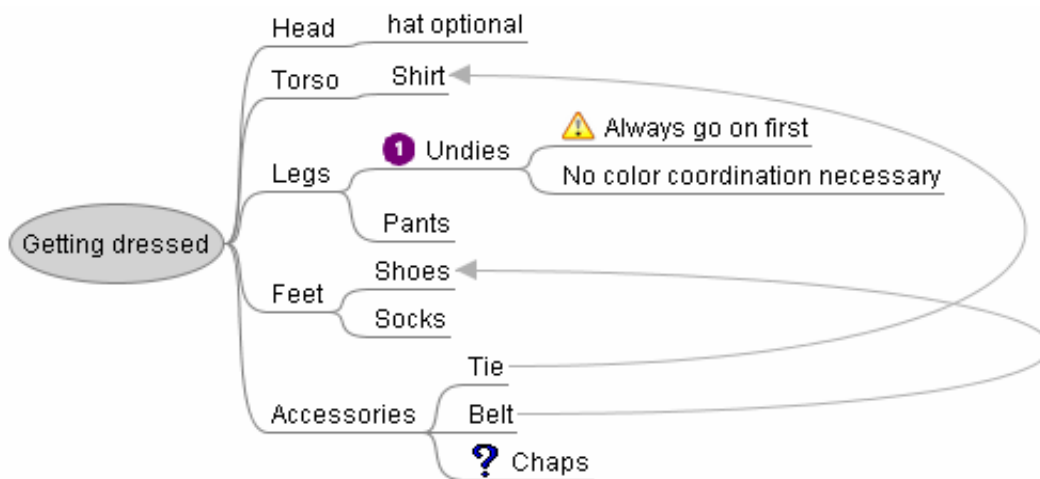


Illustration 2

Illustration 3 shows my own mind map for legal research classes on case law research and digests with only the top branch expanded to display child nodes. Nodes are not limited to text. Nodes can also contain hyperlinks to web pages, or any file on your computer or network.

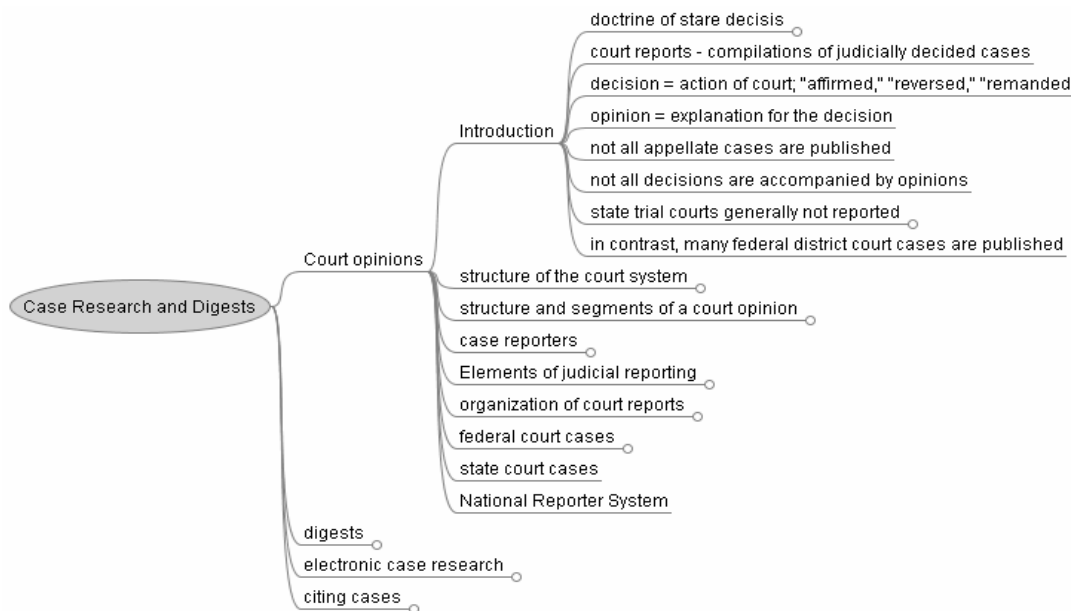


Illustration 3

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*Mapping Your Mind with Open Source Software (continued)*

Recognizing the natural fit and potential benefit that this tool could bring to law student course outlines, I introduced a few interested students to FreeMind. Initial results are promising. During final exams I asked these students about their use of FreeMind during the semester. First year law student Detria Moore replied, "I loved it. It was great. I didn't think I was a visual person before." Ms. Moore found FreeMind to be particularly useful for understanding property and estates. The ability to visualize the types of issues and their connections greatly assisted her gaining mastery of the subject through the semester.

The graphical nature of the tool may require some users to modify their printing expectations. The software is intended to be a map making tool, not a word processor for preparing outlines for the printed page. The nodes and branches can quickly sprawl over an area that does not easily fit on an 8.5x11 page.

FreeMind can export your mind maps to PDF, JPG, PNG, HTML, and XHTML. For those who can't live without a linear outline, the exported HTML can be opened in your favorite word processor.

Commercial versions of mind mapping software are also available. As for me, I am quite pleased with the performance of FreeMind. It is easy to learn, intuitive for the user, and the price is right. I concur with Rich McCue: "Give it a try, it is a wonderful product."



"I loved it. It was great. I didn't think I was a visual person before."

- IL Detria Moore on her experience with FreeMind software this semester





Planning for an Integrated Library System (ILS)

Jean L. Willis



So many libraries have now implemented an automated library system, whether it is just an OPAC or a fully integrated system, that one may forget that either there are libraries who have not yet implemented any automated system or who may need to upgrade their current system. Just recently several librarians have contacted me about how to approach this process and how to find information about ILS vendors.

I have worked with a number of products, such as InMagic and EOS (in a smaller law firm library), Innovative Interfaces' Millennium (at the San Diego County Public Law Library) and SirsiDynix's Horizon 7.x product (in my current position at the Sacramento County Public Law Library). In all but my most current position, I have led the implementation or migration process, including surveying what was currently available.

ILS's have come and gone over the years, and more recently there have been some big ILS vendor mergers or outright buy-outs. It is a tad difficult to keep up with all the latest developments, not to mention how to figure out what system will suit a library's needs best, especially if you have never been involved in this process.

Several libraries have contacted Sacramento County Public Law Library recently asking us to provide a demo of how we use our SirsiDynix Horizon 7.x system. This is one of the better places to start: visiting other libraries and reviewing how they use their system, asking questions and considering your needs. I have also received a number of emails from out of town librarians either asking me direct questions about SirsiDynix Horizon and/or asking how to begin a migration or first time implementation project.

In doing a fast and dirty Internet search, plus pulling out older materials from my files, I have compiled the following brief (mostly online) guide to planning for an ILS – either an initial implementation or a migration. *Caveat:* several of the links are to some older sites or articles. Some older articles, in particular, are still relevant today because the planning process remains pretty much the same. But some of the sites do contain many broken links, alongside of links that are still “live” and updated.

I cannot point to one online site or article that is the best of the bunch, and I may well have missed some other useful resources. But given the spate of queries about ILS systems that I have received recently, I hope that this guide is helpful.

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Jean L. Willis is Associate Director for Support Services at the Sacramento County Public Law Library in Sacramento, California





Planning for an Integrated Library System (ILS) (continued)

Concise Guide to (Mostly Online) Resources, December 2005

Automating Libraries: A Selected Annotated Bibliography

A good starting point. In addition to links to some online resources, this ALA resource also lists books about how to handle a migration project, how to write an RFP, etc.

<http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=libraryfactsheet&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=25128>

BiblioTech Review

Information about online library software products.

http://www.openrfi.com/BTR/si_pd.cfm?pid=2

Breeding, Marsall, ILS Scoop, October 2005 (reference to article but not available online) http://www.techsource.ala.org/sln/ils_scoop_october_2005.html

Breeding, Marshall, "Gradual Evolution – Automated Systems Marketplace," *Library Journal.com*, April 1, 2005

Excellent article, which includes vendor profiles.

<http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA512267.html>

Capterra Library Automation Software Directory, 2005 (but not completely up to date).

Lists most/all ILS vendors with links to their sites and provides basic info about the software, including whether geared towards small, mid or large collections. Also provides a template RFI form to request info from one or more vendors. This is also another good starting point for locating the vendors and determining which software may be best suited to your library.

<http://www.capterra.com/landing?cat=libsoft&ppcsource=googleppc>

Chick, Cindy, "Low Cost Solutions for Online Catalogs: One Librarian's Quest," *LLRX.com*, April 17, 2000

An older article, but Cindy, as usual, provides some valuable insights. Most of the software that she mentions is still relevant. This is a good resource for smaller law libraries.

<http://www.llrx.com/features/online.htm>

Colorado Department of Education, "Request for Proposal (RFP)"

A nice "tips & tricks" list of what to include in a library automation RFP.

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/technology/atrfp.htm>

Doering, William, "Managing the Transition to a New Library Catalog: Tips for Smooth Sailing," *Computers in Libraries*, V. 20, N. 7, July/August, 2000

(this is an older article available full text online, and it is still useful).

http://infotoday.mondosearch.com/cgi-bin/MsmGo.exe?grab_id=0&EXTRA_ARG=&CFGNAME=MssFind.cfg&host_id=42&page_id=3080&query=doering&hiword=doering%20





Planning for an Integrated Library System (ILS) (continued)

Library Automation Checklist from InfoOhio

A useful starting point of suggested steps to take during a migration or implementation project.

<http://www.infohio.org/LA/LAchecklist.html>

Library Information Systems

Appears to be compiled by a library student at the University of South Carolina. Contains some useful links to sites with sample RFPs, vendor lists, etc. Some links require a password to USC library databases, such InfoTrac or Gale.

<http://www.libsci.sc.edu/Chrisb/706/Links/706-Links-LibraryInfoSystems.htm#Market>

Library Technology Guides

This site provides some very useful and perhaps the most current information.

<http://www.librarytechnology.org/>

See especially, **Breeding, Marshall, "Re-Integrating the Integrated Library System," 2005**

<http://www.librarytechnology.org/lfg-displaytext.pl?RC=11340>

and

"Library Technology Guides: Automation Companies"

<http://www.librarytechnology.org/VEND-search.pl>

Mallard, Maree, "Tips and Hints on Library Automation and Automated Library Systems." *Integrated Library System Reports, 1999*

Yes, this is old, but the overall concepts are still relevant to those leading an ILS migration or implementation project. The website still has some gems even though it was last updated in 2002. Be aware that there are still "live" current links among the many broken links.

<http://www.ilsr.com/hints.htm>

Moulton, Lynn, "Leading the Library Automation Project." *Integrated Library System Reports, 1998*

See above; same website.

<http://www.ilsr.com/leading.htm>

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Planning for an Integrated Library System (ILS) (continued)

Pace, Andrew K, "Helping You Buy: Integrated Library Systems," *Computers in Libraries*, V. 25, N. 8, September, 2005, p. 25

Unavailable online but well worth obtaining; very thorough list of vendors with additional commentary.

Pace, Andrew K, "Whither Library Automation?," *American Libraries Online*, December, 2004

Includes brief commentary about writing RFPs for an ILS and why the "old way" of developing long lists of questions/requirements is not especially relevant in today's market. Some brief tips for considering how to write an RFP.

http://www.ala.org/al_onlineTemplate.cfm?Section=techspeak2004&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=85101

"Planning for Automation and the Use of New Technology in Libraries," 1997

This paper was delivered at the 9th International New Information Technology Conference, November 11-14, 1996 (NIT '96) held in Pretoria, South Africa. It subsequently appeared in the Conference *Proceedings*, edited by Chief Conference Organizer Dr. Ching-chih Chen and published by MicroUse Information, November, 1996. An older paper, to be sure, but still relevant in how to plan for automation projects.

<http://www.documentorsconsultants.com/txtplan%20for%20automation.htm>

Solo Librarians' Listserv, Survey of Library Automation Systems in Use at Various Libraries

Lists contact names and phone numbers at libraries along with the software they are using. It is unclear how up to date this is (despite of having 2005 at the bottom of the page), as most of the links at the bottom of the page are outdated and do not connect to a current site.

<http://www.sla.org/division/dsol/resources/autosurv.htm>

And, of course, don't forget:

Technical Services Law Librarian online newsletter

<http://www.aallnet.org/sis/tssis/tsll/>





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About *Connecting* . . .

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About the AALL Computing Services SIS

With members from all types of libraries, whose functions range from network and system administrators, lab supervisors, and webmasters to department heads and library directors, the Computing Services Special Interest Section serves the fastest-growing sector within law librarianship. Above all, Computing Services SIS members are law librarians dedicated to serving all the information needs of their library users with the aid of computing technologies.

Top-Ten IT Issues, 2005

1. Funding IT
2. Security and Identity Management
3. Administrative/ERP/Information Systems
4. Strategic Planning for IT
5. Infrastructure Management for IT
6. Faculty Development, Support, and Training
7. E-learning/Distributed Teaching and Learning
8. Governance, Organization, and Leadership for IT
9. Enterprise-Level Portals
10. Web Systems and Services

source: Leslie Maltz & Peter B. DeBlois, *Top-Ten IT Issues 2005*, EDUCAUSE Rev., May/June 2005, 14-28.



Law school taught me one thing: how to take two situations that are exactly the same and show how they are different.

-- Hart Pomerantz, Canadian Lawyer and Entertainer