

CALL/ACBD Research Grant

List of Issues Facing Law Librarians Which Require Research:

The Committee to Promote Research has identified the following as issues facing the profession of law librarianship which require research. This list is not intended to be finite and we welcome comments and ideas from all members of CALL/ACBD as well as information about research being conducted on any of these and related topics.

1) Planning for the mix of materials that will be required to meet future legal information needs

Some of the components/factors within this issue are:

- what should the future print collection be
- what factors have to be considered in making decisions to replace print products with electronic products
- what criteria should be used in making decisions about the mix
- what is the future of looseleaf publications
- where does digitization of information fit in
- what are the preservation issues within this planning
- role of the Internet in the provision of information

2) Improving access to information and increasing user satisfaction

Some individual issues within this larger issue are:

- the quality of electronic access tools, e.g. keyword searching/structured indexing
- quality of electronic catalogues
- how lawyers use a catalogue
- the information needs of articling students
- the role of librarians as instructors and trainers
- how to recognize and cope with changing user needs
- how to provide distance services

3) Providing high quality service in the face of financial restraint and increasing costs

Some specific issues are:

- retaining staff in a time of budget reduction
- publishers' pricing of electronic and print products, including licensing issues
- implementing fee for service programmes
- revising collection development decisions in the face of cutbacks

4) Participation in resource sharing programmes.

Some components are:

- the role of format agreements
- the role of consortia

5) Maintaining professional standards in the face of conflicting demands and perceptions

Some aspects are:

- the perception, by users and publishers, that the information mediator is no longer necessary in the era of electronic information
- the need to be, at the same time, a specialist as a librarian but a generalist in relation to legal information
- the question of whether law librarianship is a distinct specialty
- skills for dealing with constant change
- techniques for keeping up with information
- establishing positive relationships with other professionals
- the need to make informed decisions effectively
- the need to share information
- user perceptions of law librarians
- valuation of law library service

6) Technological issues that have an impact on the provision of electronic information

Some specific issues are:

- the level and range of technical knowledge required by law librarians
- integration of various electronic formats



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DES BIBLIOTHÈQUES DE DROIT

*Developing and Supporting Legal Information Specialists
Perfectionnement et soutien des spécialistes de l'information juridique*

- establishing positive relationships with Information Technology specialists
- distance access to information sources
- problems with networking CD-ROM products
- criteria for assessing electronic products

7) Recruitment and education of new law librarians