



RESPECT THE PAST
EMBRACE THE FUTURE
ALLA 2012

Combined Alerts – tackling current awareness with new technology

Alice Anderson, Lander & Rogers and Robin Gardner, University of Melbourne

Robin and Alice will discuss the conceptual and practical aspects of creating a 'combined alerts' service in both an academic library and a law firm library. Both libraries have introduced an 'alert aggregator' to consolidate, simplify and improve their current awareness services - taking control of an old problem with new technology.

Current awareness has always been an essential service offered by law libraries. As the variety and volume of online content continues to grow, the problem of 'harnessing' this content into a manageable form for both end users and librarians has also grown, and the need for focused, selective and personalised current awareness services has become even more imperative. Enter the familiar complaint: "I get so many email



RESPECT THE PAST
EMBRACE THE FUTURE
ALLA 2012

alerts but I don't know which ones to read!" How do we help our users keep up to date with the latest legal news and developments without overwhelming their inboxes?

The law libraries at Melbourne University and Lander & Rogers implemented Linex Combined Alerts to tackle this problem. Both libraries built sets of highly customised daily alerts using the Linex platform. These alerts are created using innovative technology from Linex Systems which 'aggregates' alerts from a wide range of:

- free and subscription sources;





RESPECT THE PAST
EMBRACE THE FUTURE
ALLA 2012

- information types - such as cases, legislation, journal articles, saved searches, tables of contents and newsfeeds; and
- formats – the system monitors RSS feeds, emails alerts and web pages.

These multiple sources are aggregated into one daily email, with links directly to the content.

This presentation will outline the combined alerts projects completed by Alice and Robin and it will answer these questions: 1. What current awareness problems needed to be solved? 2. What strategy and technology was used? 3. How we did it. 4. What impact did the projects have? 5. What continuing development is occurring? 6. Lessons learned.