

Current Awareness: Is this of interest to you?

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In addition to supporting the research needs of their user community, law librarians have often sought to take a proactive role by anticipating the needs of lawyers (or legal academics) to keep their knowledge current. Various described as current awareness services, alerting services, alerts or selective dissemination of information services (SDI) these services aim to feed relevant news, academic research, policy information etc to the user community, using push technology such as email, RSS, the internet/intranet or some combination of these options. They can serve a useful marketing role for librarians, proving that we have access to the latest information.

In some cases the role of the librarian in this process is minimal—it may simply be a matter of alerting the user community to the “advanced search” feature of a database that allows them to save a search and receive updates when new content is added to the database. Or it may involve providing a list of journals/publishers that offer a table of contents service.

In some other situations there may be a role for the law librarian in managing this process at an organisational level. If there are common interests why not act as an intermediary, producing a service that consolidates new information from diverse sources? If we have a substantial investment in journals, books, online services etc why not maximise the use of this investment by promoting and advertising new content. In the current professional parlance, why not “add value”? The current enthusiasm for web plus RSS and/or blog as a platform to deliver this service

versus the more traditional options (email, print) needs to be fully explored. Are your users ready for RSS or will all your efforts only reach a small percentage of your users? Does email delivery work or are the emails from the library the ones that don't get read? Do we know that email delivery of a current awareness service is better than a print-based service?

Many libraries have been offering various forms of current awareness services for a long time. New book lists and table of contents services based on the new issues of journals that have recently arrived in the library have traditionally been offered by libraries and appear to be highly valued. In the web environment, the production of these lists may have become automated. The library management system may produce a weekly or monthly list of new books but do staff have the time to check so frequently? Would a less frequently produced list meet their needs better?

What tools are available to librarians wishing to take a proactive role in alerting their clients to new developments? How can librarians keep themselves up to date with new developments? The remainder of this article surveys some of the options that are available to efficiently “harvest” new content.

Legal current awareness services can usefully be divided into two broad categories. There are some premium services that involve outsourcing the collection and delivery of content. These premium services come at a cost—examples covered here include the Regulatory Newsfeeds

¹ The author acknowledges the generous assistance of a number of organisations who allowed trial access to their services to allow this review to be undertaken.

and Legislative Alerts from LAWLEX, the services from Capital Monitor and the Alert24 service from Thomson. At the other extreme are the free services which usually come packaged with a subscription service and/or product advertising, and work best when the library subscribes to the subscription service. LexisNexis AU's Legal Express and CCH News are examples of the free services. Journal alerting services also fall into the free services category.

While it is tempting to characterise current awareness services as news services, case law services, legislation services etc in reality many services offer a blend of these types of materials. Initial attempts to categorise current awareness services in this way, based on the type of materials included, proved difficult so the resulting list provided here describes what is included in general terms only.

Legal Express (LexisNexis AU)

<http://www.lexisnexis.com.au/legalexpress/>

This service is a daily email service and is free (see Figure 1). There are three parts to the service: Today's News; Daily Cases; Daily Legislation. Today's News is sourced mainly from *The Australian* with occasional stories from other sources such as *ABC News* and *The Advertiser* (Adelaide). The news section is brief, with five to 10 headlines per day.

The Daily Cases section gives brief details of recent unreported cases. To access a more complete digest of the case you need to subscribe to *Australian Current Law*, or, for the full judgment, the LexisNexis *Unreported Judgments*. The clickable links from the email message to digest or judgment are a useful feature of this service.

Monday, 10 September 2007

LexisNexis AU
Legal Express

Today's News | Daily Cases | Daily Legislation

Legal Express News

Legal Express News is selected from the premium news content of LexisNexis, and provides a number of pertinent and current Australian legal news stories. To access the full text of the news stories, simply click on the headlines below. For more information, please check [About Legal Express](#).

Gun law changes under fire

25 - ARBITRATION

NEW SOUTH WALES

Gordon & Gotch Australia Pty Ltd v Horwitz Publications Pty Ltd - Supreme Court, NSW - Bergin J - 4 Sep 2007 [2007] NSWSC 960, 8C200707531, 28 pages

Awards - Leave to appeal - Manifest error - Application for leave to appeal arbitrator's award - Applicant distributed respondent's magazines -...

Legal Express

- Today's edition
- Subscribe
- Customise content
- Update your details
- Unsubscribe
- View archive
- About

The 17th Annual Credit Law Conference

The 3rd Annual

Figure 1: Extract from Legal Express

Both the Daily Cases and Daily Legislation can be customised. For example, if you only wish to receive notification of new administrative law cases and local government cases then you can select these two subjects from a long list. You can also specify the jurisdiction(s) for case law and legislation.

This ability to customise Legal Express is a useful feature; one of the main requirements of a good current awareness tool is that it works as a help, solving problems rather than creating them (email overload).

CCH News

http://www.cch.com.au/registration_page0.asp?bhcp=1


This is a free daily email service. You can customise the topics that are included. The following broad categories are available: Employment, Financial

Planning, Law, Occupational Health & Safety, Superannuation and Tax & Accounting but it is possible to be more focused and you can take, for example, only one or two of the law feeds—selecting from family law, intellectual property, conveyancing & property, competition & consumer law, personal injury & torts, court practice and/or corporate & commercial. It covers media releases, news content from *AAP*, *ABC online*, *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Australian*. Select articles in the email are restricted to customers who have a CCH online subscription. These are clearly marked in the email.

Capital Monitor

<http://www.capmon.com/>

Capital Monitor is a fee-based service that is focused primarily on Commonwealth government policy information and its development, but it also

 **CCH**
a Wolters Kluwer business

Daily Email Alert
cch.com.au

Monday, 10 September 2007

Dear La Trobe University,
([Subscription info](#) | [Your Preferences](#))

...lian M... Finan... nning... 2007... th Edin...

LATEST HEADLINES FROM CCH

Job security a thing of the past under Work Choices: report
A Monash University report shows the Howard Government's new workplace laws have made it easier for employers to restructure their businesses as a way to sack workers.
[Full Article](#)

Size does not count when protecting worker's rights - workplace watchdog
Australia's Workplace Ombudsman commenced prosecutions against Gabrielli Constructions Pty Ltd (Gabrielli) and RWH Parcel Pty Ltd (RWH) in the Federal Magistrate's Court in Brisbane today to recover unpaid worker's wages and entitlements of \$221.00 and more than \$30,000 respectively.
[Full Article](#)

Old: Beattie announces retirement on Thursday
Queensland Premier Peter Beattie has announced his retirement from the state's top job, effective this Thursday. © 2007 AAP
[Full Article](#)

Figure 2: CCH News

covers State and Territory Parliaments, Governments, agencies, and the courts. The service is tailored to the subscriber's particular interests, and subscribers choose from a detailed list. Topics include: banking, broadcasting and media, corporate affairs, defence, immigration & citizenship, taxation and workplace relations. Capital Monitor also publishes a number of specialist topic e-newsletters, designed to provide subscribers with timely information on specific areas of interest. Topics include: Industrial relations; Corporations Law; Anti-Money Laundering; Climate Change; and Federal Election 2007.

Three delivery options are available. A weekly newsletter (see Figure 3), a daily news service and a real time email service. The following categories of information may be included in each bulletin: Major Press Statements, Transcripts, Reports, Hansard, New Regulations, Court Cases, Proclamations, Orders, Rules, Etc, Acts and New Bills.

Google Alerts (also known as Google News Alerts)

<http://www.google.com/alerts>

Google Alerts are email updates of the latest relevant Google results (web, news, etc.) based on your choice of query or topic. You can choose to monitor news, blogs, web and groups, or all four areas and you can choose a daily email, a weekly email or "as it happens". See Figure 4 for an example.

LAWLEX

LAWLEX offers two types of alerting services as part of its premium level service. Regulatory Newsfeeds are a concise, weekly digest of the regulatory developments in specific industries or areas of law. Relevant regulatory activity is summarised with links to the full text of the documents. New legislation, Ministerial or Departmental Statements, Press Releases, Standards,

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Capital Monitor
A Division of Legislation Australia
Press Gallery
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Phone 02 6273 4000
Fax 02 6273 4005
<http://www.caemon.com/>

Industrial Relations Monitor

Week ending 26 August 2007

This Newsletter covers covers State and Federal policy and legislative developments in the area of Industrial Relations. Copies of documents referred to can be obtained by clicking on the reference in this Newsletter or through Capital Monitor's collection on our web site at <http://www.caemon.com/>

Contents

[Major Press Statements](#) | [Transcripts](#) | [Reports](#) | [Hansard](#) | [New Regulations](#) | [Court Cases](#) | [Proclamations](#) | [Orders, Rules, Etc](#) | [Acts](#) | [New Bills](#)

Figure 3: Weekly Newsletter from Capital Monitor

Draft Regulations, Upcoming dates, Consultation Papers, new Codes of Practice and Guidelines etc. are tracked, summarised and emailed directly to the subscriber. There are 16 Newsfeed titles. Figure 5 illustrates one of these titles (Governance, Risk and Compliance). LAWLEX also offers Legislative Alerts which advise when legislation has been (or is about to be) amended.

Daily Unreported Judgments Notifier

<http://www.lexisnexis.com.au/URJNotifier/subscribe.asp>
In addition to the Legal Express service mentioned above, LexisNexis offers another service which is based directly on the unreported judgments file. Daily Unreported Judgments Notifier alerts you to new Australian cases as they become available. It is a free email service available

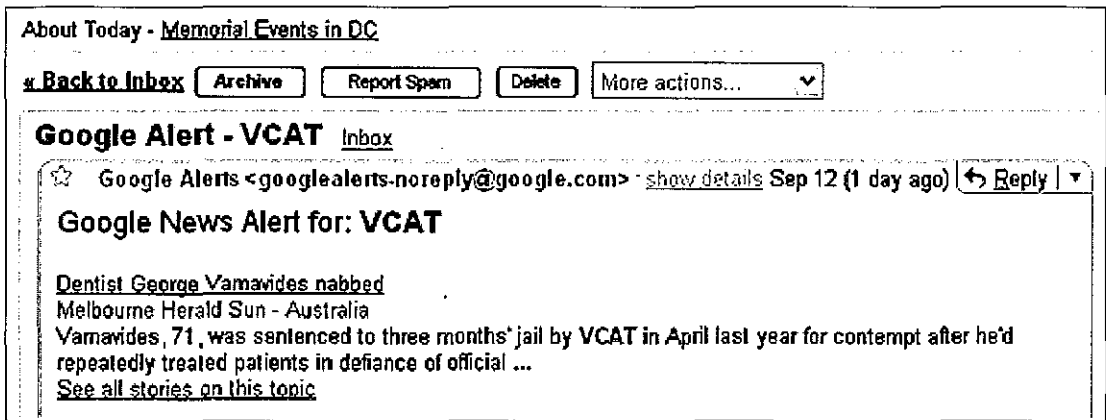


Figure 4: Google Alert

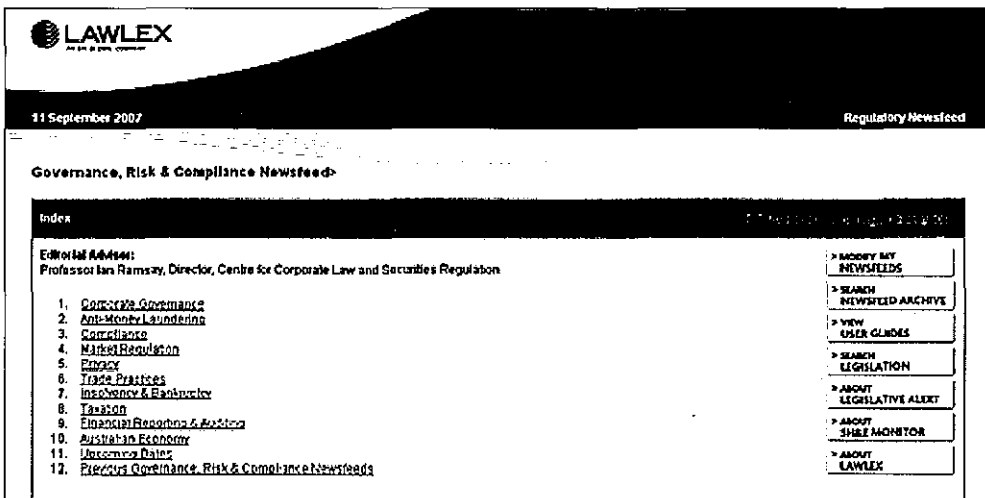



Figure 5: LAWLEX Regulatory newsfeed

Daily Unreported Judgments Notifier

Thursday 6 September 2007
Notifier generated at 17:39



Subjects:

Citizenship and Migration

Citizenship and migration

Federal Court

- *8218V v Minister for Immigration & Citizenship - [2007] FCA 1338 - 8C200707610* - appeal from a decision of a Federal Magistrate - non-attendance at hearing - whether the protection visa application was invalid...

Federal Magistrates Court

- *8737Y v Minister for Immigration & Citizenship - [2007] FMCA 1347 - 8C200707588* - Alleged denial of procedural fairness - Division 4 Part 7 of the Act is an extensive statement of the natural justice hearing rule...
- *MZX0Q v Minister for Immigration & Citizenship - [2007] FMCA 1346 - 8C200707587* - Refugee Review Tribunal - whether the Tribunal failed to consider all of the applicant's claims...

Figure 6: Daily Unreported Judgments Notifier

to LexisNexis Unreported Judgments subscribers (See Figure 6). The Daily Unreported Judgments Notifier can be customised (like Legal Express) to enable you to receive cases from any relevant area(s) of law.

Alert24

<http://www.thomson.com.au/catalogue/shopexd.asp?id=810>
<http://www.thomson.com.au/catalogue/shopexd.asp?id=7629>
This is a subscription service from Thomson. Each day subscribers can opt to receive an email noting the latest cases, legislative developments, legal news, cases and/or policy materials in their chosen area(s) of interest (see Figure 7). There are many topics covered, including commercial law, competition and trade practices and corporations law.

ComLaw

<http://www.comlaw.gov.au>
Select *Notify me when...* from the menu on the

left to set up email alerts. Figure 8 gives an example of an email alert from ComLaw.

CCH News Bulletins

These are web-delivered bulletins that are linked to CCH looseleaf publications. For subscribers, the email message announces that a new bulletin has been published, and contains a link to the full text. Examples of these bulletins are

Accountants News

(<http://ww5.cch.com.au/acan/acan.html>)

Australian Consumer Credit Law

(<http://ww5.cch.com.au/acrl/acrl.html>)

Australian Contract Law Summary

(<http://ww5.cch.com.au/acon/acon.html>)

Australian Corporate News

(<http://ww5.cch.com.au/acn/acn.html>).

Bulletins may include feature articles, case notes and/or legislation updates. They are distinguished

THOMSON

Alert24

Competition & Trade Practices Top

NEWS

ACCC alleges misleading advertising by Telstra - Next G
18/9/2007
The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has instituted proceedings in the Federal Court against Telstra Corporation Limited for alleged contraventions of th...

ACCC allows WA newsagents to bargain collectively
WA 17/9/2007
The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) will allow a collective bargaining notification lodged by the Australian Newsagents' Federation, on behalf of some o...

ACT: Ministers commit to sustainable procurement
ACT 17/9/2007
ACT Chief Minister Jon Stanhope announced the launch of the "Australian and New Zealand Government Framework for Sustainable Procurement". Mr Stanhope said it was a...

CASES

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission v Liquorland (Australia) Pty Ltd
CTH 18/9/2007 27/8/2007 [2007] FCA 1339

Figure 7: Alert 24

from the daily services based on unreported judgments (for example, the unreported judgments service from LexisNexis) in a number of ways. They refer to cases that have been identified for reporting in one of the CCH law report services so only a small number of cases are included in each bulletin and the cases include full summaries.

Unfortunately only a single email is available per subscription. This means that libraries that subscribe to a range of CCH loose-leaf services

have to actively manage the distribution of these emails to the relevant interested users. Unlike the daily CCH email alerts mentioned above which can go directly to those who want them, these alerts require human intervention. For those libraries that subscribe to a large number of services, this can become an onerous task.

Daily Business News

A number of commercial services are available for daily news monitoring. Media Monitors,

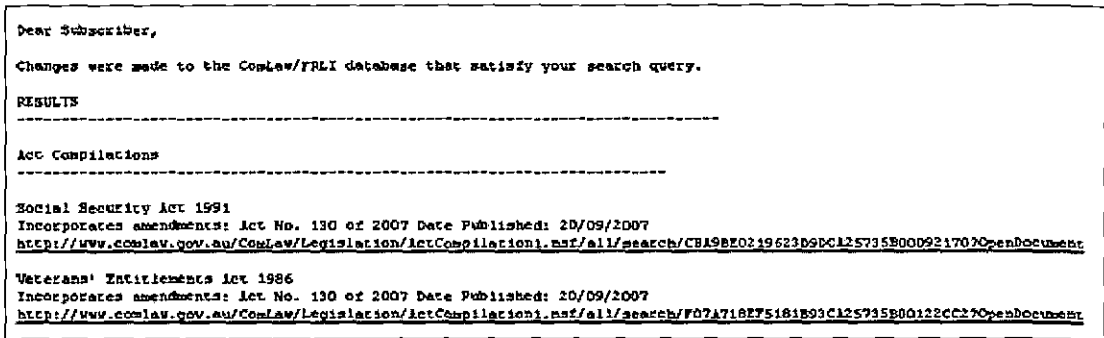


Figure 8: ComLaw

one of the best known services, provides a daily tailored news service with links to the scanned full text articles and transcripts of radio and television coverage. This is a fee-based service, <http://www.mediamonitors.com.au/ContentPage.aspx?pageContentId=25>. Figure 9 illustrates how this service is delivered.

Other news services include InfoXpress (<http://www.ixp.com.au/ixp/>) and ABIX's industry-specific, targeted newsletters, including LegalBIX (<http://www.abix.com.au/subscribe/subscribe.html>).

New Journals Published

Most international publishers now offer a free Table of Contents service. This allows you to ask to be notified when a new issue of a specific title is published. Publishers offering this service include: Blackwell Synergy, Cambridge Journals Online, Ingenta, Oxford University Press, Science Direct, Springer (formerly Kluwer Academic) and Wiley Interscience. Figure 10 illustrates how this service operates, using the Cambridge Journals service for the *Legal Information Management* journal. Features of this service include access to abstracts and, if a library subscribes to the online title, there are links through to the full text of the articles.

Another approach is to make use of the "one stop shop" approach offered by the Washington & Lee Law School. This service, called Current Law Journal Content (<http://lawlib.wlu.edu/CLJC/index.aspx>), covers 1316 law journals. The University of Texas Tarlton Law Library scans 711 titles, Washington & Lee Law School scans (or electronically reformats) 538, and other libraries scan 67 journals. You can specify particular journals and there are both email and RSS options available. E-mails (containing links to a webpage) are sent to subscribers each Sunday.

The *Canadian Law Library Review*, *Legal Information Management*, the *Law Library Journal* and the *International Journal of Legal Information* are four library journals that are offered via the Current Law Journal Content platform. In most cases what is supplied is simply a list of articles in the latest issue—with no abstract (see Figure 11). The table of contents alert for volume 7, issue 2 of *Legal Information Management* arrived via email on 13 June 2007, using the direct publisher's service and on 30 July 2007 using the Current Law Journal Content service.

Press Index

Attention:
Company:
Date: 14/09/07



1. Ministerial

- 1.1 **Munce to serve time in Sydney**
Daily Telegraph, 14/09/2007, General News, Page 5, ClipRef 30102219, ByLine: Ray Thomas
- 1.2 **Child sex ban laws extended**
Daily Telegraph, 14/09/2007, General News, Page 25, ClipRef 30102377
- 1.3 **Crooks to face national bet ban**
Herald Sun (Melbourne), 14/09/2007, General News, Page 43, ClipRef 30106804, ByLine: Mark Dunn
- 1.4 **Online networks face privacy battle**
Sydney Morning Herald, 14/09/2007, General News, Page 3, ClipRef 30106549, ByLine: Erik Jensen

Figure 9: Media Monitors

LexisNexis AU offers a Content Notifier Service (http://www.lexisnexis.com.au/aus/services/tools/pdf_roc/subscribe.asp) for the titles it publishes. An email service notifies you when new law reports, journals or looseleaf service bulletins are published. Via this service you receive the table of contents of the latest issue in PDF format.

The most useful part of the service is the journal notification service, covering the following journals: *Australian Bar Review*, *Australian Journal of Corporate Law*, *Australian Journal of Family Law*, *Australian Journal of Labour Law*, *Australian Property Law Journal*, *Competition and Consumer Law Journal*, *Inside Tax*, *Insurance Law Journal*, *Journal of Contract Law* and *Torts Law Journal*. Also included are the various bulletins that accompany the looseleaf services (for example, *Australian Administrative Law Bulletin*, *Australian Family Law Bulletin*, *Labore Patents*, *Trade Marks*

and Related Rights and *Butterworths Corporation Law Bulletin*). See Figure 12 for an example.

This is a free service and you can subscribe to as many publications as you like. Unfortunately, if you see an item that interests you, you then have to go online and browse to the volume and issue number to read the article. The service would be vastly improved if LexisNexis adopted the practice of other publishers and sent an email with clickable links through to the article. The two step process of browsing a PDF document attached to an email and then going online and browsing to the most recent issue of the journal/bulletin would probably discourage most people from making full use of this service.

For those LexisNexis AU subscribers who use password (rather than IP-fixed) access, there are two forms of alerts available: scheduled searches

CAMBRIDGE JOURNALS

This email is sent from Cambridge Journals Online per your request. The following issue is now available online:

Legal Information Management
Volume 7 - Issue 02 - June 2007

Editorial
Christina Miskin
[Legal Information Management, Volume 7, Issue 02, June 2007, pp 83 - 83](#)
doi: 10.1017/S1472669607001302, Published online by Cambridge University Press 12 Jun 2007
[\[abstract\]](#)

Asian, African and Middle Eastern Legal Materials at SOAS Library
Sarah Spells
[Legal Information Management, Volume 7, Issue 02, June 2007, pp 84 - 86](#)
doi: 10.1017/S1472669607001314, Published online by Cambridge University Press 12 Jun 2007
[\[abstract\]](#)

Legal Resources in the Little Red Dot: Singapore
Joe Kennedy
[Legal Information Management, Volume 7, Issue 02, June 2007, pp 87 - 89](#)
doi: 10.1017/S1472669607001326, Published online by Cambridge University Press 12 Jun 2007
[\[abstract\]](#)

The Legal System, the Courts and Law Reporting in Hong Kong
Charlotte Pache
[Legal Information Management, Volume 7, Issue 02, June 2007, pp 90 - 92](#)
doi: 10.1017/S1472669607001336, Published online by Cambridge University Press 12 Jun 2007
[\[abstract\]](#)

Figure 10: Journal Alerting Service from Washington & Lee Law School

and legal updates. When you run a search that retrieves results that you may want to update periodically, you may save the search as a scheduled search that runs at pre-defined intervals. You may also set up a legal update, which is a periodic search on specific legal topics.

RSS feeds

More recently, particularly with the development of RSS feeds, it has become possible to get new content directly from the source that produces

the content. Many organisations that produce content now offer RSS feeds from their website, so any discussion of keeping current needs to include these as a strategy.

For those keen to explore RSS feeds and POD casting, as a current awareness tool, there are a number of options. This topic was explored in detail by Lianne Forster Knight in the Winter 2006 issue of *Australian Law Librarian*² and in a paper by Jason Eiseman titled *Using RSS to Create and Enhance Current Awareness Services*.³

² Lianne Forster Knight, "What about RSS" (2006) 14 *Australian Law Librarian* 7.

³ Jason Eiseman, *Using RSS to Create and Enhance Current Awareness Services* (2006) <<http://www.llrx.com/features/currentawarenessrss.htm>> at 4 September 2007.

Washington & Lee Law School
Current Law Journal Content

Free subscription: Create profile | Modify | Remove
or subscribe via an RSS feed

explanation needed journals newer included journals

CLJC covers 1328 law journals. The University of Texas Tarlton Law Library scans 711, WBL scans (or electronically reformat) 546, and other libraries scan 71 journals.

SHOW tables of contents added
in the past [] days, OR 2007-07-23 to 2007-07-29
YYYY-MM-DD YYYY-MM-DD

sort by: jnl-name [] date-added [] jnl-score []
include: jnl-homepage [] abstracts [] header jnl-list []

format: full [] brief []
finders: gateway [] WBL [] COinS []

SEARCH for words [] Choices above apply. Journal names not searched unless XX(!!!) used.

SEARCH EXAMPLE: AU(gamer or smith) and TI(mit*) and JO(*student lawyer*) and ((good or bad*) not poor*) and DA(2006-2007)

LIST Journals: A-Z UPLOAD Issue list

July 23, 2007 - July 29, 2007
Legal Information Management (United Kingdom)

Legal Information Management
Volume 7, Issue 2, 2007
homepage [] [] [] other issues

July 25, 2007

- Asian, African and Middle Eastern Materials at SOAS Library
Spells, S. p.84-86 [] []
- Legal Resources in the Little Red Dot: Singapore
Kennedy, J. p.87-89 [] []

Figure 11: Journal Alerting Service from Washington & Lee Law School

SOME Australian sites offering RSS feeds and/or pod casting:

Australian Government Media Releases
(http://www.australia.gov.au/News_and_Media)

CCH News Feeds
(http://www.cch.com.au/news/cch_news_feed.asp)

Lawyers Weekly
(<http://www.lawyersweekly.com.au/>)

The Law Report (ABC Radio National)
(<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/lawreport/default.htm>)

Parliament of Australia
(<http://www.aph.gov.au/rss.htm>)

One of the most comprehensive law lists is the infolaw list at
<http://www.infolaw.co.uk/lawfeeder/lawfeeder.asp>

Infolaw gives you an idea of how you can set up an RSS feed and import content from another site into your website. This example could be used as the basis for your library, based on journals subscribed to by the library and getting an RSS feed for these journals from the Current Law Journals site mentioned above.

There are many other options. For example, RSS newsfeeds are available from the Library of Congress, including News, Upcoming Events, New on the Web, New Webcasts, News from the John W. Kluge Center and What's New in Science Reference. (RSS Web page at <http://www.loc.gov/rss>).

Web Tracking Software
RSS feeds are an excellent option for tracking new content, but what happens if the web content

Australian Administrative Law Bulletin	
Contents of this issue	Para
Table of Cases	
Table of Cases.....	[7241]
Legislative Developments	
Bills.....	[7242]
Decisions	
Health.....	[7243]
State Judicial Review.....	[7244]–[7250]
Federal Judicial Review.....	[7251]–[7252]

Figure 12: PDF Content Notifier Service from LexisNexis AU


infolaw

the Lawfeeder

Real time news and comment for UK lawyers

Front Page :: Comment

Law Journals

Current Law Journal Content: UK law journal issues 
From Washington & Lee Law School

- 19/06 Howard Journal of Criminal Justice, Volume 46, Issue 3, July 2007
- 19/06 Punishment & Society, Volume 9, Number 3, July 2007
- 18/06 Feminist Legal Studies, Volume 15, Number 1, April 2007
- 17/06 Law and Humanities, Volume 1, Issue 1, June 2007
- 13/06 Family Law, Volume 37, June 2007
- 12/06 Journal of International Banking Law and Regulation, Volume 22, Issue 6, 2007
- 12/06 Juridical Review, Volume 2007, Number 1
- 12/06 Crime & Delinquency, Volume 53, Number 3, July 2007
- 11/06 International Travel Law Journal, 2007, Issue 2
- 11/06 Journal of African Law, Volume 51, Number 1, April 2007

All Lawfeeder categories

- Banking and Finance
- Bloggging for Lawyers
- Competition
- Construction
- Conveyancing
- Corporate Commercial
- Criminal Justice
- Criminal Practice
- Dispute Resolution
- Eclectic and Inreverent
- Employment
- Environment
- European Union
- European Union: Europa
- Family and Children

Figure 13: Infolaw

provider does not provide an RSS feed? Using web tracking software, it is possible to be emailed when a web page changes. For example, the latest issue of the *Law Institute Journal* is online at

<https://www.liv.asn.au/journal/current/> and web tracking software can be used to generate an email when a new issue is posted.

There are a number of web tracking options. These have been described more fully elsewhere.⁴ Free ones include ChangeDetect (<http://www.changedetect.com/>), TrackEngine (<http://www.trackengine.com/>) and WatchThatPage (<http://www.watchthatpage.com/>).

Any change to a web page triggers an email. These services can be used to monitor a range of pages, including pages on your own website. Figure 14

illustrates an email alert, using TrackEngine, and monitoring a page from the Australian Parliamentary Library. The email message alerts the recipient to the number of changes, and the changes are highlighted on the page.

Examples of pages to monitor:
Victorian Parliamentary Library Research Service—Current Research Publications
<http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/research/>

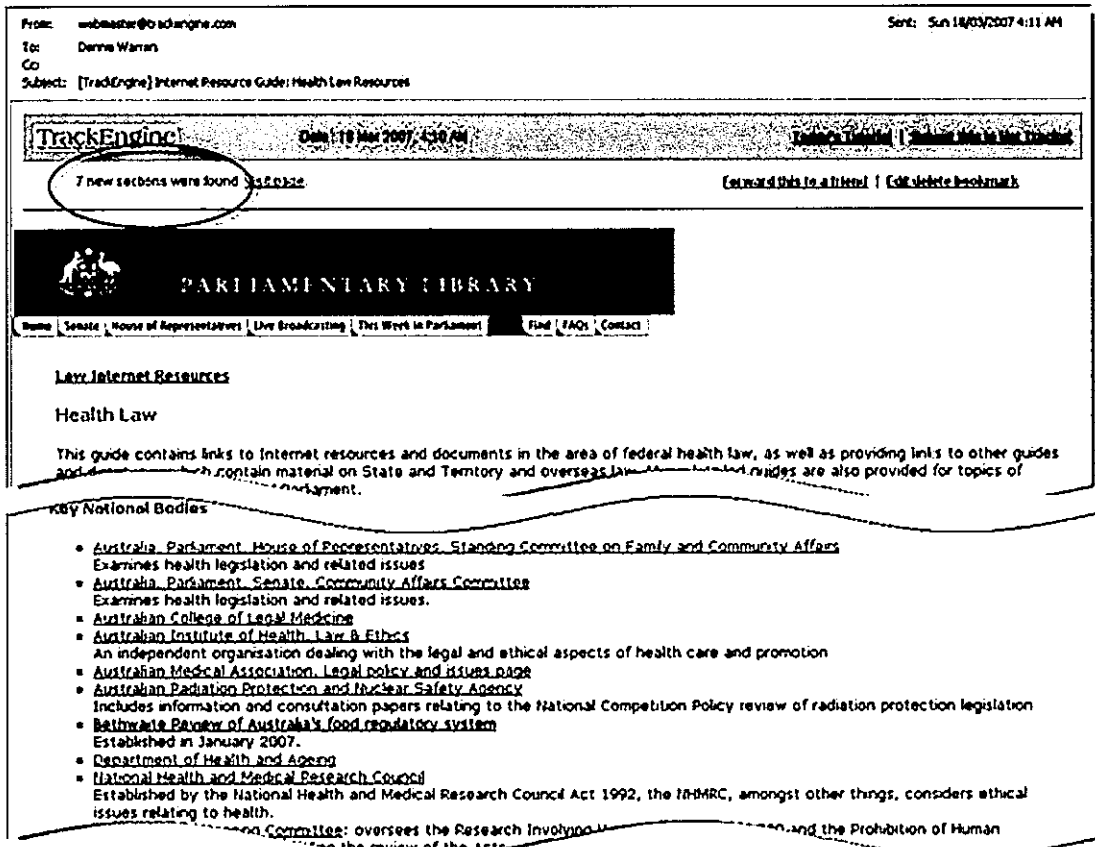


Figure 14: TrackEngine highlights the sections of the page that have changed

⁴ Dennis Warren, "There aren't enough hours in the day: choosing a web monitoring service" (2004) 19(7) *Online Currents* 8.

Research Papers—Parliamentary Library
<http://www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/rp/index.htm>

Putting it all together

What is the role for librarians in the current awareness process? Should the end user be responsible for their own current awareness, should librarians be responsible, or is a blend the preferred option? In some situations, the onus for current awareness is best placed with the end user. For example, for the unreported judgments notifier service from LexisNexis this is best managed by the end user. The librarian can assist by producing a simple user guide, by regularly promoting that the service exists and/or by sitting with the end user for a few minutes to create a tailored service. The same applies for the legislation service from LAWLEX, if it is available.

For specific journals, end users probably can and should manage their own table of contents services. The process can be assisted by the creation of a webpage with links to the publishers offering these services. For a simple example of how this could be handled see the Griffith University page on Current Awareness Services at http://www.griffith.edu.au/ins/reference/studyguides/law/other/content_awareness_sources.html or the Law-related alert services page from Monash University (<http://www.lib.monash.edu.au/law-on-the-internet/alerts.html>).

For those fee based services that generate a single daily email, the librarian has a different role. This involves scanning the contents for relevant content and then connecting the content with the end user(s) who need(s) to know. There are various strategies to do this—via a blog, intranet,

mailing list, personal email to one or two people or a mix of these options.

We need to review what we do, on a regular basis. If someone has “opted in” to receive a regular email alert when a new issue of the *Law Institute Journal* is published, we need to check every twelve months or so to ensure that the recipient still wishes to receive these emails. Do we notify all our users when a new issue of a CCH newsletter is published, or do we only notify those users who have an interest in the specific subject matter of the newsletter? If a user has their own personal subscription to the *Law Institute Journal* then we’re not doing them a favour by emailing a table of contents.

The subtitle of this paper is “Is this of interest to you?” By knowing the interests of the individuals that make up our user community and by alerting them to new developments, we can insure that the library service continues to be one of the sources that people turn to for information. We know that individuals will often go to a friend or work colleague when they have a question, rather than automatically coming to the library, and email has made this process much easier. As a marketing tool, being actively engaged in providing current awareness is probably one of the best tools we have at our disposal. If we manage to successfully anticipate the information needs of our user community then we remain a player in the information game.

Further Reading:

Current Awareness Services for Canadian Lawyers
<http://www.slw.ca/2006/10/18/1404/>

**Appendix: Australian titles available via the
Current Law Journal Content service**

Alternative Law Journal

Australasian Dispute Resolution Journal

Australian Bar Review

Australian Business Law Review

Australian Intellectual Property Journal

Australian Journal of Corporate Law

Australian Journal of Family Law

Australian Journal of Legal History

Australian Law Journal

Australian Property Law Journal

Australian Tax Review

Building and Construction Law Journal

Company and Securities Law Journal

Competition & Consumer Law Journal

Criminal Law Journal

Environmental and Planning Law Journal

Flinders Journal of Law Reform

High Court Quarterly Review

Insolvency Law Journal

Insurance Law Journal

*International Journal of Punishment and
Sentencing*

Journal of Australian Taxation

Journal of Contract Law

Journal of Judicial Administration

Journal of Law and Financial Management

Journal of Law and Medicine

Journal of Migration and Refugee Issues

Law in Context

Local Government Law Journal

Macquarie Journal of Business Law

Melbourne University Law Review

Original Law Review

Public Law Review

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Justice Journal

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