Legal Information Management, 25 (2025), pp. 71–72
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Editorial

"It is important to remember that these applications are the worst they will ever be and will only get better. It would be foolish for anyone working with information to not at least be seriously experimenting with such tools and exploring their potential." So warns Dr Martin De Saulles in his fascinating look at AI on page 79 of this issue of LIM.

Martin makes a good point, though we do believe most in the sector are already awake to the implications of this seemingly ubiquitous technology. Elsewhere in this wide-ranging piece he goes on to explore some of the key points relating to the evolution of AI in relation to those who work with information. It is timely, thought provoking, and pretty much a must-read – by the way, for more on Martin De Saulles check out the review of his latest book on page 123.

Another must-read AI article is Ryan Marcotte's contribution on page 84, which sort of goes a step further, in that he is very much looking to the future of AI in terms of how the information professional will use it. It's a very detailed piece, covering just about anything a legal researcher needs to know about AI right now, and also offering a view on how AI legal research should and will be carried out. We think Ryan has done a marvellous job with this, and while it is a little on the lengthy side for a regular LIM article, in this case we thought it was important to give it the room it deserved.

One person who knows a bit about how AI is impacting libraries and librarians and will continue to do so is CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals) CEO Louis Coiffait-Gunn, a man who has come to the top job in the wider information world from a distinctly non-librarian background. Not that that's been a disadvantage, for he has used his broader viewpoint to widen the outlook of the organisation. To learn how he is doing this, and many other things, turn to our interview with Louis on page 73.

Something that's sure to be on Louis' radar is the mental health of his members. This is an issue across society, of course, but working in the legal sector seems to be particularly stressful, according to a survey by workplace wellbeing platform Unmind. We've picked out the most interesting and illuminating aspects of this to give you an overview of the findings (page 99), and it makes very interesting reading indeed.

Of course, different people are affected by different things when it comes to mental health, and one surprisingly common stress trigger is the library itself, it seems. On page 105 Catherine Parkin takes a look at library anxiety in law undergraduates: what it is, why it is, and what information professionals can do to make it less of an issue. It's a fascinating piece, and well worth a read.

One thing that's causing many librarians anxiety – but not all it seems – is the decline of the book in the law library. As this seems to come up over and over again in the articles we run and the interviews we conduct, we thought it would be useful to gauge just what is happening with print collections, focussing specifically on libraries in commercial law firms. To do so we put together a survey which we then sent out to a selection of individuals working in this environment. The results, along with some of the answers from respondents, are on page 111.

The analysis of the results of another survey have also been sent in by the BIALL Supplier Liaison Group (SLG). The reason for this survey was to assess the migration of LexisNexis customers with subscriptions to LexisLibrary and/or LexisPSL to the new Lexis+UK platform between 2022 and 2024. The idea was to see how the process had gone, but also to identify the challenges and suggest improvements to the method employed. There are some interesting findings, and it's a fine shopwindow for the sort of valuable, and often unsung, work the SLG does.

Meanwhile, on page 120, ProSec CEO Max Gower explains some of the key changes brought about by the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act 2023, seen by many as a long-overdue reform of Companies House, and a tightening up of the regulations behind setting up a company in the UK. In this short but informative piece Max discusses the implications of this Act for those working in the corporate and legal sphere.

REGULARS

The review of Dr Martin De Saulles' book, *The AI and Data Revolution: Understanding the New Data Landscape*, has already been mentioned above, but it's worth repeating here as Renate Ní Uigín has done a great job in getting to the heart of this work. Our advice? Read the review, then buy the book.

On page 125, meanwhile, it's our regular trip back through the years aboard the LIM time machine, this time alighting in 1985; the year of Live Aid, New Coke and *Neighbours*, and not a single mention of AI! As a bonus, there's also a little mini quiz tucked away in the copy. We really will be amazed if anyone can answer all three questions, set, as they were, 40 years ago.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Before we get down to saying thank you to everyone, we need to make an apology. We really believed that Spring would be out in the spring, and that it would also be available before the BIALL Conference in mid-June. As

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1472669625100777 Published online by Cambridge University Press

things turned out, there was a bit of a hold up, but the online issue at least was out the day before things kicked off in Birmingham, so our painstakingly put-together Conference guide was not a total waste of time. Still, sorry about that.

We also ran a caption competition in the last issue. Kathryn Hall came up with the winner with: "Ehm . . . That's not what I meant when I asked you to *Cat*egorise these books for me." We had a feeling that *cat*aloguing and *cat*egorising might feature in the captions.

We won't be running a caption competition this issue, mainly because we haven't found a funny picture with a library slant – if you have one we could use, please send to the usual email address: limeditor@biall.org.uk

But, back to the acknowledgments, as always we are indebted to Katherine Read and Heather Memess for their work in compiling the Current Awareness section at the back of the journal (where you will also find the answers to our mini quiz, by the way). Also, LIM would be nothing without our contributors, so a very big thanks indeed to each and every one who has supplied us with copy for this Summer issue – we believe it's a very strong LIM with a good mix of articles, and that's all down to the quality of the contributions.

A big thanks also goes out to our proofreaders, who have done a marvellous job in turning this around in double quick time, as always.

As mentioned in the last issue, we will be moving to a new publisher next year. At the time of writing the contract had not been signed, but it was just a matter of crossing eyes and dotting teas, or something like that, and it will probably all be announced before this issue comes out. So, keep an eye out for that bit of news.

We will miss Cambridge University Press (CUP), and particularly working with Craig Baxter and Jamie Davidson, who have always been nothing less than very helpful and wholly professional during our time at the helm of the good ship LIM.

But if you would like to have an article in the last ever CUP issue of Legal Information Management then it's time to get cracking, as because of an overlap in schedules with the new publisher the final CUP LIM is going to be a doubler, Autumn and Winter combined – an instant collectible we would think!

To give you an idea of the sort of thing we're after, we're particularly interested in receiving articles on AI (you don't need telling that it really is *the* thing right now); research and resources guides on specialised areas of law such as family, immigration, pensions, property, arbitration etc.; evaluations of online legal databases; implementations of new technology or services; and strategies for effective legal information management.

If there's anything there you think you could have a stab at then don't hesitate to contact us at limeditor@biall.org.uk, and the same goes for any other idea you might have. Chances are that if you're interested enough to write it, as someone working in the legal information sector, then our readers will be interested enough to read it.



Jas Breslin



Mike Breslin

Jas Breslin and Mike Breslin
Co-Editors in chief

- Stop press: As this issue was going to press the contract with our new publisher was signed, so we can now announce that from the first issue of 2026 Edinburgh University Press will be taking over from Cambridge University Press. Look out for more details in the next issue of LIM.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1472669625100777 Published online by Cambridge University Press