

## **BIALL US Law Librarians Group meeting minutes**

Date: 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010

Venue: Morrison & Foerster (UK) LLP

### **What significant changes have you noticed at your organisation in the last 12 months?**

- a number of attendee mentioned that they had new offices opening in the Middle East, and library teams were getting to grips with the type of work and information resources required for answering queries for those offices
- restructuring within firm from management level down
- dealing with the issues inherent in a merger with another law firm
- due to a restructuring the library currently does not report in to anyone
- attorneys were offered a one year sabbatical in reaction to the economic downturn, and now they are returning to work
- solo librarian working for 120 attorneys
- working with fewer team members in the library to provide a more collaborative work ethos
- working with a reduced budget and reduced staff
- one firm has taken on administration for CPD training.

### **Coping with reduced budgets and staff**

- Provide office copies only to attorneys who are 5years qualified
- Provide office copies per office – two attorneys in one office generally so have halved office copies.
- Direct attorneys to online versions of office copies rather than providing print version.
- Liaise with group heads and get their support on cutting print office copies, and other resources that are no longer required.
- Bring looseleafing in-house
- Put an elastic band around the Listing Rules so that the user has to manually take off the elastic band. Librarian can then see whether item has been used or can be potentially cancelled.
- When asked if anyone had cut either Lexis.com or Westlaw, one firm said they had cut Lexis.com in London to save money

### **Outsourcing in the library world.**

Many firms are already using outsourcing companies for other administrative functions e.g. accounting.

Licensing for databases was discussed – for the group of law firms in the West Country who outsource their library functions, the law firm must have a contract with each database supplier that states that a third party working for the firm may have a password to access the data on that law firm's behalf. So for a researcher doing research for multiple law firms must have multiple passwords for the same database. Usage can continue to be tracked.

Some firms still outsource looseleafing.

### **Training issues**

We discussed how to get attorneys to attend training:

- Mandatory trainee training sessions for each change of seat

- One to one training sessions – go on desk visits as many attorneys think training has an ‘embarrassment factor’ and do not want to show ignorance in a group session
- Offering food/sweets for attendance
- Structure training sessions so CPD can be offered.

### **Middle Eastern information**

We had a very brief discussion on Middle Eastern information as there seems to be a number of people in the room for whom this was an issue. Apparently Lexis has a Middle Eastern usergroup.

Another resource mentioned was Affinitex for translations of Arabic law, and Getting the Deal Through (<http://www.gettingthedealthrough.com/>). It was noted by several people that there are very few resources in this area.

We hope to hold the next meeting of the BIALL US Law Librarians Group in the summer.

*Jas Breslin  
6 April 2010*