

 **Bora Laskin Law Library**

The Academic Tango: Improving the Faculty/Librarian Relationship

Implementing the InfoExpress Faculty Document Delivery and Research Service at the Bora Laskin Law Library


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InfoExpress


- “InfoExpress is the Bora Laskin Law Library's premium document delivery service...the InfoExpress service: retrieves books, articles, primary and other materials from the Law Library, other campus libraries, the internet and interlibrary loan, and delivers them directly to your office.”




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InfoExpress


- How does it work?
- How it came about.
- Effect on the Law Library's relationship with the faculty.
- Statistics.
- Challenges.




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InfoExpress – How does it work


- **Two major components:**
- **1) Document Delivery and Retrieval** to faculty in their preferred format.
- A very simple model...
- We use all sources available to us: our collection, other campus library collections, online and ILL to retrieve and deliver materials to our faculty.




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InfoExpress – How does it work


- **2) Small discreet research projects –** for example:
 - Find commentary on a specific treaty.
 - Historical version of a statute.
 - All Supreme court decisions written by Justice Iacobucci that deal with labour or employment law.




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InfoExpress – How does it work


- **Staffing:**
 - Faculty Services Librarian: 50% of her time spent on InfoExpress.
 - Access Services Coordinator (a Library Technician): 70% of her time spent on InfoExpress.
 - Student assistants: 10-15 hours a week.




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InfoExpress – How does it work


- **Process:**
 - o Requests are sent by e-mail to our InfoExpress mailbox.
 - o Librarian reviews each request and completes it herself or assigns it to the LT.
 - o LT manages the student assistants who do much of the legwork – retrieving books from other campus libraries, copying, scanning.




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InfoExpress – How does it work


- Turn around time – we aim for 1- 3 business days.
- Same day is typical for a straightforward document delivery request for materials that are online or in our collection.
- We advise the faculty member on a time frame, track due dates and send reminders.




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InfoExpress – How does it work

- **Delivery:** a daily delivery every afternoon directly to faculty offices.
- LT makes delivery using our special cart and basket.







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InfoExpress – How does it work


- The cart and bell have become part of the law school's culture.
- We place items on faculty's desks even if faculty member is not there. We also pick up anything this has been set out to be returned.




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InfoExpress – How does it work


- **Who can use the service:**
 - o Full-time faculty.
 - o Visiting and adjunct faculty (only in terms when they are teaching).




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InfoExpress – How does it work


- **Who can NOT use the service:**
 - o Student RAs and faculty secretaries.
 - o Essential that we have a 1 to 1 relationship with the faculty, NOT their proxy.
 - o Initially, this was a challenge for some faculty.




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InfoExpress – How it came about


- Faculty asked for a service like this – especially those who had spent time at the major US schools.
- Prior to InfoExpress, faculty (or their RA or secretary) retrieved their own materials; arranged for their own photocopying.
- Faculty wanted a one-stop service from the library that delivered materials to them regardless of source or format.



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InfoExpress – How it came about


- Beatrice Tice joined Bora Laskin in 2004.
- Was charged with creating a faculty services program on a limited budget – i.e. no new staff.
- Beatrice adapted the model used at Michigan (where she was previously the Foreign and Comparative Law Librarian).
- We emphasized the document delivery aspects of the model.
- We downplayed the research component of the Michigan model.



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InfoExpress – How it came about

- After about 6 months of planning, InfoExpress launched in 2005.



- A large initial promotional push.
- The Dean and most faculty attended the launch party.

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InfoExpress – How it came about

- Within a week the Dean forwarded a message to all faculty from a senior professor who praised how quick and effective the service was in finding and delivering an obscure source.
- No real marketing since then.

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InfoExpress – How it came about


- **Costs:**
 - o Staffing: we redeployed existing staff.
 - o Casual staff at 10-15 hours/week.
 - o The cart, a basket and a suitcase.
 - o Branded stationery (due date forms, reminder slips etc).

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InfoExpress – Effect on the faculty’s relationship with the library


- Has completely changed how the faculty view and use the library.
- Most faculty are now regular library users.
- InfoExpress is now entrenched. Anecdotally faculty are very happy with the service – we get a lot of positive (sometimes effusive!) feedback from faculty.




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InfoExpress – Effect on the faculty’s relationship with the library


- *Law Faculty External Review (2006)* “The past two years have witnessed a dramatic reorientation of the library’s mission toward better faculty service. That change elicited broad and deep appreciation from the faculty with whom we spoke. Overall, an area that is often perceived as a potentially infinite cost center in many law schools appears to be a well managed and unusually effective element of the Faculty’s research and teaching infrastructure.”



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InfoExpress – Effect on the faculty’s relationship with the library

- InfoExpress is used as part of faculty recruitment.
- In 2008/09 – average of 33 professors. used the service on a monthly basis.
- Only one current professor is not a user.



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InfoExpress – Statistics

- **Total requests :**
 - o 2005/06: 3743 (312 monthly average)
 - o 2008/09: 4887 (407 monthly average)
- **Hardcopy deliveries (books, articles, videos) annual/per month:**
 - o 2005/06: 2410 (201 monthly average)
 - o 2008/09: 2749 (229 monthly average)

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InfoExpress – Statistics

Sources of materials 2008/09

Source	Count (Approximate)
Bora Laskin	1200
Other/Staff	1000
Collins	2300
LL	400

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InfoExpress – Challenges

- Balancing faculty requests – some faculty will submit lists of 100+ items.
- Risk becoming victims of our own success: more requests and more complex requests over the years.
- Faculty rarely appear in the library anymore.
- Offering a more in-depth research service.
- Maintaining relationships with other campus libraries.
- Copyright and licensing concerns.
- Ensuring that the all the other things the library does – reference, teaching, collection development, tech services are recognized and appreciated.
