

***When Print Law Journals Are Dissolved by the Net -- What Then?  
The liibulletin's Model for Tapping the Student Talent and  
Effort Now Wastefully Channeled into Print Journals***

***liibulletin -- The Original***

Three years ago, realizing that Internet access for many was still limited to e-mail and that even for those with high bandwidth, certain types of information were far more valuable if delivered as available rather than in response to a query, the Legal Information Institute began publication of the liibulletin, an e-mail based service which delivers synopses of the decisions of the US Supreme Court within hours of their release by the Court. A companion service, liideliver, offers e-mail delivery of the full text of the opinions upon request. As of this writing (December 1996) there are over 10,000 subscribers to the bulletin, and the rate of growth is increasing. Production of liibulletin is almost completely automated; decisions are "detected" by LII-devised software when they are first released by the Court. Once detected the syllabi are retrieved and reformatted by software which requires only that one of the Institute staff make minor editorial corrections and approve the release of the bulletin (a human step that as necessary we can and do omit). A related software tool creates the hypertext links to the new decisions and rebuilds the index at our Web site.

***liibulletin-ny -- Electronic Casenotes Plus***

The success of liibulletin led us to consider other types of current-awareness service, and in September, 1995, we began publication of liibulletin-ny, a mail-based service driven by the decisions of the New York Court of Appeals. In several important ways this second venture goes well beyond its predecessor, on the one hand, and competing print services, on the other. First, liibulletin-ny offers not only synopses, but analytic material written by second- and third-year students under faculty supervision; one might think of them as electronic case notes. While similar in content to a variety of print-based services, the liibulletin-ny it is far more timely, being issued, usually, within five working days of the decision's release. Unlike the parent liibulletin, this one is selective; student editors choose a limited number of decisions from the hundreds issued by the court. Response from readers has thus far been enthusiastic. Currently, there are nearly 1,000 subscribers, with significant portions of the subscriber list representing media organizations and law firms. The same work has a second electronic version and through it additional potential users. Each case write-up is mounted as a headnote, rich with hypertext links, to the companion full-text decision residing on the LII server.

Students working on the liibulletin-ny during its inaugural season worked carefully and well at solving the problems of format, presentation, style, and editorial quality control which attend any new publication. In year two, we have, collectively, dealt with those questions of personnel selection and continuity on which the long-term success of any effort based largely on the work of students will depend. Student interest and effort has been stunning. The bulletin offers a highly demanding research and writing experience, with all work aimed at a producing commentary of interest and value to lawyers, judges, and similar professionals. While most law journal writing is done alone and never sees publication, work on the liibulletin is done in teams and all of it is, when ready, published.

### ***For More Information***

Since the liibulletin-ny resides on the Net, those curious about the format, scope, and quality of this novel publication can review its year and a half of commentary at:

**<http://www.law.cornell.edu/bulletin/index.htm>**

Subscription information is also available at that address.

In addition, the LII web site holds full documentation on the staffing, organization, and work practices of the bulletin editorial board at: **<http://www.law.cornell.edu/bulletin/start.htm>**