VENDOR VOICE
From Paper to ProQuest

Since adding a legislative resource eight years ago, the company has provided new, innovative ways to research public law history and access legal information.

n 1970, publishing professional James B. Adler created the Congressional Information Service (CIS), which for years issued the *CIS/Index*, a popular legislative activity record that researchers could access on microfiche at libraries.

Over the years, the company was sold twice—most recently to information provider ProQuest in 2010. Shortly after joining ProQuest, the index's production team introduced a new product, Legislative Insight, which offers reports, committee prints, and other items to help law school librarians, students, and other users more easily work with compiled legislation histories.

ProQuest has, in the years since, debuted other new products, which were modeled after its searchable legislative database to aid in lawmaking process investigation. We recently spoke with ProQuest product manager leader Catherine Johnson about the index's early days, Legislative Insight's launch, and the way changes in information management could potentially shape the future of legislative research.

What market need did the early versions of the *CIS/Index* address?

My sense of the company's purpose was a desire to ensure that government content was preserved, so they wanted to have high-quality microfiche that would last for 100 years, and add high-quality abstracting and indexing so people could find what they were looking for. In many ways, that purpose still exists.

How has the production process changed since the index was launched?

I started as an abstractor. Some of the same people are still here from 1980. It was a really different time; Esthy Adler [James Adler's wife] used to go down to Capitol Hill to acquire paper volumes. Of course, when the internet came along, that changed a lot of things, such as the actual process, but it also changed the way we abstract and index. When we were abstracting for microfiche users, I always had the sense that if we failed to capture the main theme it would mean no

Supreme Court Insight features a recently launched Certiorari Denied tool, which lets users search for both cases heard and cases denied, or just cases that have been heard or denied.

one would ever find a piece of information. Now that we use PDFs, you're able to do full-text searches. There are different things we can do to help you.

How did technology alter the format you use to share the information?

When we started our online products, we didn't have PDFs. The idea was just to give you a searchable index to find microfiche. We launched our first online product with PDFs, our *U.S. Serial Set Digital Collection 1789-1969*, in January 2004. The plant that made our microfiche had to transition to be a company that could make PDFs. From that point on, we embarked on a plan to digitize all of our content and make it available as separate products organized by type and date range.

What inspired Legislative Insight's launch?

We wanted to take advantage of the things you could do that you couldn't have done in previous times, as far as searching and working with content. Legislative Insight just started by talking to people. We went to law schools in our area and I would ask them, "What is your process for doing research your professor wants you to do for legislative history?" After we went to enough places around here, we started holding focus groups at the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) Annual Meeting.

Who uses the product?

We have some local public library customers and we have federal agency customers and courts, but the big group we work with is law and main campus libraries at higher-level academic institutions that have serious research programs. There are some customers in Canada; but the Insight products were designed with the U.S. academic market in mind.

Schools can subscribe campus-wide or buy a perpetual access license where we host it, and they pay a hosting fee every year. There's a cap on how much the fee is, so for many law schools that have a lot of content, they can get new products without paying a fee.

If a law firm was already a customer, we can sell it to them, per the agreement from LexisNexis's sale of our company to ProQuest. We can't sell Legislative Insight to most. In 2020, we will be able to compete for the law firm market.

How do law librarians tend to use Legislative Insight?

A lot of librarians do research for professors—they'll have a research project a professor might have asked a student to do, or a librarian does research for the professor.

Many law school librarians actually do research or work with students who are doing research, so it's a little different than the main campus librarian who is pointing things out to students and showing them how to use it. But in some schools, the main campus subject specialist does work closely with students once they declare a major.

How did you decide what components to include in Legislative Insight?

The big thing is on the compilation page, you can do a search within the results. The default page is organized by document type and category to try to give the novice student a way of getting a handle on what's in the legislative history. But you can switch it to a chronological display, and reverse the dates backward or forward. It's color-coded, so the results jump out at you by publication type.

There are some other features people requested that have to do with teaching. A historical context element gives you access to the source documents for each year. We try to tell you what the economy was like; whether the country was at peace or war; any constitutional amendments; what the main Supreme

Court cases were; and some of the main events going on in the world.

What other products do you offer?

We were at a conference in 2013 and somebody came up and said, "I love Legislative Insight, it makes it so easy to teach legislative history to my students; but when a law is enacted, I don't have anything to help me explain what happens next." We asked people we know from law schools and we had a lot of focus groups; there was a lot of interest in developing a regulatory product.

If I'm in a legislative history in Legislative Insight and I'm looking at The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, I can click on a link and go directly to the regulatory history. Regulatory Insight compiles Federal Register articles; it goes from 1936 to present and links to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). A law

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PROQUEST FACTS

Legislative products include:
Legislative Insight; Regulatory Insight; Supreme Court Insight; the Congressional Hearings collection, a record of events, public policy issues, and the actions Congress took to address them; and the U.S. Serial Set collection, containing publications compiled under Congress's directive from 1789-1969.

Amount of top 50-ranked U.S. law schools that use:
- Legislative Insight: 80%
- Regulatory Insight: 66%
- Supreme Court Insight: 58%
- Serial Set: 86%
- Congressional Hearings: 100%

Product production headquarters:
Bethesda, Maryland

ProQuest's headquarters:
Ann Arbor, Michigan

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school student can say, "I'm looking for something that has a tax provision" and pick rules promulgated by the Internal Revenue Service. You can pick final or proposed rules to get rid of notices and you can also limit it by agencies.

When you look at the final rule, it will take you to the first version of the CFR that included your final rule, so you'll see the authority on the act. It's a teaching tool to help you see what's happened—a Federal Register mini-history.

Regulatory Insight launched at the end of 2015. We're still working on it and hope to have the Federal Register articles all loaded by the end of 2017.

How does your Supreme Court product, which launched less than a year ago, work?

The thing that's unique about Supreme Court Insight is if the case is in direct response to a public law, we have links to Legislative Insight and Regulatory Insight. For example, if I were looking at the *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Store, Inc.* case, I can just click and go back to Regulatory Insight and find the regulation issued on the response to the court decision. You might decide you want to go back to Legislative Insight to see if there's a Congressional Research Service report that explains it.

You can also find a brief that has been very richly tagged. For example, if you wanted to limit your search to the Ninth Circuit and were looking for habeas corpus cases, and you only want cases that were affirmed, you can do that really easily.

We have another Supreme Court Insight product—Supreme Court Insight Certiorari Denied—that just launched and is fully integrated into Supreme Court Insight that gives you a choice, if you want to search for both cases heard and cases denied, or just cases that have been heard or denied.

The demand for Regulatory Insight and Supreme Court Insight came from people who felt Legislative Insight had made it so much easier to do research and teach, because they don't need to compile all that information themselves. It takes a researcher over a week to do a large law's whole history. By bringing in

technology, we can offer a different way of thinking about it.

Do you think technology will continue to shape what legislative research looks like?

Things do change; when we first started to put things online, people basically wanted a book—they wanted the *CIS/Index* so they could search parts of it. But when you have data like the kind from a Supreme Court case and tag it, you can add a lot of criteria to it. So in some ways, it moves beyond just the content that you were retrieving when looking for one brief; if the full text is tagged, it becomes more data. There will be more functionality developed to allow people to work with content as data in the future.

I was talking to a legal research class at a local university recently. My advice to them was to find Supreme Court content they're interested in and try to do a search on that—the justices on the case and how many cases were reversed where one lawyer was present. I basically told them to start letting their minds go to see what kind of searches they could do when thinking about the content differently.

In Supreme Court Insight, when a student goes in to look for things, it can give you ideas you might not have had otherwise—it's really easy to get into whatever lower court context is in the joint appendix to see what people originally sent, and do a search within that. I was [recently] looking at *District of Columbia. v. Heller*, the case about the DC gun law, and read the original affidavit; I really didn't have a good idea beforehand that people had brought the case forward partly because they were afraid. You can read what organization wrote the amicus briefs supporting those people, and how many mentioned hate crime. As a casual user, I could see a different side of it that I hadn't seen from just reading the newspaper. ∎