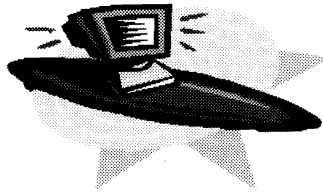


# CYBERLEX



Everywhere you look "e-" is being attached to every day words: e-Business; e-Commerce; e-Vendor; e-Customer; e-Services; e-Marketing; e-Books; e-Generation; e-Leaders; e-Now; e-Seminars; e-Funerals; e-Virtual; e-Bay; e-Bank; e-Bus; e-Software; e-Development; e-Infrastructure; e-Government, e-Devices; e-Projects; e-Loan; e-Cash; e-Strategy; e-Solutions; e-Adviser; e-Market; e-Medic; e-Journal. But wait, here are some closer to home: e-Justice; e-Law; e-Firm; e-Practice. "e-" is the prefix of the new millennium.

E-Mania has led to the creation of "The Society for the Preservation of the other 25 letters of the alphabet" (<http://www.persistence.com/e-nough/index.html>) and the "E-Nough" campaign "aimed against the desecration of the English language and proliferation of artificial words starting with 'e-'".

What does the "e-" mean? Increasing I think "e-" simply means, with some exceptions, that something we have done, are currently doing or are now able to do, can be done electronically. Further, I think it is fair that "e-" is being associated more and more with the internet despite originally encompassing a range of technology solutions.

E-Mania heralds the transformation of our everyday lives, personal and professional — the legal profession is no exception. Technology has already made in-roads into the practice of law from the printing press to simple word processing software to legal research via the internet to the filing of electronic documents. Lawyers and the legal system have often been criticised for the slow adoption of technology — is this fair? I will be exploring this question in a future article so let me know what you think.

Over the next few months I will examine what technology lawyers are using and what the future might hold. In particular, I will be looking at:

- litigation support technology;

- artificial intelligence and expert systems, and
- technology and the court.

In addition to specific applications of technology to current practices, I will be investigating virtual law firms as well as looking at impact of technology on the legal services industry. It is often said that technology is an "equaliser" for the smaller firms and sole practitioners. Is this still valid? Was it ever true? How will law be practiced over the next 5-10 years?

## Official Site of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games

"Citius, altius, fortius" is a Latin phrase meaning "swifter, higher, stronger" and is the motto of the Olympics. This is just one of the historical facts you can read on the official Sydney Olympics site. The Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games and IBM have teamed together to create a website that I found easy to navigate. I was particularly surprised by the advertising on the site.

Yes there is advertising, you had to expect advertising, yet it did not detract from the experience. The official site features information on athletes, sports, venues, Sydney itself and a kids zone. You can buy Olympics paraphernalia from the online store, though the items I wanted were either sold out or on backorder.

When the Olympics start the official site states that it will be serving up comprehensive results so you can follow your favourite athlete, your country in the medal count or news about your favourite sport.

For more facts and figures visit the Olympic Almanac (<http://www98.pair.com/msmonaco/Almanac>).

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# Legal industries profits up

Organisations in the Australian legal services industry generated \$7,730 million in income during 1998-99 according to figures released in August by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

The large majority (91%) of this income was generated by solicitor practices (\$6,192 million) and barrister practices (\$843 million).

The legal services industry at the end of June 1999, comprised 7,115 private solicitor practices, 3,704 barrister practices, 39 patent attorney businesses, 9 government solicitor organisations, 8 legal aid authorities and 152 community legal centres.

The main sources of income in solicitor practices operating at 30 June 1999 were commercial (\$1,821 million), property (\$1,152 million) and personal injury (\$966 million) work. Qualified solicitors and barristers working for solicitor practices carried out 11,782,000 hours of pro bono work, representing 71 hours per solicitor/barrister during 1998-99.

Most (92%) solicitor practices had employment of less than 20 people. These small practices accounted for 44% of private employment and 33% of practice income.

Over the period from June 1996 to June 1999 there was a 11% increase in the number of barrister practices. The 3,074 barrister practices generated \$843 million in income during 1998-99. The main sources of income were in the fields of commercial (\$89 million), personal injury (\$235 million) and criminal law (\$89 million).

Barrister practices undertook 489,000 hours of pro bono work during 1998-99 which represented 132 hours per barrister for the year.

Details of the ABS publication *Legal Services, Australia 1998-99* can be found at: [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au).