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I'm a solo practitioner handling a sophisticated, complex litigation practice (class actions, antitrust, complex commercial litigation). With the 2008 recession, many of my big clients were struggling to avoid bankruptcy. By going solo, I partner with clients' regular outside (or inside) counsel, come into a matter at a high level (first or second chair). Key is low overhead..... Cornell's project fits perfectly with my business model... being able to go online any time an knowing that I can have the current rule (and advisory committee notes)--all of which are public domain to begin with--at my fingertips saves me from the administrative hassle (I have no assistant) and cost of pocket parts and staff.”

“I can't speak for the entire (Federal) Bureau (of Investigation), but I find your service critical to my practice as we fulfill our mission within the mandates of the Constitution, as interpreted by the Supreme Court. Keep up the great work!

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LII: Service to the Legal Profession

Publishing legal information

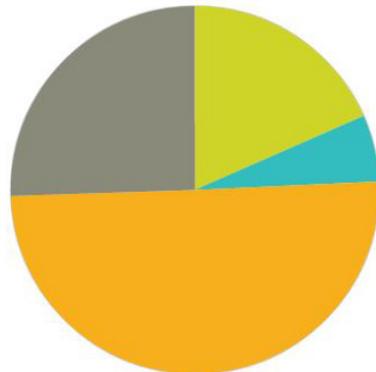
During the last year, over 20 million people visited the LII site. We don't know for sure how many are lawyers. We do know that:

- Our [Federal rules collections](#) – pretty much of interest only to lawyers – were viewed more than 10 million times.
- At least half of those who make contributions to the LII are lawyers.
- The [lawyer directory](#) we operate with Justia.com is among the largest and most heavily-used on the Internet

- Our [Supreme Court Bulletin](#), which offers analyses of upcoming Supreme Court decisions, is read in most of the AmLaw 100 law firms; the founder of SCOTUSblog has used it in teaching CLE classes. Over three-quarters of its subscribers are lawyers, and it is redistributed within bar associations and practice groups all over the country.

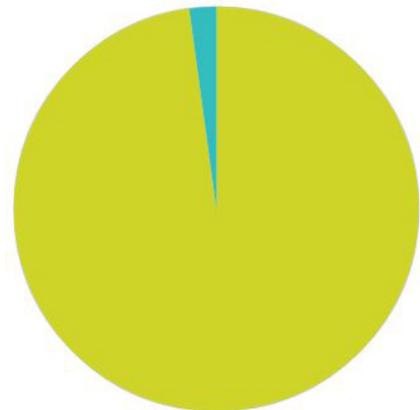
However you count, it's obvious that the LII has served tens of thousands of attorneys with free legal information every day, year-in and year-out, for more than 20 years now.

What best describes your use of the LII?



■ I'm an average citizen looking for legal information
■ I work for a government agency
■ I'm a lawyer using LII in my work
■ I'm not a lawyer, but I use LII in my work

Were you able to find what you were looking for?



■ Yes
■ No

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(The establishment of the LII provided) the possibility for law schools to become an important and creative space in ways that were simply not possible before.”

-- **Peter Martin, Cornell Law School Dean Emeritus and LII Co-founder**

“You guys do work that matters for all of us.... Thank you!

-- **Anurag Acharya, Project Lead for Google Scholar, and LII Donor**

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I’m a practicing lawyer; I work in the U.S. Department of Justice. I’ve been using LII since before law school...”

“Once I went to law school and got a Westlaw and Lexis subscription, I continued to use LII for most of my statutory lookups, because it’s (again) more well formatted than the competition: I particularly like the hard returns between paragraphs and the consistent indentation, which makes it much easier to see the relationships between sections and subsections.

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Providing alternatives

We’re free, and that’s different. And sometimes free leads to different, as it does when attorneys use us to help pro-bono clients. But we’re also different in ways that go well beyond price. We offer alternative approaches and technologies; our information is frequently more readable, more timely, and easier to navigate than that offered by government or by expensive commercial publishers. In 1992, we were the first to provide an alternative to commercial publishers; since then, more than 50 operations just like ours have sprung up worldwide. Our Canadian counterpart, CanLII, is the de facto national legal information service, and is supported by a very modest annual fee collected through the provincial Bar Associations; AustLII is similarly positioned in Australia. And all around the world, courts and legislatures are self-publishing on the Internet using techniques that were pioneered in the open-access to law community. For over 20 years, we’ve said, “Let’s try something new.”

Indenting

Great service is made up of a lot of little things. [We care about indentation](#), and about a host of details that make legal text findable, readable, navigable, and usable. For a while we thought we were the only ones, but it turns out that many of you do, too. Just last week, a young government attorney talked to us for 10 minutes straight about how much he loves our page layouts. Admittedly, we were in a bar, and he’d had at least one beer, but even so...he cares, and so do we.

Our users frequently tell us that [our edition of the US Code](#) is the most usable online – including the official sites, and the versions offered by expensive online services. We’re the only source that offers a fully-browsable edition of the US Code in the most up-to-date official version from the Office of the Law Revision Counsel. Last year, we brought the same set of features to the [Code of Federal Regulations](#); use of that collection has grown more than 50% in the last six months.

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Increasing numbers of people and institutions can publish law, many people and institutions already do, and soon many more will. We're looking ahead to what will need to emerge once everyone is publishing what they should. Within cramped resource constraints, we're working to figure out what a seamless, highly usable, multinational legal information commons would look like and how it might be built from the isolated, individual collections that now exist. We're constantly thinking about how to integrate caselaw, statutes, regulations, and explanatory material in ways that make the whole greater than the sum of the parts.

-- Tom Bruce, LII Director, in 2006.

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take the work of a great research university, and an international network of researchers in legal informatics, and adapt it for use by lawyers everywhere, continuing a 20-year tradition of innovation. We're also [working with policymakers and law creators](#) to open up and integrate collections of legal information and government data into public services that will one day go beyond what's available from commercial providers. We expect to bring you more and better offerings in the years ahead.

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Early in my practice I was not sure I could count on it, because it was free. Over the years, now that I can see it's still around, I like the site's reliability and sustainability.

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Bringing you the next new thing

The LII has long been recognized as a leading innovator in legal information. Its founders were members of the inaugural class of "Legal Rebels" identified by the ABA Journal as the leading innovators in the profession, and were selected in online polls "FastCase 50", a similar group. In 1999, they were runners-up for the World Technology Award in Law. They put the first Supreme Court case in HTML and wrote the first web browser for Windows.

Today, the LII engineering team is leveraging research on the Semantic Web into usable systems that will make legal information easier to find and understand. For example, we're using advanced techniques to tie regulations to statutes and to agency-written interpretations. On the editorial side, we [sponsor a guest blog \(VoxPopuLII\)](#) that provides a major showcase for new ideas and innovations in legal information systems. We

If you need anything, we'll be around

For more than 20 years, the LII has provided legal information services to the profession. We reach out from our academic headquarters to provide practicing attorneys with new techniques and technologies that help them with their practice, and we'll continue to do that no matter what form that practice may take, or how the contours of the profession may change. To do that, we need your support – and we get it. More than half of LII donors are attorneys who appreciate the fact that "free" can mean "valuable," but it never means "costless." In some ways it is they, and not us, who provide the real service to the profession, and we hope you'll join them.

For information on how to support the LII with a financial contribution, please visit <http://liicr.nl/GIVE2LII>

