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Catherine Burke

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THE DARBY & DARBY LAW LIBRARY: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND TECHNOLOGY

By Catherine R. Burke

Firm Profile

Darby & Darby is a full service intellectual property (IP) law firm which, for almost one hundred years, has represented clients in all types of patent, trademark, copyright and unfair competition matters in the United States and abroad. Based in New York City, this 40-attorney firm has a solid practice in intellectual property litigation as well as in procurement of intellectual property rights. The firm regularly advises clients on global strategy affecting intellectual property rights. Partners and associates actively participate in both domestic and international intellectual property law associations and are frequent speakers at meetings of such associations and technical groups.

The Collection

The 8,000+ volume library is nested within the central core of the firm's full-floor Manhattan quarters. Its collection, until recently, was developed without the aid of a professional librarian. Growing competition within the IP field convinced administration to extend that competitiveness beyond legal practice and encompass all office services.

The collection consists of: legal reporters (primarily Federal); looseleaf services (all areas of IP practice); treatises of law (including international); general sci/tech materials.

Because of the abundance of technical knowledge and publications, it is necessary to rely heavily on interlibrary-loan for journals and law reviews. My first change as professional librarian was to establish interlibrary-loan contacts and open copy service accounts with organizations such as: Legal Library Association of Greater New York, Special Libraries Association, New York Academy of Medicine, Association of the Bar, Engineering Societies Library, British Library, etc.

Library Services

The firm has adapted quickly to having a professional librarian and welcomes the expanded level of library services. Adding more database/CD-ROM products and coordinating training among users has improved awareness of electronic services. Currently these products include: Lexis/Nexis, Westlaw, Information America, Dialog, Dun & Bradstreet, Datatimes, as well as *Official Gazette of the Patent & Trademark Office* and Trademarkscan CD-ROMs.

One area of boosting competitiveness through library service is that of document delivery. Particularly in patentability searches, the speed with which references are located is crucial. Because of the variety of types of documents and the wide range of dates and geographic regions to be covered, the use of service

bureaus has proven highly effective. Some include:

- Patent research and copies faxed in as little as one hour—Faxpat, Airmail Patents;
- Annual reports and corporate documents messengered within two hours—Disclosure, Docutronics, Federal Document Retrieval;
- Court documents and legislative materials faxed or overnight expressed—Research Information Service, New York Legislative Service;
- Journal articles, legislative history, reference requests, database searches, etc.—N.Y. Public Library Corporate Services.

Research requests are interesting and varied. The librarian may spend one morning reading a famous children's book to determine if any of its text resembles a character in a client's trademark. One might need to locate U.S. laws for labeling pickle jars or customs duties on

Canadian beer. One search, continuing for months, involves finding early 1980s foreign language specifications for a particular electronics product. Determining a specific date on a twenty-year old doctoral dissertation could invalidate a patent.

Summary

Like many other law firms specializing in the IP field, Darby & Darby is faced with the competitive challenge. Its long history of service in this ever-growing field can only be enhanced by its commitment to improving the quality of its library service.

Catherine Burke is Librarian, Darby & Darby, 805 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022-7513. She received the B.A. degree from Carlow College, the M.L.S. degree from the University of Pittsburgh, and the Certificate for Advanced Librarianship from Columbia University School of Library Service.

