PART I
Research: Much More than Search and Retrieval
by Crystal Sharp, Guest Editor

The development of enabling technologies for data collection has led to an exponential growth in the availability of information, presenting challenges in finding relevant information, organizing it and using it to advantage. But it also offers opportunities to independent information professionals who can leverage their knowledge of the information landscape, of ever changing information search techniques, of information use patterns and of information management technologies to provide services of value to their clients.

In this group of articles Cindy Shamel and Liga Greenfield, who work with clients in the biomedical industry, discuss the value and process of helping clients articulate their information needs to locating relevant resources efficiently and the value of analyzing organizational information flows in defining information management solutions. Tom Wolff and Stephen Adams, specialists in patent information, discuss the many ways IIP patent consultants provide business intelligence, support legal opinions and business decisions and provide strategic guidance using patent analytics and services like intellectual property management and database development and training. Jane John, Jocelyn Sheppard and Jan Knight use a question-and-answer format to present their views on getting started in business, reaching and meeting target clients, the challenges of marketing and the unique opportunities and benefits of working with early stage sci-tech companies and entrepreneurs. Peggy Garvin’s article discusses the value IIPs provide to professionals working in policy, politics and journalism in navigating the information-rich and constantly evolving space of government information on the Internet. Phyllis Smith describes the value of her business to a Canadian federal government department. Arthur Weiss and Ellen Naylor offer insights into the use of secondary and primary research for competitive intelligence. Eiko Shaul discusses how an IIP fluent in the language and culture of a country (Japan, as an example) would be an asset to cross-country research. Finally, Missy Corley uses the business approaches and products of three IIPs, as well as projects her own business has undertaken, to show how IIPs in genealogical research, a specialized niche, provide value-added services.  ■

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