

## Summary of Discussions with ALM Regarding Preservation and Access

### ALM Meeting Part 1

January 27, 2025

**Participants:** Richard Caruso (ALM), Chris Plapp (ALM), Jessica Silveria (ALM), Ellen Augustiniak (UC Irvine), (Robert Brink (Social Law Library), Bob DeFabrizio (Mass Trial Courts), Anna Lawless-Collins (BU), Wendy Moore (U Georgia), (Michele Pope (Loyola), Jacob Sayward (U Minnesota), Caroline Walters (Harvard) and Elisabeth Umpleby (UConn).

In the initial meeting with ALM, the discussion centered on their evolving access model and the implications for long-term archival access in academic settings. Key takeaways included:

- ALM is rolling out a new version of Law.com, with changes in how its branded publications will be presented.
- Beginning in 2026, ALM will no longer make their editorial content (NYLJ, NLJ, American Lawyer, etc.) available on Lexis or Bloomberg.
- After 6 months, all editorial content will be moved over to a new fee-based product on the platform called “News Vault.”
- Pricing for News Vault is still being developed.
- Academic institutions are concerned about paying multiple times for the same content, as ALM’s model functions as an additional layer of paid access beyond existing subscriptions.

### Follow-up Q&A with ALM (Post-Meeting 1):

- **Library Access:** Academic libraries can access ALM publications via an Enterprise subscription.
- **Interlibrary Loan (ILL):** ALM does not currently support ILL and has no plans to incorporate it into their roadmap.
- **Walk-in Access:** This will continue to be available for libraries with active Enterprise subscriptions.
- **Ownership Model:** ALM is not pursuing a perpetuity model; their digital archive will remain within NewsVault.
- **Third-Party Partnerships:** ALM will not collaborate with HeinOnline or other third-party vendors for archival access.
- **Preservation Collaboration:** ALM is not interested in working with academic institutions for external archiving efforts.
- **Selective Access:** Individual article reprints can be purchased but may be cost-prohibitive compared to a full subscription.
- **Archiving Timeline:** Content older than six months moves to the NewsVault archive; no plans to extend front-end availability.
- **Content Integrity:** Archived content will be preserved in its original format, including images.
- **Citation & Discoverability:** Users can cite content using direct URLs, but there is no integration with citation management tools.
- **Brand Publication Changes:** ALM clarified that branded publications (e.g., NLJ, NYLJ, American Lawyer) will remain distinct but will be organized more regionally on the new platform.
- **Alumni Access:** ALM currently relies on student roster spreadsheets for tracking access eligibility after graduation.

### ALM Meeting Part II

March 11, 2025

**Participants:** Chris Plapp (ALM), Ellen Augustiniak (UC Irvine), Bob DeFabrizio (Mass Trial Courts), Sarah Jaramillo (NYU), Anna Lawless-Collins (BU), Wendy Moore (U Georgia), (Michele Pope (Loyola), Jacob Sayward (U Minnesota), Caroline Walters (Harvard) and Elisabeth Umpleby (UConn).

The second meeting focused on long-term access risks, the role of libraries in preserving legal scholarship, and alternative solutions. The discussion was framed around the following concerns:

- ALM’s plan creates a serious risk for long-term access and preservation. Unlike print or microfiche, digital content on a proprietary platform is vulnerable to licensing changes, price increases, platform shutdowns, or content removals.
- ALM’s access model should not be considered a substitute of a comprehensive archival plan that aligns with library best practices and industry standards.
- Libraries and research institutions ensure historical continuity by preserving legal and journalistic records, something that ALM’s current plan fails to support in a sustainable manner.
  - Our role is to support legal and historical research and it requires permanent, affordable archives, not just access to a proprietary database.
- ALM’s refusal to offer a viable preservation option harms the legal profession, legal scholarship, and public access to law.
- Law schools, courts, and public law libraries—key stakeholders who depend on access to ALM’s publications—may be unable to afford subscriptions, leaving gaps in legal research.
- Courts and legal professionals cite ALM publications in cases and scholarship—if those references disappear behind a paywall with no way to access older issues, the credibility and influence of ALM’s work may diminish.
  - Legal citation requires stable, permanent sources—ALM’s current model makes it impossible to guarantee long-term access.

### Proposed Solutions:

1. **Re-establish partnerships** with ProQuest or similar vendors to offer microfilm or digital format archives.
2. **Allow ILL** for archived materials.
3. **Engage with preservation systems** such as Portico, CLOCKSS, or LOCKSS for long-term archival stability.
4. **Develop an institutional pricing model** that allows libraries to purchase historical archives outright.
5. **Ensure perpetual access** for libraries that purchase archives, similar to academic journal repositories.

### Key Outcomes & Next Steps from Meeting 2

- **EZ Proxy compatibility:** ALM confirmed that their system works with EZ Proxy.
- **Public Access:** Walk-in access will continue.
- **Pricing Discussions:** Jenna will coordinate a meeting on pricing models.
- **Commitment to Discoverability:** ALM emphasized its focus on Search Engine Optimization (SEO) to improve article discoverability.
- **Archiving Timeline Concern:** There remains uncertainty over how subscription periods align with the six-month archival transition.
- **Stakeholder Influence:** There was discussion about understanding ALM’s revenue breakdown—how significant is the research/library market versus firms/corporations?
- **ALM’s response:** Chris Plapp, the only ALM VP on the call took notes and assured us he would relate our points of concern to ALM leadership.

### Conclusion:

After reviewing our feedback, ALM confirmed that they are moving forward with their current plans, including shifting editorial content to NewsVault after six months and discontinuing access through Lexis and Bloomberg. They acknowledged our concerns but did not indicate any changes to their preservation or access model. ALM did clarify that they offer different pricing for academic institutions and are aware of budget differences compared to law firms. They remain open to future conversations and product demos, but for now, the core issues around long-term access and preservation remain unresolved.