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Summary: We Mean Business: A BI Session for Business Case Analysis Students

Meg K. Scharf
University of Central Florida Libraries, meg@ucf.edu

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Suzanne E. Holler, Phyllis L. Ruscella, and Meg K. Scharf

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NOTE: A poster session with the same title was presented at the American Library Association Annual Meeting, Chicago 1990. The abstract of the poster session appears separately in STARS.

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Like most academic libraries, before CD-ROMs and other services entered the market in the 1990s, the UCF Libraries offered mediated searching of electronic databases for users, using the DIALOG service and charging patrons for the direct cost of each search. The total cost had two components: an hourly charge for the amount of time each database was used, and a print charge for each abstract or full text item retrieved and printed. The cost of mediated searching (Predicasts searches could easily total over \$100) presented a barrier to many UCF students. Librarians consulted with patrons prior to each search to determine the parameters of the search. The search topic, time period covered, and an estimate for the final charge were all discussed. Prices were set by each database vendor. Business and scientific databases were the most costly.

So in 1988, when the business database Predicasts offered free searches to business students to introduce them to their databases, UCF librarians were interested in participating. Predicasts was most frequently used to research companies, products, technologies, and competitive markets. Since enrollment at UCF was growing at that time (about 21,500 were enrolled) and the number of librarians participating in the online searching program was not growing, it was decided that a program would be designed creating eligibility characteristics for those receiving free searches. Eligible students would be enrolled in the College of Business Management Department's "case class", meant to serve as a capstone for the program, and would attend a bibliographic instruction (BI) session. Classes supplied participating students with a balanced overview of available business resources, as well as an explanation of online searching and the use of the Predicasts databases.

In academic year 1989-1990, 123 face-to-face classes were taught to 585 undergraduate and graduate "capstone" students. Students who attended the classes scheduled 177 intellectual searches, which used 446 database accesses, and connected for 81.02 hours. This represented a significant increase in requests for library instruction from faculty in the College of Business. Feedback from faculty and students was highly favorable.

