

Media Release

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Information delivery reaches new frontier

7 February 2006, Wellington, New Zealand –

New Zealand's premier provider of professional information services Brookers Ltd today announced the launch of its new **Brookers Online** service.

The new service is powered by a revolutionary new web platform developed by Brookers in New Zealand, and delivers information databases through a new-look interface that's easier and more intuitive to use.

Built to meet the specific needs of New Zealand users, Brookers Online utilises a fully centralised, XML-based legislation production system that enables online products to be updated dynamically to reflect the fluidity of legislative change.

Brookers managing director Neil Story says that in developing the new platform, the company has changed the game plan for the delivery of legal information in New Zealand.

“The real value of the information we provide lies in its currency and accessibility – users being able to get the first cut of relevant information, delivered right to their desktop. Databases on the new Brookers Online platform will deliver the most up-to-date online legislative information available in New Zealand.”

Brookers general manager product development Haydn Davies adds, “Ever since we developed our first web-based products in 1999, we've known that frequency of updating was the key to adding true value to our products through the online medium. But to achieve this we had to break away from a book publishing model to one where products were truly dynamic.”

The company has put the necessary investment in place “to turn our publishing processes and online business on their heads”, says Neil Story. Traditionally Brookers, along with many professional publishers around the world, used production systems built around updating looseleaf and CD products (mainly monthly), with legislation being separately processed in product 'silos'.

Under recently-introduced and fundamental changes to its editorial system, all legislation is now centrally processed by Brookers *Law Partner* team – giving editors and authors of other products time to concentrate on creating extra commentary and materials.

This radical but highly effective new approach has been enthusiastically adopted by editorial and production teams, and not only benefits users of the new online service in terms of its unrivalled information currency; it also adds further value to the content of Brookers traditional print and CD products.

Whilst content, especially content currency, is still very much seen as key to most of its customers, Brookers also acknowledges that functionality will continue to play an important part in the lives of online users.

In developing their new platform, Brookers has turned from the widely-used Next Page/Folio software to more industry standard web development applications, largely based on use of the .NET framework with SQL database architecture housing SGML/XML content stores.

Built, maintained and enhanced on an ongoing basis here in New Zealand, the new platform employs parent company Thomson's hi-tech hardware resources and disaster recovery systems in Sydney in a seamless hosting solution. Supported by committed service level agreements, this hosting arrangement means New Zealand users will enjoy a service that's extremely well insulated from interruption risk.

In concert with the "de-siloed" editorial process, the technology leap of the new platform allows the new Brookers Online to deliver total interlinking of all related content, taking key functions such as searching, cross-referencing and compiling to a new level of simplicity.

Neil Story uses an analogy to describe the benefit of this enhanced functionality, likening the informational environment to "digital soup", and the new service to "the ladle that helps you spoon out the exact helping of information you need".

"We're all excited about the almost unlimited potential that these new processes and technologies will provide for future enhancements and new products", says Neil. "In the early 1990s we pioneered the delivery of electronic information using CD-ROM, anticipating our customers' need to do better and smarter business. Now we have embraced the possibilities offered by online delivery of information."

"Of course, what hasn't changed is important too: our legal information is still unequalled in quality, depth, range, and timeliness."

Brookers is the leading name in professional and business information for New Zealand's legal professionals.

Founded in 1910 as a family-owned firm supplying annotation services to Wanganui's lawyers, Brookers Ltd has been part of the Thomson Corporation's Legal & Regulatory division for over ten years. Thomson Legal & Regulatory (TLR) is a global leader in

providing value-added information, software tools and applications that help customers make better decisions, faster. TLR includes the West Group (USA), Sweet & Maxwell (UK), Carswell (Canada) and Lawbook Co (Australia).

Through the Brookers, BusinessWise, Employment Today and Safeguard brands, Brookers Ltd provides customised integrated information solutions for legal, tax, accounting, human resource, government and business professionals throughout New Zealand.

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