



billed at 4 pence per line for regular content such as the content of the Financial Times newspaper, whilst some market research reports were billed at several pounds per line of text downloaded.)

On one occasion when the invoice for this database arrived the senior management team were surprised to see that usage had been so costly; it seemed to them that the cost was unreasonable, and they sought an explanation from the information centre manager. He, however, could not adequately account for the high cost of this database over the preceding period, other than to say that it was because one of the senior consultants had been engaged in particularly sensitive work for a key client regarding a corporate acquisition. He felt unable to explain the nature of the costly enquiry as he had assured the client that all information work would be treated in utmost confidence. The information manager was saddened to think that senior management did not accept that some clients may justifiably incur large costs and that they were not prepared to accept his word.

The dilemma was partly resolved by first speaking with the client to tell him of the problem, then by revealing to a senior manager (approved by the client) who was not involved in the investigation the identity of the client. That senior manager agreed that such expensive work could justifiably be attributed to the particular client, and he in turn advised the investigating managers without revealing the identity of the client.

In a similar case, the information manager resolved the conflict by describing the general nature of the enquiry (which could be seen from detailed logs), without revealing the client's identity, satisfying senior management that appropriate work had

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