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And the Winner is… : Nominees for Best Supporting Website

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Introduction

The focus of this paper is to explore websites that you may find helpful to your daily work and research. There are 24 websites drawn from governmental, educational, and commercial information resources. The websites featured in this paper are by no means comprehensive and do not even constitute the core websites you might use for legal research. Rather this paper focuses on websites that can assist your research, but that you might not think to search or may not even know that resource exists in the first place. Consider these websites a good jumping off point to familiarize yourself with the types of information available on the Internet to assist you in your research needs.

And the Website Winners are...

Often the small under appreciated gems in the entertainment industry receive not the "big" awards, like Best Director, Best Actor, or Album of the Year, but instead are honored with the smaller awards, such as Best Supporting Actor, Best Adapted Screenplay, Best Spoken Word Album, Best Boxed or Special Limited Edition Package, or a Technical Achievement Award for Visual Effects. Below is an imagined website awards ceremony honoring some of the overlooked and underappreciated websites for assistance with legal research.

Nominees for Best Supporting Reference Tool

When you need a traditional reference tool such as a dictionary, the Internet is a good place to find websites for quick information and fact checking, although you need

to pay special attention to the reliability of the source.

Law.com Dictionary

http://dictionary.law.com/

Law.com Dictionary provides a free and easy to use legal dictionary on your desktop. There are 3 different methods you can use to search the site, including term look up, definition searching, and alphabetical browsing. Not the depth you might find in Black's Law Dictionary, but much easier to carry around with you.

Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary & Thesaurus

http://www.m-w.com/

With "spell-check" dictionaries in software programs limited at best, Merriam-Webster Online offers a dependable, authoritative, and easy to use dictionary and thesaurus that makes having a print dictionary near your desk unnecessary. The best way to utilize this resource is to download their browser toolbar available for Internet Explorer or to use the Firefox plug-in. That way you are always ready to look up a definition or check a word spelling. The free access search is based on the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary 10th edition, but you can also access as premium services the 11th edition of the Collegiate Dictionary and the Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged. In addition, the website offers fun features, such as a 'Word of the Day' available via email or text message, a 'Daily Podcast' with an RSS feed, and 'Open Dictionary' where you can add your own words and keep up with popular slang, and a 'Daily Crossword' and 'Word Game.'

docstoc

http://www.docstoc.com/

docstoc is a user generated content website, where you can find free legal, business, and other professional documents and forms. You can also post documents to share with other *docstoc* community users. In many ways it works similar to *YouTube*, only made up of professional documents rather than videos. Making them easier to browse, the 'legal' section breaks documents down into the following subjects: Contracts, Employment, Family, Forms, Incorporations, IP, M&As, Real Estate, and Wills & Trusts. However, the number of documents is large enough that making use of the Search Box in the top right of the webpage is recommended.

RefDesk.com

http://refdesk.com/

With its beginnings in 1995 still evident in its design, *RefDesk.com* has a cluttered and homespun look and feel. With that said, it is an excellent collection of links covering a wide array of topics and facts. Designed to serve as your browser homepage, it also includes direct search boxes to popular search engines, such as *Google,* and to web reference resources, such as *MapQuest* and *Whitepages.com*. The website is maintained by Bob Drudge, who proudly notes that he is the son of a librarian and the father of Matt Drudge of *The Drudge Report*.

FindSounds.com

http://findsounds.com/

FindSounds.com is a search engine that specializes in locating examples of sounds on the Internet. Under 'Need Examples?' they have a partial list of available sounds organized by subject that you can browse and then click on the link to execute the search, such as the sound of an elevator, the roar of a lion, the crash of a collision, or the scrape of a shovel. You can limit your search by file format, file size, channels, resolution, and sample rate.

Winner for Outstanding Achievement in Making Foreign and International Law Easy to Locate

WorldLII - World Legal Information Institute

http://www.worldlii.org/

Developed collaboratively by various Legal Information Institutes and similar organizations from several countries, *WorldLII* currently features 877 databases from 123 countries, including 23 international databases. *WorldLII*'s core purpose is to provide a consistent and comprehensive approach to accessing the vast amount of legal information found in databases around the world, and to ensure free access to that information, as demonstrated by its affiliation with the Free Access to Law Movement. The various databases provide access to case law, legislation, treaties, law reform reports, law journals, and other materials. In addition to the databases arranged by jurisdiction, *WorldLII* contains a Catalog of links to law-related web sites in every

country in the world. This Catalog is searchable and can be browsed in several ways, including directories of countries and legal subjects. *WorldLII* has a very simple interface, but offers one stop searching when trying to identify available foreign and international law information sources.

Winner for Outstanding Achievement in Coverage of Legal News

JURIST

http://jurist.law.pitt.edu

JURIST is hosted by the University of Pittsburgh School of Law and staffed by legally-trained law professors and students reporting and researching law in real time, as a public service. The mission of its reporters and editors is to focus on the legal importance of news stories rather than on their mass-market appeal. In practice, this means that *JURIST* tends to have less sensational news about crimes, trials and celebrities, and instead concentrates on substantive legal and political issues with significant social and jurisprudential implications. *JURIST* provides on its webpage and through RSS feeds access to current legal news, live webcasts of law related news events, a video archive, links to legal documents in the news, discussion forums, a hotline section, in depth coverage of a current news topic, real time user information about latest searches and most viewed news items, and a this day in legal history section.

Nominees for Best Supporting Search Site Whose Name Begins with Google

      Google produces some of the most interesting special topic databases currently under development on the Internet. Since you are already searching *Google* anyway, you should utilize some of these databases to retrieve results that go beyond basic websites.

Google Book Search

http://books.google.com/

Google Book Search, easily accessed under the 'more' dropdown menu at the top of *Google's* homepage, provides a searchable database of information about books and their contents from a variety of sources. Some source information comes from authors and publishers looking to promote their publications as part of their Partner Program. Large academic libraries are also a major source of book information and contents, with scanning projects now being conducted at nearly 30 libraries from around the world, making up the *Google* Library Project. If the book is in the public domain, you can page through the entire book, print it, or download it. If the book you identify is under copyright, and the publisher or author is not part of *Google's* Partner Program, then only brief information about the book appears, with occasionally from the books scanned as part of the Library Project, 'snippets' of sentences showing your search terms in context. The is an Advanced Book Search option, similar to the offerings in general *Google*, it allows you to narrow where your search terms are retrieved from, such as title or publication date, and to limit results to books that have full view available. *Google*

professes that the aim of *Google Book Search* is to help you discover books and learn where to purchase them or locate a library from which to borrow them. There has been a lot of controversy surrounding the legality of *Google's* massive scanning project and concern in academia about its effect on research, but everyone agrees that *Google Book Search* is here to stay and could make a huge mark in the future as it continues to grow.

Google Scholar

http://scholar.google.com/

Google Scholar provides access to scholarly articles, papers, books, theses, and abstracts through a full-text search of research materials from academic presses, university and scholarly organizations, preprint repositories, and professional societies. Results are ranked for not only appearance of your search terms, but more importantly for the scholarliness of the publication by analysis of its source, author, and citation in scholarly literature. *Google Scholar* allows you to search a wide breadth of subject areas and materials in a single search. The results consist mainly of citations and abstracts, but include ways of locating articles or papers at local libraries and provide links to where the content can be purchased on the web. Like *Google Book Search*, *Google Scholar* offers an Advanced Scholar Search option that is very useful for refining your results, such as limiting them to specific subject areas.

Google News – Local Search

http://news.google.com/

In early February 2008 *Google* launched a new 'Local News' section to their *Google*

News search. The *Google News – Local Search* allows the user to input a city, state, or zipcode and have current news results returned that feature information from or about that locale. Google analyzes not only the byline and the source location, but the full-text of the stories to ensure that the article is about the place you are search for news from. Their article ranking promotes local sources over other sources for any given story being covered. You can also have your custom 'Local News' section sent to you by RSS feed. Probably works better for smaller cities, like Athens, rather than a large metro area like Atlanta.

Google Patent Search

http://www.google.com/patents?hl=en

Google Patent Search is made up of over 7 million patents. These patents made available by the United States Patent and Trademark Office were issued between the 1790's and mid 2006. Since it does not cover current applications or international patents, it is primarily useful for historical research. If you know someone's name and location, for example a search for <u>George L. Moore Iowa</u> returns several matching results, including an exact match for the patent needed, which turned out to have been issued in 1916. The *Google Patent Search* interface certainly makes it easier to search than the *United States Patent and Trademark Office website* <www.uspto.gov>, where the patents from 1790 through 1975 are searchable only by issue date, patent number, and current US classification. *Google Patent Search*, of course, searches the entire full-text of the patents allowing for the location of a specific patent without knowledge of its issue date or number as required on the government site.

Google U.S. Government Search

http://www.google.com/ig/usgov

Designed to provide a single location for searching for government information, *Google U.S. Government Search* creates a specialized search that limits results to only U.S. federal, state and local government websites. A search from *Google U.S. Government Search* provides more depth of coverage, than limiting your search to a specific domain such as .gov, since it also includes selected sites with .mil, .us, .edu, and even .com. A quick search for <u>*Georgia State Parks*</u> returned relevant results from a variety of state and federal domains including, nps.gov, georgia.gov, tennessee.gov, state.ga.us, and fed.us.

Winner for Outstanding Documentation of Georgia's Historical Record

Digital Library of Georgia

http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/

The *Digital Library of Georgia* connects users to 500,000 digital objects in 105 collections from 60 institutions and 100 government agencies of cultural and historical value in the state of Georgia. The various databases that make up the *Digital Library of Georgia* contain digitized books, manuscripts, photographs, government documents, newspapers, maps, audio, video, and other resources. You can search across the many databases that make up the *Digital Library of Georgia* or you can browse the databases

by topic, time period, county, institution, or media type. There is also an A-Z list of all the databases if you already know the database's name. Under the topic 'Government & Politics' you will find several databases that could be of interest in your legal research. Listed below are a sampling of these 'Government & Politics' databases.

- **Georgia Government Publications**

  http://www.galileo.usg.edu/express?link=ggpd

  Monographic public documents of departments or agencies within the state government, published from 1994 to the present.

- **Georgia Legislative Documents**

  http://www.galileo.usg.edu/express?link=zlgl

  Fully searchable versions of the Georgia General Assembly's Acts and Resolutions from 1799-1999. An excellent legal resource, especially when you want to do a keyword or subject search the Georgia Laws.

- **GeorgiaInfo**

  http://www.cviog.uga.edu/Projects/gainfo/contents.htm

  GeorgiaInfo, created by the Carl Vinson Institute of Government, provides extensive information about political life and governance in Georgia and the wider United States.

- **Historic Documents of Georgia**

  http://www.georgiaarchives.org/what_do_we_have/online_recor ds/historic_documents/default.htm

  Significant state documents from Georgia's history dating from 1732 to 1983

from the collections of the Georgia Archives.

- **New Georgia Encyclopedia**

    http://www.galileo.usg.edu/express?link=ngen;id=type%3DCatego ries%3Bid%3DGovernmentPolitics

    The New Georgia Encyclopedia provides an authoritative source of information about people, places, events, institutions, and many other topics relating to the state.

- **Trademark Registrations, 1894-1959**

    http://content.sos.state.ga.us/cdm4/trademarks.php

    Trademarks from products sold in Georgia from 1894 to 1959.

Based at the University of Georgia Libraries, the *Digital Library of Georgia* is an initiative of *GALILEO*, the state's virtual library.

Nominees for Best Supporting Federal Government Website that is Easy to Forget About

The Federal Government produces a wealth of information freely available on the Internet. In recent years there has been a push to develop websites that are user content focused rather than websites solely defined by their department or agency in an effort to make information easier for citizens to find and use. It is difficult to remember which agencies or services are in which departments, much less keep track of all of the possible information sources they produce. Below are some examples of content focused sites and departmental focused sites produced by the federal government. Always keep in

mind that a good way of identifying these sites is using specialized subject search

engines like *USA.gov* <www.usa.gov> and the previously described *Google U.S.*

Government Search <www.google.com/ig/usgov>.

Recalls.gov

http://www.recalls.gov/

During 2007, product recalls were frequently making the news, with high profile recalls

of toys and dog food. Pulling information from six different federal government

agencies, *Recalls.gov* provides a single website to access information concerning

product recalls. The recalls are divided into topic and agency groups, but one can also

search the multiple agency websites from one screen and read recent recall notices from

each agency as well.   There is also an option to sign up for free direct notification of

recalls from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Food & Drug

Administration, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The six agencies participating

in *Recalls.gov* include the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the National

Highway Traffic Safety Administration (now going by <safecar.gov> on the web), the

U.S. Coast Guard, the FDA, the USDA, and the EPA.

U.S. Department of State – travel.state.gov

http://travel.state.gov/

travel.state.gov is an easy to navigate website produced by the Bureau of Consular

Affairs in the U.S. Department of State. The website is an information-rich grouping of

resources covering international travel (including warnings and alerts), passports, visas

(for both U.S. and foreign citizens), and children & family issues (including adoption).

There is also a section devoted to law and policy information. This section focuses on

both "private matters" such as marriage, divorce, the need for a foreign attorney,

acquisition of U.S. Citizenship, or the birth/death of a U.S. citizen abroad and "public

matters" such as our international law obligations with regard to foreign nationals

arrested or detained in the United States and other treaty, legal or public policy matters.

Regulations.gov

http://www.regulations.gov/

Regulations.gov is a one-stop source to find and view all Federal regulations and related

materials. Through *Regulations.gov,* you may also comment on proposed regulations

open for comment and view closed for comment regulations. *Regulations.gov* is

updated daily by the National Archives and Records Administration using electronic

versions of the same Federal Register documents printed every business day to ensure

that regulations open for comment are available for public access. The information

displayed on *Regulations.gov* docket and document details screens and comment forms

is unique for each Department and Agency. These dockets usually consists of one or

more Federal Register documents, the materials specifically referenced in those

documents, any public comments and submissions received, and other information used

by decision-makers or otherwise related to the Agency rulemaking activity, such as

supporting and related materials and analyses. As of December 2007, approximately

90% of the Federal government's regulatory information is accessible on

Regulations.gov. The website's mission is to make it easier for the public to participate

directly in the regulatory process by enabling individuals, businesses, educators, interest groups, and state and local government officials to search, view, and comment on hundreds of Federal regulations.

Child Welfare Information Gateway

http://www.childwelfare.gov/

A free service of the Children's Bureau in the Department for Health and Human Services, the *Child Welfare Information Gateway* provides access to print and electronic publications, websites, and online databases covering a wide range of topics including child abuse and neglect, family permanency, and adoption. Under the section 'Responding to Child Abuse & Neglect' there are a series of links to various articles and publications, such as one containing information and resources about 'Mandated Reporting' of suspected abuse situations. The 'Adoption' section has many subdivisions including 'Types of Adoption,' 'Foster Care Adoption,' and 'Search & Reunion' all of which provide the user with links to related guides and resources.

FedStats

http://www.fedstats.gov/

FedStats is a portal for statistical information from over 100 Federal agencies organized by topic, geographic location, and reporting agencies. There are also links to important statistical publications under 'Statistical Reference Shelf,' such as *The Statistical Abstract of the United States* and the *State and Metropolitan Area Data Book*. The 'Data Access Tools' provides a listing by agency of statistical databases available for

searching. It is the information that is contained in these statistical databases that is often referred to as the "invisible web" making a list these statistical databases especially valuable. *Fedstats* is a very basic website that looks about the same as it did when it started 10 years ago. However, it remains an excellent starting point when trying to identify and locate statistics for use in your research.

Winner for Special Achievement in Legal Ethics

American Legal Ethics Library

http://www.law.cornell.edu/ethics/

Part of the *Legal Information Institute (LII)*, the *American Legal Ethics Library* maintains links to the codes or rules setting standards for the professional conduct of lawyers and commentary on the law governing lawyers. These links are arranged by jurisdiction and by topic in a browsable directory. The section on Georgia contains primarily links to materials and handbooks on conduct maintained by the Georgia Bar Association, although there are links to other sources as well. You can also search the website, allowing you to search the text of the codes and narratives of all states or a single state for specific phrases or terminology.

Winner for Technical Achievement in Pharmaceutical Knowledge

RxList – The Internet Drug List

http://www.rxlist.com/

The RxList – The Internet Drug List is a very helpful resource when trying to identify information about prescription drugs and their uses and effects. It allows you to look up drugs by name through a search as well as a browsable A-Z list. There is also a 'Pill Identifier' section that allows you to describe a pill you have in hand and provides possible matches for that drug. The 'Medical Dictionary' and 'Diseases & Conditions' sections round out the site's usefulness as a source for health information. It is operated by WebMD.com

Nominees for Best Supporting Website for Continued Learning about Internet Legal Research

The Internet is always changing. A favorite site could disappear tomorrow, while a new, beneficial site could go unused. In order to stay abreast of interesting legal research related websites and helpful search tips, utilize legal research newsletters and research guides designed for legal professionals.

LLRX.com

http://www.llrx.com/

Produced since 1996, *LLRX.com* is a free monthly Web journal dedicated to providing legal, library, IT/IS, marketing, and administrative professionals with up-to-date information on a wide range of Internet research and technology-related issues.

LLRX.com provides, in addition to its legal columns, feature articles, and legal news, research guides on a number of legal topics and jurisdictions that are particularly helpful. LLRX.com also maintains a continuously updated database of links to court rules, forms, and dockets enabling researchers to locate easily reliable links to these important resources.

The Virtual Chase

http://www.virtualchase.com/

Designed with experienced researchers, lawyers, and other legal professionals in mind, the purpose of *The Virtual Chase* is to inform users about websites and research strategies for finding the law. The website offers under the 'Internet Research' section 'Research Articles' covering a variety of areas of research and information fact gathering. The free weekday newsletter, *TVC Alert*, discusses law and technology-related news and offers research tips and information about new web sites. Started in 1996, *The Virtual Chase* is a free service from the law firm Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP.

Internet for Lawyers

http://www.netforlawyers.com/

Internet for Lawyers is a commercial site offering research training and seminars from Carole A. Levitt, co-author of the book *The Lawyer's Guide to Fact Finding on the Internet* (ABA, 2006). In addition to its commercial offerings, the website has a free newsletter and an article database covering legal, business, and research topics.

InSITE

http://library2.lawschool.cornell.edu/insiteasp/default.asp

InSITE is a current awareness service/e-newsletter of the Cornell University Law Library. Issued approximately 24 times per year, InSITE provides users with detailed descriptions and reviews of websites useful to legal research. One can browse the archived issues or search across the entire collection, going back to 1996. You can have the newsletter emailed to you or you can receive it through RSS feed.

Conclusion

These are just a brief sampling of the many websites available for use in conducting your legal research on the Internet. Always keep in mind the rich diversity of websites you can use – even 'supporting' websites have something to offer!