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Listicles of Legal Websites

Wendy Moore

University of Georgia School of Law Library, wemoore@uga.edu

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Wendy E. Moore, M.S. in L.S.

Acquisitions Librarian

The University of Georgia School of Law

Law Library

Athens, GA

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Introduction

What is a listicle? A blend of the words article and list, listicles, as the name implies, are articles based around a list. Listicles have been around for decades, used by popular magazines on their covers to entice readers with slogans like, “6 Easy Exercises to a Slimmer You” and “10 Best Films of the Year.” However, the use of listicles has exploded in recent years on the Internet. Due to their short, easy-to-read format, listicles are perfect for reading on mobile devices. Their intriguing titles are well suited for social media with topics such as “8 Child Actors Who Disappeared From Film,” “The 6 Stealthiest Disguises in the Animal Kingdom,” “14 Bad Ideas That Are Still Shockingly Influential,” and “5 Time-Saving Tricks From Professional Chefs” which promise quick information to the reader. Many web-based news/opinion sites, like Huffington Post, use listicles to increase the time a reader spends on their website. Some websites, such as Cracked and BuzzFeed are almost entirely made up of listicles, which may give listicles a bit of a bad reputation. But in the end, the listicle format can be a great tool for placing digestible bites of information into a larger topical context. This paper contains carefully selected groups of websites to assist in legal research arranged using the listicle format. While searching the Internet often yields useful results, when conducting legal research, it is helpful to be knowledgeable of a pool of websites, which one can draw upon for fast and authoritative information. These websites are not a definitive list of the best legal websites available, but they are a good starting place to help one stay informed about legal issues and make conducting legal research more effective.

The Listicles

11 Free Ways to Access the Law (at least some of it)

There are several freely-available options for tracking down primary law and case law on the Internet. The following websites, offering various coverage levels, are probably the best resources for conducting legal research in statutes and case law at no charge. While these resources do not replace the use of commercial resources, such as Westlaw or Lexis, these resources can be useful starting points to identify laws and cases of interest, saving the user time and money.

1. Justia

<http://www.justia.com/>

Run by the original co-founders of *FindLaw*, *Justia* is a legal information portal committed to making primary legal materials freely available for the benefit of society. They also partner with educational, public interest, and like-minded organizations to provide legal and consumer information to legal professionals and the public. The website has a simple directory style layout, with the two major sections divided into 'Legal Practice Areas' and 'Legal Research & Law Practice.' There are also free daily opinion newsletters one can sign-up for, documents for cases in the news, and access to Latin American law. *Justia* has a "Lawyer Directory" and a "Legal Answers" section that allows the public to ask lawyers questions for free. The website also maintains an

excellent law blog directory called *BlawgSearch* <<http://blawgsearch.justia.com/>> which in addition to arranging legal blogs into categories and listing the most popular blogs it also has a directory of legal professionals on Twitter called *LegalBirds*.

2. Public Library of Law - PLoL

<http://www.plol.org/>

Created by *Fastcase*, the *Public Library of Law – PLoL* is a resource for searching freely available law on the Internet. It provides a searchable interface to a large collection of primary law at both the state and Federal levels. *PLoL* features cases from the U.S. Supreme Court (1754-present), U.S. Circuit Courts of Appeal (generally 1951-present, with a few exceptions), and state cases (1997-present), as well as codes from all 50 states, regulations, court rules, and constitutions. Clicking on the ‘Advanced Options’ search allows one to limit by court and by date. There are also helpful video tutorials and guides to learn more about searching for cases and statutes on the site. *PLoL* requires registration and login before materials can be accessed, however they note that they never give registration information to third-parties. It also offers links to information on *Fastcase* which can be accessed through the State Bar of Georgia agreement with *Fastcase*.

3. LII – Legal Information Institute

<http://www.law.cornell.edu/>

LII is a legal information portal maintained by the *Legal Information Institute* at the Cornell Law School. The website is a collection of links to case law, statutes, state

constitutions, as well as the entire Uniform Commercial Code, Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Criminal Procedure, Bankruptcy Procedure, and Evidence, and the American Legal Ethics Library. The 'State Law Resources' section is useful with state-by-state links to legislative and court resources, administrative codes, agency information, state bar associations, and ethics information. There is also their legal encyclopedia called *Wex* and a 'Table of Popular Names' which can be helpful. The *Legal Information Institute* is a non-profit and dedicated to the concept of free legal content on the web.

4. Google Scholar

<http://scholar.google.com/>

In addition to scholarly articles and patent information, *Google Scholar* offers an extensive database of state and federal cases. First select the 'Legal documents' button, then refine one's search by clicking on the 'Select courts' link, then input search terms or enter a citation into the search box. Advance Search options can be accessed by clicking on the downward-pointing arrow in the search box, which lets one search for a phrase, exclude certain terms, or limit by date. One can also narrow search results using the facets on the left side of the screen. For example, if one clicks on the 'Select courts' button in the facet list, one can limit the results to specific jurisdictions.

5. Court Listener

<http://www.courtlistener.com/>

Court Listener provides a free and timely way to get alerts of cases, especially at the Federal court level. After creating an account, one can create alerts based on search

queries. Even without creating an account one can use the site to search across the court opinions. There are daily uploads of information concerning all precedential opinions issued by the 13 Federal Circuit Courts and the Supreme Court of the United States. There are also uploaded each day non-precedential opinions from all of the Federal Circuit Courts except for the D.C. Circuit. They boast that their coverage of the Supreme Court and the third series of the *Federal Reporter* is the best available on the open Internet. There are almost 2.5 million opinions from over 350 court jurisdictions are now represented in *Court Listener*, a list of the courts is available at the URL <<https://www.courtlistener.com/api/jurisdictions/>>. They have used data from *Public.Resource.org*, *LawBox, LLC* as well as from court websites to build this large back-file of opinions. They are in the process of expanding to provide search and awareness tools for state courts as possible. The site is very forthcoming about privacy issues, clearly stating what site use they track and why, with their stated goal to making the site as secure and private as possible. *Court Listener* started in 2010 and is now a core project of the Free Law Project, a California Non-Profit corporation.

6. Public.Resource.Org

<http://public.resource.org/>

Public.Resource.Org is another website devoted to “making government information more accessible.” They do not offer a nice search engine like you find at some websites, but rather they are more of a clearinghouse for government data and information, including 50 years of U.S. Court of Appeals decisions. They take a much more radical approach to making the law freely available – they encourage their users to go out and

take the law back into the public domain. In fact, their attempt to download as many *PACER* documents as possible during a free trial of *PACER* at 17 Federal Depository libraries caused the government to suspend the entire *PACER* free trial in September 2008. There is much documentation on their website concerning their efforts to obtain data to make it part of the open Internet. While one might not completely agree with their tactics, it is hard to come away from their website not feeling that more could be done to make primary legal documents freely available.

7. Constitute

[http:// constituteproject.org/](http://constituteproject.org/)

New constitutions are written or amended every year. The people who write these important documents need to read and analyze texts from other places. *Constitute* offers access to the world's constitutions that users can systematically compare them across a broad set of topics for free. Thanks to tagging of topical passages, this new resource allows individuals to use advance search features and filtering to effectively research across constitutions and filter for specific results. *Constitute* was developed by the Comparative Constitutions Project and features the constitution in force as of September 2013 for nearly every independent state in the world with a few exceptions due to complicated structures or current transition. Soon they are planning to have not only current constitutions, but also versions of all available constitutions written since 1789.

8. PacerPro

<http://www.pacerpro.com/>

PacerPro is a free discovery layer one can use to search the federal courts' system *PACER* <<http://www.pacer.gov/>>. *PacerPro* was started by a San Francisco attorney, Gavin McGrane, who was frustrated by the user interface of *PACER* and the lack of ability to search across courts. As of January 2014, *PacerPro* became a free service. One must register with *PacerPro* and provide the username and password for your *PACER* account. *PACER* charges still apply when searching via *PacerPro*, however, the time saving browsing, bookmarking, and downloading features are a significant improvement over the *PACER* interface. Also once a *PacerPro* user has downloaded a document, that document becomes available to all other *PacerPro* users for free, so over time, searching *PacerPro* will become less expensive than *PACER* due to the use of these stored copies.

9. Casetext

<http://casetext.com/>

The practice of crowdsourcing on the Internet has been applied to many areas, for example the development of *Wikipedia* was thanks to crowdsourcing. Now the resource *Casetext* is using crowdsourcing to add freely available annotations to primary legal sources. *Casetext* expands the free law mission to make law not only publicly available, but also understandable. There are over a million judicial opinions, statutes, and regulations with annotations of practicing attorneys, professors, and other experts alongside the text. Once one creates an account using the Login/Sign Up link in the top right, one can begin contributing annotations. *Casetext* users are encouraged to

contribute under their real identities, so one can see the experience and background of a particular contributor. Users also can up-vote and down-vote contributions, which are then sorted according to these votes, so that one sees the most valued content first.

10. Mootus

<http://www.mootus.com/>

Designed for those missing the stimulation of engaging in legal discussions, *Mootus* bills itself as “open online legal argument.” Designed for use by practicing attorneys of all levels as well as for law students, *Mootus* users post legal issues to be argued. Then other users can add relevant cases along with their arguments for why those cases apply. Users can also vote if what others have added is “off base” or “on point.” There is even a game aspect to how *Mootus* works, where users get points based on the quality, frequency, and timeliness of their answers, which gives their contributions greater influence. Users can choose whether or not to make their identities known.

11. Fastcase

<http://fastcase.com/>

Fastcase is not technically a free legal resource, but is freely available to members of the State Bar of Georgia. Information on *Fastcase* and how to access it is available under ‘Attorney Resources’ on the State Bar’s website <<http://www.gabar.org/>>. Founded in 1999, *Fastcase* has more than 400,000 subscribers. *Fastcase* is known for their innovation and features to assist users in getting the best information quickly, including their apps for mobile devices. According to the *2013 ABA Legal Technology Survey*

Report, the most popular legal app is *Fastcase*, having been downloaded by 26.5% of attorneys surveyed.

9 Information Rich Federal Government Websites You Should Be Using

Sometimes it is easy to forget when one needs information to go directly to the source. The Federal government provides many portals, directories, and search engines to make it easy to identify and locate information needed for legal research. The following are a few key websites to go to first, rather than starting with a general search engine like Google.

1. 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*, one may also comment on proposed regulations open for comment and view closed for comment regulations. *Regulations.gov* is managed by the eRulemaking Program with assistance from partner agencies. The website offers three tabs in the upper right to help one explore regulatory information. The default tab is the "Search" tab, which provides a keyword search box to look for rules, comments, adjudications, and supporting documents. The returned search results offer a variety of facets to simplify narrowing one's results. There is also a "Browse" tab which groups regulations into ten industry-related categories, which

allows one to locate recent actions of interest by subject. Finally, there is a "Learn" tab which gives a step-by-step explanation of the rule-making process and helps to fulfill the website's mission of making it easier for the public to participate directly in the regulatory process.

2. Congress.gov

<http://congress.gov/>

Congress.gov has officially replaced *Thomas* <<http://thomas.loc.gov/>>, and contains all data sets that were available on THOMAS.gov except for nominations, treaties and communications, which will be added throughout 2014. Designed to be a portal for U.S. legislative information past and present, it is a free service of the Library of Congress using data from the Office of the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Office of the Secretary of the Senate, and the Government Printing Office. *Congress.gov* offers much improved searching capabilities over that of *Thomas* with also cleaner page displays, easier linking, and responsive design for mobile devices. If one needs to research only legislation and information, *Congress.gov* is an excellent place to start. The website includes legislative documents from 1973 through the current legislative session, with full-text bills and the *Congressional Record* available from 1995 to the present. An excellent feature is the Congressional Member Profiles that go back to the 71st Congress (1929) and a link to the *Biographical Directory of the U.S. Congress, 1774 – Present* <<http://bioguide.congress.gov/biosearch/biosearch.asp>>. Links to video from the House and Senate floors and committees, as well as calendars and roll call votes are also available on the *Congress.gov* homepage.

3. USCourts.gov

<http://www.uscourts.gov/>

USCourts.gov is maintained by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts on behalf of the Federal Judiciary. The purpose of this site is to provide information from and about the Judicial Branch of the U.S. Government. There are 'Court Locator' and 'Your Court Services' search boxes and links on the homepage. The section on 'Rules & Policies' offers the *Federal Rules of Practice & Procedure*, the *Code of Conduct* for judges, and regulations and policies that addresses matters essential to court operations and maintaining a fair and impartial federal judiciary. The 'Forms & Fees' section of *USCourts.gov* contains links to standard forms used in the U.S. Courts as well as listings of court fees. The 'Court Record' section has links to *PACER* <<http://www.pacer.gov/>> and explains how to obtain older paper based records.

4. FDsys

<http://fdsys.gov/>

A service of the Government Printing Office (GPO), *FDsys* (Federal Digital System) provides free online access to official publications from all three branches of the Federal Government. *FDsys* provides an advanced search engine to allow one to refine and narrow searches for quick access to the documents and publications. One can also browse the over 50 collections, including 'Public and Private Laws,' 'Compilation of Presidential Documents,' and most notably 'United States Court Opinions.' *FDsys* not only provides current information, but it also serves as a repository that guarantees

long-term preservation and access to digital Government content. Resources available on *FDsys* are authentic, digitally signed PDF documents, which makes it an exceptional source for legal information.

5. IRS.gov

<http://www.irs.gov/>

IRS.gov has a new interface making it much easier to access the rich trove of resources available. The section on 'Forms & Pubs' is probably the most popular, but there are also helpful resources under 'Credits & Deductions' and 'Help & Resources' offering assistance and direction for a wide array of tax related issues. *IRS.gov* has helpful resources for corporations, self-employed, non-profits, estate & gift issues, as well as for individuals. *IRS.gov's* practice of noting on every page when the information was last reviewed or updated provides reassurance that the resources are current.

6. GAO.gov

<http://gao.gov/>

GAO.gov is the homepage for the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), an independent, nonpartisan agency that works for Congress. Often called the "congressional watchdog," GAO investigates how the federal government spends taxpayer dollars and advises Congress and the heads of executive agencies about ways to make government more efficient, effective, ethical, equitable, and responsive. *GAO.gov* offers links to their reports and testimonies before Congress, which can be browsed or search in the 'Reports & Testimonies' sections. The 'Legal Decisions & Bid Protests'

section shares legal decisions, opinions, and reports on bid protests, appropriations law, and other issues of federal law issued by GAO's Office of General Counsel. There is also a link to the various volumes of *The Principles of Federal Appropriations Law*, commonly referred to as the Red Book. The multi-volume treatise provides text discussion with reference to specific legal authorities to illustrate the principles discussed, their application, and exceptions.

7. 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.

8. Copyright – United States Copyright Office

<http://www.copyright.gov/>

Copyright.gov, the homepage for the United States Copyright Office serves the copyright community of creators, users, legal professionals, as well as the general public.

One of the core features of the website is the ability to search all copyright ownership and registration documents since 1978, although there is a lag of several months before recent registrations appear in the database. *Copyright.gov* has links to all key publications produced by the United States Copyright Office, including information circulars, application forms for copyright registration, links to copyright law and policy, links to copyright-related organizations, and the latest regulations. The site is easy to read, navigate, and is rich in information.

9. USA.gov

<http://www.usa.gov/>

The Federal government portal and search engine *USA.gov* offers a simple platform for accessing government information. While users are primarily directed towards the search box at the top of the page, there is a 'Topics' tab that breaks government information down into broad categories designed to meet the needs of the average citizen. Under the 'Government Agencies' tab there are up-to-date listings of official state, local, and tribal websites, in addition to Federal departments and agencies. The search engine at *USA.gov* is powered by the *Bing* search engine with results limited to governmental websites.

7 Superb Sites for Legal News to Help You Stay Current (without paying anything)

It is important to stay in touch with news and developments in the wider legal

community and beyond. There are so many news feeds and resources potentially to follow that reading news daily can take up too much time. The best approach is to choose one or two legal news sources to monitor, using the platform one finds the easiest to use, such as Twitter, Facebook, email, or RSS feed. This section highlights several legal news resources, each of which is well-respected, but offers a slightly different focus and headlines.

1. Bloomberg

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/law/>

Bloomberg.com offers news and market analysis from this major financial information service provider. Under their 'News' section drop down at the top of the page, one can select the sub-category for 'Law' to access current headlines concerning cases and litigation related to business, or go to the direct link provided above. Their 'Market' section at the right side of the website homepage is a way to get current market information quickly in an easy to navigate interface. There are also links to their 'Live TV & Video' feeds and the 'Radio' section at the top of the page offers a live stream of Bloomberg Radio as well as links to their podcasts. The affiliated *BusinessWeek* magazine <<http://www.businessweek.com/>> can also be accessed from *Bloomberg.com*.

2. Wall Street Journal Law Blog

<http://blogs.wsj.com/law>

The *Wall Street Journal Law Blog* focuses on legal news about court decisions, trends,

and people that are of interested to the business community. The *Law Blog* covers what are seen as hot cases, emerging trends, and important individuals in the legal profession. Written by lead writer Jacob Gershman with contributions from *The Wall Street Journal's* staff, all posts can be read in their entirety for free. It is a good source for breaking news about big law firms and developments in business litigation. The Law Blog is sub-divided into the following sections: 'Law School,' 'Constitutional Law,' 'Supreme Court,' 'Lawyers & Law Firms,' 'State Legislation,' and 'Intellectual Property.'

3. Jurist

<http://www.jurist.org/>

JURIST is the only law school-based comprehensive legal news and research service. It is run by a mostly-volunteer team of over 30 part-time law student reporters, editors and web developers at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. *JURIST* covers legal news stories based on their substantive importance rather than on their mass-market or commercial appeal. It is an excellent source for both the latest legal information and for researching legal topics in its vast legal news archive. The news is divided into the following subheadings: 'Paper Chase,' 'US Legal News,' 'World Legal News,' 'News Archive,' and 'This Day at Law' which focuses on an event each day in legal history. Beyond the news sections, there is a 'Commentary' section with op-ed pieces written by law school faculty from around the country and a 'Features' section with in depth coverage of important issues in the news. As with most legal news websites, in addition RSS feeds, one can follow *JURIST* on Facebook, Twitter, or via email updates.

4. The Law Review

<http://www.fastcase.com/blog/>

The Law Review is a daily podcast produced by *Fastcase*. The purpose of the daily podcast is to provide the listener with the most important, practical legal news in 10 minutes or less. After that the podcast provides more depth on the top stories, explores new technology, and interviews people with something to say about the law. A summary of each episode is posted to the *Fastcase Legal Research Blog*. The podcast is available for download at iTunes as *Fastcase Presents: The Law Review*

<<https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/fastcase-presents-law-review/id803445766>>

and is also available as *The Law Review* subreddit at *Reddit* where you can submit or vote on stories <<http://reddit.com/r/thelawreview>>.

5. SCOTUSBlog

<http://scotusblog.com/>

Following *SCOTUSblog* is one of the best ways to keep up on the news and activities of the Supreme Court. The blog generally reports on every merits case before the Court at least three times: prior to argument; after argument; and after the decision. Many of the blog's posts go beyond coverage of individual cases, to include a news "Round-up" each business day of what has been written about the Court, as well as broader analytical pieces. One can follow *SCOTUSblog* on Twitter, Facebook, RSS, or via email digests. Started back in 2002, the blog is provided as a public service and is sponsored by Bloomberg Law. *SCOTUSblog* won a 2013 Peabody Award, the first blog to receive the prestigious media/broadcast journalism award given by the University of Georgia's

Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication.

6. Stateline

<http://stateline.org/>

Stateline is a nonpartisan, nonprofit daily news service of the Pew Charitable Trusts. An excellent source for state government and political news, *Stateline* has an easy to navigate, feature-rich website. One can view recent news stories gathered from newspapers, wire services, and from *Stateline* staff writers by selecting a specific state, browsing all states, or in one of 17 issue areas. Customized RSS feeds are available for individual states and issue areas as well. The "Special Features" section includes in-depth reporting on special topics plus a Legislative Review section that looks at state services, budgets, and legislation. *Stateline* content is published daily at *Stateline.org* and can be found on *LexisNexis*, *Factiva*, and news outlets served by McClatchy-Tribune Information Services.

7. ABA Journal

<http://abajournal.com/>

ABA Journal is an excellent source for free legal news on the Internet. The homepage contains the its featured stories, the latest headlines, topical news stories, in depth articles, and links to the most read/commented/mailed stories. The *ABA Journal* homepage provides links to its well-respected *ABA Journal Blawg Directory* <<http://www.abajournal.com/blawgs/>>, including their annual feature on the top legal blogs, the *Blawg 100*. Under the 'Stay Connected' section there are directions on

subscribing to the *ABA Journal* RSS/Facebook/Twitter feeds, their free email newsletters, and even, for a fee, the monthly paper magazine version.

10 Legal Practice Blogs You Already Know About, But Still Don't Read

The amount and variety of legal practice blogs can be overwhelming. Many people just give up, dismissing all of them as “noise” and a “waste of time.” However, to do so cuts one off from new ideas and developments. Legal blogs are the old practice print newsletter and water-cooler conversation all rolled into one. Selecting a few blogs, perhaps no more than 3-5, that fit one’s specific interests and then following them using one’s preferred information platform (such as, email notices, blog readers, RSS feeds, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) keeps the flow of information manageable. The following legal practice blogs are well-respected in their specific subject areas. Check out the *ABA Journal’s* annual *Blawg 100* <<http://www.abajournal.com/blawg100>> to locate more suggestions for highly regarded legal practice blogs to follow.

1. Volokh Conspiracy

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/volokh-conspiracy/>

Volokh Conspiracy blog, now hosted the Washington Post, is a group blog, co-founded by Eugene Volokh and Alexander Volokh, written by primarily law professors. With a generally libertarian /conservative /centrist viewpoint, the blog focuses on law and public policy issues. *Volokh Conspiracy* was named in 2012 to the *ABA Journal Blawg*

100 'Hall of Fame.'

2. Robert Ambrogi's LawSites

<http://lawsitesblog.com/>

Named in 2012 to the *ABA Journal Blawg 100* 'Hall of Fame,' *Robert Ambrogi's LawSites* is a blog that provides thoughtful, in-depth coverage of news, websites, technology, and social media related to legal practice and management. There are thorough reviews of apps, software, and e-tools for practice needs such as document management, research, billing, and cyber-security. New and redesigned legal research and practice management products are assessed in its detailed 'LegalTech Report' posts. Founded in 2002, the blog's author Robert Ambrogi is well respected in the area of legal technology, having extensive experience in both the legal and publishing professions. He often writes for the *ABA Journal* as well.

3. Attorney at Work

<http://www.attorneyatwork.com/>

Knowing that information overload can be a problem, *Attorney at Work* is a blog that promises "one really good idea every day" for practicing lawyers. Its writers draw upon their expertise in practice management for their original and insightful daily blog posts. The site covers practice management topics such as developing a client base, dealing with personnel issues, incorporating technology into legal practice, and achieving one's goals while maintaining work-life balance. One can sign up to get their "Daily Dispatch" or "Weekly Wrap" sent directly to one's email account, or one can follow the blog via

RSS, Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter.

4. My Shingle

<http://myshingle.com/>

My Shingle is authored by Carolyn Elefant, an attorney in the Washington, D.C. area. She provides a voice for the solo practitioner in a profession that she sees as being too focused in terms of costs, ethical obligations, and practice management on lawyers in large firms. Posting a couple of times per week, her blog posts draw from her own experiences, ideas, and opinions. The blog is easy to navigate, with tabs across the top containing links to posts arranged by topic, an online guide on starting a law firm under 'Resources,' as well as a list of guides and tips from other authoritative legal resources on the web. *My Shingle* in 2012 was named to the *ABA Journal Blawg 100* 'Hall of Fame.'

5. Jonathan Turley

<http://jonathanturley.org/>

George Washington University law professor Jonathan Turley has been blogging since 2007 and was added to the *ABA Journal Blawg 100* 'Hall of Fame' in 2013. The blog gives in depth analysis of legal issues that arise in the current news. The blog focuses on issues related to the First Amendment, rights of consumers, the rights of criminal defendants but can cover a wide range of topics.

6. Virtual Law Practice

<http://virtuallawpractice.org/>

Can legal services be provided in a professional and ethical way from a web-based virtual law office? North Carolina-based practitioner Stephanie Kimbro does just that and uses her blog, *Virtual Law Practice*, to share her experiences with the issues surrounding lawyering without a brick and mortar office. This blog is an excellent source for articles and other information sources about virtual lawyering gathered from many websites. There are also links to downloadable ebooks and presentations by the author, including her latest free ebook, *Consumer Law Revolution: The Lawyer's Guide to Working with Online Marketing Tools*. The 'Topics' section has a useful subject list making it easy for one to access information on a specific topic. The 'Law & Tech Blogs' section offers links to a few key blogs that might be of interest on the topic of how technology is changing legal practice.

7. Real Lawyers Have Blogs

<http://kevin.lexblog.com/>

Real Lawyers Have Blogs is designed for a tech-savvy lawyer audience about how to make the most of their legal blogs and presence on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Created by LexBlog founder Kevin O'Keefe, the blog is committed to showing lawyers how to build relationships and generate a strong word of mouth through blogging and the effective use of social networking and social media. *Real Lawyers Have Blogs* was named to the *ABA Journal Blawg 100* 'Hall of Fame' in 2013.

8. Abnormal Use

<http://abnormaluse.com/>

Abnormal Use blog is focused on the discussion of federal and state product-liability litigation. However, the topics sometimes drift into technology issues, such as social media discovery. There is a ‘Friday Links’ column, which is a roundup of offbeat and quirky legal news blurbs. The blog is created and supported by attorneys at Gallivan, White & Boyd, P.A., one of the Southeast’s leading litigation and business law firms. *Abnormal Use* blog was voted the Best Torts blog in 2013 by the *ABA Journal Blawg 100*.

9. iPhone J.D.

<http://www.iphonejd.com/>

iPhone J.D. describes itself as a website for lawyers using Apple’s iPhone or iPad. Started in November 2008 and maintained by New Orleans attorney Jeff Richardson, the site is not affiliated with a firm, organization, or Apple itself. Every Friday there is an “In the news” post giving one a rundown of relevant news from the week pertaining to Apple devices. There are insightful reviews of iPad and iPhone related products and apps that a practicing attorney may find useful, including recent reviews of *Westlaw Next*, *Lexis Advance*, and *Fastcase* for the iPad. The site has a very useful “Index to Prior Posts” arranged by category making it easy to access from these alphabetical lists previous reviews of apps, hardware accessories, books, movies, websites, tips, practice stories, and “classic” posts (that may now be outdated). The site was voted the Best Legal Technology blog on the *ABA Journal Blawg 100* for 2013, an honor the blog also

won in 2010 and 2011, coming in second in the category in 2012.

10. The Droid Lawyer

<http://thedroidlawyer.com/>

As of December 2013, Android is the number one smartphone platform in the U.S., with 51.5% of subscribers, with Apple iOS in second at 41.8%. Created in February 2011 by Oklahoma City-based attorney Jeffrey Taylor, *The Droid Lawyer* offers tips and product reviews for lawyers using Android devices in their legal practice. There is a tab called 'Apps for Lawyers' at the top of the page that takes one to a web form to submit a favorite legal related app and a link to a list of Android apps specifically designed for attorneys, to use by attorneys.

7 Easy Ways to Uncover Business-Related Information

Knowing a handful of business information websites can be helpful when trying to research more about a business or individual on behalf of a client. These are reliable web resources, although no information provider is without data holes, so read the coverage descriptions provided by these or any web-based database. These resources are from a mix of governmental, non-profit, and commercial providers.

1. AnnualReports.com

<http://annualreports.com/>

Claiming to have the most complete and up-to-date listing of annual reports on the

Internet, *AnnualReports.com* is a database of annual reports gathered directly from participating companies. *AnnualReports.com* can be searched alphabetically, by company name, by ticker symbol, by sector, by industry, by exchange, and by index. Once a company is found, it can be viewed in either HTML or PDF format and, if available, a hardcopy can also be ordered through the website. The database is maintained by IR Solutions, which provides online corporate reporting and financial information under several different website services, which are linked to from *AnnualReports.com*.

2. GuideStar

<http://www.guidestar.org/>

Sometimes one needs information on a non-profit organization rather than a commercial company. *GuideStar* is a directory of non-profit organizations. *GuideStar's* database includes information on all tax-exempt nonprofits registered with the IRS. Currently, there are more than 1.8 million organizations in the database. *GuideStar* itself is a non-profit, operating with the mission of providing information about the non-profit sector that advances transparency, enables users to make better decisions, and encourages charitable giving. *Guidestar* is not a charity evaluator or watchdog, but rather a neutral source whose goal is to collect, organize, and present this information in an easy-to-understand, consistent format. It can be searched for free, but additional information can be accessed if one creates a free user account.

3. EDGAR

<http://www.sec.gov/edgar.shtml>

EDGAR is the Federal government database providing free access to SEC filings, including registration statements, periodic reports, and other forms. Go to the website listed above, then click on the 'Search for Company Filings' link to access the several search options for accessing *EDGAR* information. All public companies, foreign and domestic, are required to file registration statements, periodic reports, and certain other forms electronically through *EDGAR*, making it an excellent source for company information. The *EDGAR* homepage provides a link to the current SIC Code List and a tutorial for using the database. The website also provides links to written and oral statements made by members of the SEC's staff on various accounting and legal matters and links to related regulatory actions.

4. ThomasNet

<http://www.thomasnet.com/>

ThomasNet is the online version of the important longtime industry directory the *Thomas Register of American Manufacturers* (aka the "Big Green Books"). The website allows one to search for information by Product/Service, Company Name, Brand, CAD Drawings, Industrial Web, and White Papers. The benefits of using *ThomasNet* over a general search engine like Google are the specific Browse features and the more than 67,000 industry categories assigned to the entries. One can also limit searches by zipcode, state, company type, ISO certifications, minority owned status, and information available, such as product catalogs or CAD drawings.

5. elaws – United States Department of Labor

<http://www.dol.gov/elaws/>

The website *elaws* maintained by the United States Department of Labor provides information on employment laws for workers and small businesses. It features the “elaws Advisors” which are compliance tools to help provide information on specific topics and problems. While they do not yet have an “elaws Advisor” for every Department of Labor law or regulation, they do cover topics such as the Family and Medical Leave Act, Fair Labor Standards Act, Drug-Free Workplace, Veteran’s Preference, and the “FirstStep” Employment Law. There is also an electronic copy of the most recent “Employment Law Guide” published by the Department of Labor.

6. North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)

<http://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/>

The *North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) website* contains information about the NASIC standardized codes used to describe industries. Adopted in 1997 to replace the SIC system, the NAICS allows for a high level of comparability in business statistics among the North American countries. Codes identified on this website can be used for industry searching in other databases. The *NAICS website* offers the ability to search by keyword or 2-6 digit code the 2012, 2007, or the 2002 editions of the NAICS Manual. There is also the ability to browse by subdivision, which is helpful when one is not certain of the precise terminology to use. The *NAICS website* also provides the latest information on plans for NAICS revisions, as well as access to

various NAICS reference files and tools, including a section on Federal Register Notices.

7. SBA.gov – U.S. Small Business Administration

<http://www.sba.gov/>

From initial counseling and business planning to contracting with the government and finding seminars, *SBA.gov* has information that is helpful for anyone managing their own small business. *SBA.gov*'s suite of tools and their 'Learning Center' provide step-by-step directions on topics such as "Create a Business Plan" and "Qualify for Government Contracts." The section 'Starting & Managing' contains quality free resources on starting and managing a small business. The 'Contracting' section offers links to resources to assist clients in identifying, creating and pursuing potential business opportunities with the federal government.

8 Websites that Keep Georgia On My Mind

There are many Georgia specific resources covering legal related topics available on the Internet in large part due to resources made available by the State of Georgia on *Georgia.gov* and other state websites and to the *Digital Library of Georgia*, a contributing member of the *DPLA – Digital Public Library of America* <<http://dp.la/>>. Below are a selection of sites that may have helpful information related to Georgia legal and business matters.

1. Georgia Secretary of State

<http://www.sos.ga.gov/>

The *Georgia Secretary of State* website offers links to its four major areas of service at the top of their homepage. The 'Corporations' section has in its "Quick Links" a link to information on annual registration. In the dropdown menu labeled 'Create or Change An Entity' one can find the current information needed to assist incorporation in Georgia. The dropdown 'Customer Information' under 'Corporations' is where one can find the link to the *Rules & Regulations of the State of Georgia* as well as proposed rules and amendments. The 'Elections' section has information on election dates and voter registration. Under the 'Licensing' section, one can find information on applying for and renewing state issued licenses. The 'Securities' section contains information for persons seeking to register with the Commissioner as a broker/dealer, investment adviser, broker/dealer agent, or investment adviser representative. Additionally, persons wishing to register a security with the Commissioner will find all requisite forms under the link "Securities Forms."

2. Open Georgia

<http://www.open.georgia.gov/>

To locate information related to state government and politics in Georgia, one should explore the resources available through the state run portal *OpenGeorgia*. The resources linked on this site are gathered from a variety of state agency websites, where they are sometimes difficult to locate, even if one knows of their existence. While much of the information is only updated annually, *OpenGeorgia* is an excellent, time-saving

resource for Georgia state financial-related information.

3. Georgia Department of Banking & Finance

<http://dbf.georgia.gov/>

The Georgia *Department of Banking & Finance* website contains resources related to the Department's work in promoting and regulating the financial services industry in Georgia. Features include database searches for state chartered banks, credit unions, and money services businesses as well as cease and desist orders published. There is a 'Laws and Regulation' section, which contains highlights of relevant sections of the *O.C.G.A.* and *Department Rules and Regulations*, including recent revisions.

4. Georgia Department of Labor

<http://www.dol.state.ga.us/>

The Georgia *Department of Labor* website is divided into sections by the following user groups: 'Individuals,' 'Employers,' and 'Workforce Professionals.' The website is a great source for statistics related to labor and employment in Georgia. In the 'Employment Laws and Rules' section one can find links to helpful federal and Georgia documents arranged by topic <http://www.dol.state.ga.us/em/employment_laws_rules.htm>. There is also a section labeled 'Forms and Publications' that contain links to forms useful to employers and job seekers.

5. Georgia.org

<http://www.georgia.org/>

Georgia.org is a portal website to promote economic development in Georgia, maintained by the Georgia Department of Economic Development. There is information about major industries in Georgia, including statistics for those industries. The 'Film and TV Production' industry gets its own section on the homepage, showing the emphasis being placed on promoting that growth area currently. There are also brief articles on entrepreneurship, expanding businesses, and community development in Georgia, with links to appropriate associations and agencies.

6. Georgia Chamber of Commerce

<http://www.gachamber.com/>

The *Georgia Chamber of Commerce* website is dominated by its news feed of relevant items effecting the *Chamber of Commerce's* economic development in Georgia, including 'GBAN Legislative Updates' covering the current session of the Georgia Assembly. Information is divided into the following tabbed sections: 'Advocacy,' 'Membership,' 'Small Business,' 'Economic Development,' 'Events,' and 'Press Room.' Of particular interest in the 'Advocacy' section are the "Legislative Updates" and "Legislative Scorecard."

7. Georgia Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Commission

<http://ethics.georgia.gov/>

The *Georgia Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Commission* (formerly known as the State Ethics Commission) website provides information in support of administering and enforcing the provisions of the Georgia Government Transparency

and Campaign Finance Act. The website's primary users are Public Officials, Candidates for Public Office, Campaign and Non-Campaign Committees, and Lobbyists, as well as researchers, the media, and the general public. Through the website, one can access all campaign finance and financial disclosure documents that are required to be filed with the Commission. Under the section 'Search Reports & Records,' one can search and browse candidate contributions by county, office, or zip code. The 'Laws/Rules' section has a .pdf version of the current Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Act, Campaign Finance Commission Rules, and Advisory Opinions issued by the Commission from 1987 to present. Candidates can e-file their reports directly on the website.

8. Digital Library of Georgia

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

Based at the University of Georgia Libraries, the *Digital Library of Georgia* is an initiative of *GALILEO*, the state's virtual library. The *Digital Library of Georgia* connects users to a million digital objects in more than 200 collections from 60 institutions and 100 government agencies. 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. One can search across the many databases that make up the *Digital Library of Georgia* or browse the databases by topic, time period, county, institution, or media type. There is also an A-Z list of all the databases. Under the topic 'Government & Politics,' there are several databases with legal-related topics. Listed below is a sampling of some of the

most relevant databases for legal research from the 'Government & Politics' topic section of the *Digital Library of Georgia*. Yes, it is a listicle within a listicle!

Digital Library of Georgia Resources Under 'Government & Politics'

1. 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.

2. Georgia Legislative Documents

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

This database contains 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.

3. GeorgiaInfo

<http://georgiainfo.galileo.usg.edu/>

GeorgiaInfo is an online almanac about the state of Georgia. Navigation throughout the site is by topics and features listed on drop down menus at the top of the home page - each of these links will take you to a page with information about a specific aspect of Georgia - history, maps, counties, cities, wildlife, etc. There is also a search box available at the top of each page. Two of *GeorgiaInfo's* more popular features are featured at the bottom of its

homepage, 'This Day in Georgia History' and 'This Day in Georgia Civil War History.'

4. Georgia Official and Statistical Register

<http://statregister.galileo.usg.edu/statregister/>

The *Georgia Official and Statistical Register* was published from 1923-1990 by the Georgia Archives. Considered an important reference work for historical research, it covers Georgia's executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, providing biographical sketches of elected and other state officials. Georgia members of U.S. Congress and federal judges are included, as are county officials and regents of the university system. There are also election returns and basic reference data on Georgia counties.

5. Historic Documents of Georgia

http://www.georgiaarchives.org/what_do_we_have/online_records/historic_documents/default.htm

Significant state documents from Georgia's history dating from 1732 to 1983 from the collections of the Georgia Archives.

6. Historic Georgia Codes Collection

<http://www.archive.org/details/ugalaw>

This collection includes all of the historical Georgia codes beginning with the *1799 Watkins Digest of Statutes* through the *Code of Georgia of 1933*.

7. The New Georgia Encyclopedia

<http://www.galileo.usg.edu/express?link=ngen>

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

8. Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842

<http://www.galileo.usg.edu/express?link=zlna>

Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842, contains approximately 2,000 documents, comprised of letters, legal proceedings, military orders, financial papers, and archaeological images relating to Native Americans in the Southeast.

9. Trademark Registrations, 1894-1959

<http://cdm.sos.state.ga.us:2011/cdm/landingpage/collection/trade>

Official trademarks and union labels of goods sold or distributed in Georgia and represent their registration with the State of Georgia, 1894-1959.

Conclusion

These listicles are just a sample of what is available on the Internet to assist one

in staying informed about legal news, application of technology, and conducting legal research. When one knows some 'go-to' websites that provide helpful and convenient information, then using the Internet for legal research becomes a straightforward and successful experience.