

## Tour the Legal Web's New Sites

By Robert J. Ambrogi  
[Law Technology News](#)  
November 7, 2008

This month, my column for *Law Technology News* rounds up new legal Web sites that have recently debuted.

### LEGAL SEARCH FROM LEXIS

LexisNexis has launched a beta version of its Web search tool, called [Lexis Web](#).

Unlike general search sites such as Google, Lexis Web searches a more limited sphere of legal-oriented Web sites. The user guide says that the sites it searches have been selected and validated by the LexisNexis editorial staff, so that users "can trust that all content has met LexisNexis criteria for being authoritative and accurate."

This is similar in concept to the Law.com search tool, [Quest](#), which searches an editorially selected sphere of Web content in addition to Law.com's own content. The goal is to produce search results that are more relevant and targeted to legal users.

In addition to search results, Lexis Web displays a selection of "LexisNexis Recommended Sources." These are sources and libraries within the subscription version of the [LexisNexis Research System](#). If you have a subscription, you can click on any of these recommended sources to run the same search there.

Another feature of Lexis Web is clustering to help you narrow your search results. Clusters are topical folders and subfolders shown in a pane to the left of the search results. A search for "Antonin Scalia" resulted in top-level folders for "Legal Topics," "People" and "Keywords," among others. You can also use this to narrow results by subject or geography.

In the search results, when you click on a link, it opens a nearly full-sized preview of the linked page. Click one icon in the preview to go to the actual page or another to close the preview. Lexis Web is free, but the user guide includes this foreboding note: "During the beta offer -- all search activities will be available to you free of charge." Does this suggest Lexis plans to charge at some point? Charging for a Web search tool would make little sense, so let's hope not.

### E-DISCOVERY LEGAL GUIDES

Lawyer Michael Arkfeld is a leading expert on electronic data discovery and author of the treatise, [Arkfeld on Electronic Discovery and Evidence](#). Recently, Arkfeld (a member of *Law Technology News's* Editorial Advisory Board) launched a comprehensive e-discovery Web site, Arkfeld's [eLawExchange](#).

A standout feature of this free site is a database of e-discovery case law and rules from all 50 states. Enter a keyword and select a state to find the applicable entries, or simply select a state to find all cases from that



photo: Corbis

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jurisdiction.

A second database contains information on individuals and companies that provide EDD services and consulting. Other features of the site include articles on EDD and a collection of "litigation intelligence links" to Web resources that are particularly useful to litigators.

### A SITE FOR SOFTWARE REVIEWS

[LitiReviews](#), provides free access to reviews of legal and litigation software and technology.

The site collects the reviews from third party sources such as [TechnoLawyer](#), the [American Bar Association](#), the [Association of Legal Administrators](#), and [Law.com](#). It does not actually publish the reviews, but links to them at their original sources.

Its usefulness is that it organizes all these reviews from disparate sources by categories and product names. So if you want to find reviews of, say, [Amicus Attorney](#), you click on that product name and you find 10 reviews compiled from such publications as [Law Office Computing](#), [GPSolo](#) and [Legal Assistant Today](#). (Be prepared for the occasional dead link -- the danger of linking externally.)

The site is operated by [Lexbe.com](#), a company that I've written about before for a similar site it operates, [LitiLaw](#), which provides access to legal articles written by lawyers for CLE programs or publication. Lexbe is a company that sells its own case management software, so one must be wary of a software company operating a site that collects software reviews. That said, LitiReviews simplifies the task of quickly finding reviews for specific products or types of software.

### WORLDWIDE LEGAL NEWS

The Law Library of Congress has converted its [Global Legal Monitor](#), from a static, monthly PDF newsletter to a dynamic and regularly updated Web site. The monitor tracks legal news and developments worldwide, drawing on information from the [Global Legal Information Network](#), and other sources.

The new Global Legal Monitor provides readers with the ability to browse legal developments by more than 100 topics and more than 150 jurisdictions. Current and archived news stories are also fully searchable through an advanced search interface.

Each legal development has its own permanent link for easy reference and sharing. An RSS feed is available for those wishing to keep up with Global Legal Monitor developments.

### CODE CITY

It can be difficult to keep up with the folks at [Public.Resource.Org](#) and their efforts to put as much law as possible into the public domain. I've written before about their successes in putting case law in the public domain. The latest release, [Codes.gov](#), publishes critical state and municipal public safety codes from all across the country.

These are building, electrical, plumbing, elevator, mechanical and fire codes, among others. Included are codes from every state, although not every code from every state. They are working on that.

Also here are the full [California Code of Regulations](#) and [the full administrative code of Sonoma County, Calif.](#), where Public.Resource.Org is based. Previously, these have been available only through private publishers that claim copyrights in them.

That copyright issue may come to a head at some point. Public.Resource.Org spent some \$20,000 buying these codes in order to post them online. It takes the position that they cannot be subject to copyright. They've even created [an illustrated storybook detailing their case](#), which you can find at the Codes.gov link.

### EXAMINE THE EXAMINERS

A recent Web site, [USPTO Examiners](#), aims to provide a forum where patent professionals can review, rank and learn about patent examiners and trademark examining attorneys. "Prior knowledge about a particular patent examiner or a trademark examining attorney can be a valuable tool when planning and strategizing the prosecution of a patent or a trademark case," the site explains.

The site is mainly a message board for posting comments about particular examiners. I never found any ranking component. The site's owners are anonymous and those who post comments are anonymous. A comment about one examiner said, "Although he seems to be conscientious, he can hardly speak or write intelligibly. The office actions I have seen are terribly ungrammatical, virtually unintelligible and evidently illogical."

That quote gives you the flavor. As message boards tend to do, this one has its share of rants and ad hominem attacks. If you are a patent or trademark attorney interested in keeping up with gossip in your field, you may find this site of interest. Otherwise,



there is little here of practical value.

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