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June 2007



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ANDREA USES AND RECOMMENDS

eLegal Connection

KEEPING LEGAL PROFESSIONALS CONNECTED

Free ≠ No Cost

See the value and understand the risks before incorporating any “freebie”

Free offers abound on the Internet. From “test” accounts to 30 day software downloads, if you can think of a process or software or function, you can generally find a free way to accomplish it on the Internet.

Take Google, for instance. Recently, Google introduced web based applications which mimic Microsoft® software – spreadsheet, presentation and word processing programs which are accessible from your web based account. This means that you are not dependent on the software located on your desktop to manipulate your content or business communications. That’s a plus! However, there are also downsides to using “free” services, including:

- (1) you are not paying for the service, therefore there is no guarantee that you will receive it;
- (2) some downloads may not be functional or can even harm your computer upon download; and
- (3) at some point it is conceivable that only the basic features will remain free, while the more advanced features will become a pay as you use or monthly subscription service so you end up paying anyway. I have seen numerous companies use this model in order to become very successful, including my favorite unified messaging service, www.onebox.com.

Before investing in any “freebie” make sure you have a thorough understanding not just of what it does, but whether or not it has been successfully tested and/or integrated into similarly situated businesses; how long has it been around and is it supplied by a reputable company. Even with these precautions, there is no guarantee that a freebie will remain so!

Until next time.....

LegalTypist

*To listen to my interview by fellow IVAA member, Andrea Kalli, Virtual Trainer and Assistant (<http://www.virtualassist.net>) about unified messaging visit: : <http://www.legaltypist.com/InterviewbyAK.htm>.



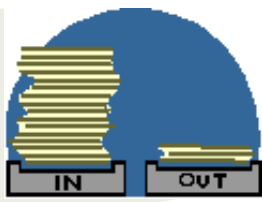
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Counts



DOWNLOAD WITH CARE

Some people, like me, just really enjoy technology. We love seeing what is out there, tinkering with software, equipment and webby stuff to see (a) if it does what it says it does; and (b) if it can be used for the betterment of something.

Before downloading or testing any new process, system, or application do some research – from reading the whole site to *googling* the name plus “issues” or “security”. Download and install with caution as many applications cause adjustments in settings or may even corrupt your PC!



The Ins & Outs of:

RSS Feeds

Have you ever read an article, intended to explain RSS in simple terms that, begins well, but soon descends into confusing jargon or information overload?

If so, take heart, I was in the same place a few months ago.

Often the best way to understand something, is to use it. RSS is no exception. So rather than try and create a definitive explanation of RSS, this article will tell you how to use it. I guarantee once you've done so, everything will that much clearer.

If a website you visit utilizes RSS, there are a number of ways it will communicate this.

The most common way is to show a little orange button with the letters XML.

Alternatively, you may see words such as "ATOM", "RSS", "Site Feed" or variations on these.

What they have in common is that they will link to a webpage that, in most browsers, looks like gibberish.

It doesn't matter one way or another, what is important is the address of the web page they link to.

To demonstrate, I will relate how to read a site feed for my website, The Nettle Blog. Don't confuse RSS with blogs (web logs). They are two separate concepts. The only reason you see them together so often, is that blogs are the perfect website to take advantage of site feeds. More on that later. Here we go...



Click on this link to go the site feed for The Nettle Blog. Ignore the content in the window, just make a note of the URL in the web address bar. It should read: <http://feeds.feedburner.com/thenettle>

Now you've got the web address for the site feed, keep it safe somewhere. You'll need it again in a moment.

The next step is to use an RSS reader to make sense of the site feed. There are lots of these available and if you are a heavy user you would probably want to purchase a nice piece of software.

But to begin with, start with something simple and free. Start with Bloglines.

Go to www.bloglines.com/register/ and create a new account.

From the "My Feeds" section of your account you can add new site feeds you want to keep track of.

Select "ADD", enter the URL you copied and hit "Subscribe". You can preview the results, but skip that stage for now. Select "Subscribe" again and the title of the site feed will be transferred to the left-hand window.

Well done. You have now subscribed to your first RSS feed.

To read it just click on the title and you can view all the messages in that feed within a selected time period. The feed will most likely record news related to the website the feed belongs to.

In this instance, the site feed to The Nettle Blog records each new entry to my blog. If you find something of interest, most entries have a clickable link you can follow.

Anytime you find a website you like with a site feed, make a note of the URL for that site feed and add it to your Bloglines folder.

Now comes the clever bit.

In the left-hand column of your account is an "Extras" list. Select Download Notifier and choose the correct file to download the Bloglines Notifier This file is only 100k so any half-decent connection should complete the download in just a few seconds.

If the download is successful, you should see a small, blue icon with the letter "B". Double-clicking it will short-cut you to Bloglines.

Right-click on the icon and you can adjust the settings. Specify how often you want Bloglines to check messages for you.

When Bloglines checks your site feeds and finds that one or more have been updated, a little chime will play and the Bloglines icon will show a little red marker. This means one of the feeds you have subscribed to has something new to say.

So there you have it. A spam-free, hassle-free way to keep track of websites you have an interest in. Providing of course, that they have a site feed. If they don't, ask them why not.

Part two of this article will show webmaster and ezine publishers how they can easily publish a site feed for their website and track the visitors, free of charge.

David Congreave is owner of The Nettle Ezine, the newsletter for the home business -- online.

David lives in Leeds, in the United Kingdom with his wife Leanne.

Article Source:
http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=David_Congreave

IVAA Member Sandi Martini's Overview of RSS:
<http://www.legaltypist.com/RSSMartini.htm>

Technology2Go...

because mobility is key

Recently, the owner of the company I recommend for digital dictation and transcription equipment, Bret Williams of www.Novuscript.com reviewed the latest edition to the Phillips professional dictation line, or the 9600.

According to Bret:

First, "this ain't your father's Philips." The 9600 is a complete new re-design for Philips.

The Philips 9600 is much more ergonomic, with a larger LCD display, convenient slide-switch and button locations, as well as a much more comfortable shape and feel. Design-wise, we're very impressed.

Philips also employed several new technologies into the 9600, which are unique to the industry:

REVIEW – PHILLIPS 9600



New/Better Features:

- DSS Pro recording format. This increased the fidelity of the DSS recording format, while also providing for more file attributes such as encryption.
- Encryption. Not only does the software provide file encryption, but the recorder itself will encrypt as the file is being recorded. This prevents someone who might find the recorder from playing the recordings.
- LAN docking cradle. An optional LAN docking cradle (a regular USB cradle is included) can allow instant FTP transfers of voice files without having to be tethered to a computer.

In comparison, Bret wrote:

The 9600 is a big step up for Philips in its quest to compete against the market-dominating Olympus DS-4000 (in the professional market). The 9600 brings a higher quality recording, better ergonomics, longer battery life and more, but it has a couple of areas which prevent it from KO'ing the competition.

The biggest of which is price. The 9600 retails for \$499 or \$50 more than the comparable Olympus DS-4000. The increased cost may be justified, particularly considering the improved technologies; however, the higher price point may just prevent wider adoption.

UPGRADE?

Reviews are in for the new **iPhone**:
<http://legaltypist.com/iPhonereview.htm>

Stephen Colbert did a funny show, which included a review of his imaginary **iPhone**:

<http://legaltypist.com/SColbert.htm>

Waste neither time, nor money, but make the best use of both.
Benjamin Franklin

*** FRUGAL FINDS ***

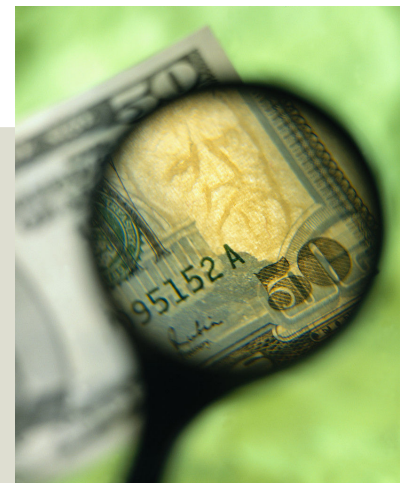
Here's a list of some interesting on and off line bargains!

Practice Management articles/education:
<http://www.pa-lawfirmconsulting.com/articles.htm#hr>

Free Conference Calls: www.freeconference.com

Test Yourself - a fun site to visit to test your knowledge on topics such as baseball, candy, Harry Potter, NASCAR, Pokemon and Star Trek:
<http://www.brainbench.com/xml/bb/common/testcenter/funtest.xml>

Best Nail Polish: Sally Hanson Hard as Nails Xtreme Wear - \$2.49 at discount, drug and department stores. Resists chips and extends manicures.



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