

ABSTRACT

ESSENTIAL CRITERIAS FOR EVALUATING LEGAL RESEARCH THROUGH INTERNET

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2014 ABA Legal Technology Survey states that 50.8% of attorneys reported going to a free Internet/online service when starting a research project. 35.7% reported starting with a fee-based Internet/ one service, and only 11.2% turned to print materials first. This inclination away from using print and traditional legal research sources as a starting point is bound to continue as a younger generation of attorneys accustomed to Internet research joins the legal ranks. A huge measure of legal subject matter is available for free online. In addition to government web sites, there are commercially published online resources, such as West Law and Lexis Nexis Communities, as well as online information created by academic and county law libraries. Online legal research can be daunting, however, depending on the researcher's familiarity with legal terminology and understanding of the organization of legal authority. The increased dependence on the Internet for legal research has its advantages and disadvantages.

Through this research paper, authors are taking an effort to answer the questions raised regarding the authenticity of use of internet as a legal research tool. Further, authors are examining the advantages and disadvantages, issues and concerns of using the Internet for legal research; essential criteria for evaluating Internet resources; and approaches to conducting legal research on the Internet. The paper also describes some of the active roles that law librarians can play to enhance the legal research experience on the Internet for legal and support staff of law firms.

Keywords: Internet, Legal Research, Online Resources, Law Libraries.

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² E P Ellinger & K J Keith, "Legal Research: Techniques and Ideas", 10 *Victoria Uni Wellington L Rev* 1 (1979-1980).