

Casemaker Upgrades and New Products Improve Functionality

by Wanda J. McDavid

Since 2004, the Colorado Bar Association (CBA) has provided a suite of research tools available free of charge to all CBA members.¹ The release of Casemaker version 2.2, combined with the launch of two new products, CASECheck+ and CasemakerDigest, has markedly enhanced the value of this member benefit by improving functionality, coverage, and speed of navigation. In addition, Casemaker 2.2 now provides a mobile application for most smart phones, including the iPhone and Blackberry.²

Getting Started

CBA members who have taken advantage of the automatic login feature on the CBA website³ can bookmark or add to their favorites folder the following link: www.cobar.org/casemaker. This link goes directly to the Colorado library on Casemaker. A second way to access Casemaker from the CBA home page is to select the “Enter Casemaker” link under Quick Links on the right side of the home page. Users should periodically select the Casemaker logo on the left side of the screen on the CBA home page to stay current on new updates to the numerous Casemaker libraries, enhancements, and contact information for after-hours assistance. New users will want to take advantage of the recorded training tutorial.⁴

Coverage and Features

Casemaker’s Colorado library contains state attorney general opinions, case law, workers’ compensation decisions, session laws, the statutes, the state constitution, Colorado federal court rules and state court rules, and a complete collection of articles from *The Colorado Lawyer*. The two most popular “books”⁵ within the Colorado library are the Case Law book and the Statutes book. The Colorado Case Law book contains a comprehensive collection of all Colorado Supreme Court opinions, beginning with the first decision issued in 1864, and all Colorado Court of Appeals opinions.

The Statutes book contains the current Colorado statutes with annotations and the history of each section of the statute. The Browse feature of Casemaker allows the user to page through relevant sections of the statutes. A new feature in the Statutes book

provides hyperlinks to any referenced Colorado statute section. In addition, if the Colorado statute cites to a section of the U.S. Code, the U.S.C. section is hyperlinked.

Additional features of the Colorado Statutes book include a reference to the currency of the section, as well as archival versions of the Colorado Revised Statutes. The Colorado library contains archived versions of the Colorado Revised Statutes from 2003 through the current version.

Casemaker 2.2 Enhancements

CaseCheck (Casemaker’s version of KeyCite® or Shepard’s®) is among the research library’s recent improvements. In Casemaker, when the user views a case, a list of citing references appears on the upper right side of the screen under the CaseCheck icon. Citing references are organized by jurisdiction. Colorado cases are listed first, followed by federal courts, and then cases from other state jurisdictions listed in alphabetical order by state.⁶ Selecting a particular jurisdiction will open a new window with links to the relevant cases citing the original case.



About the Author

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When viewing a listed case, another window will open containing the case with the section where the cited case is located highlighted in yellow.



CASEcheck+

Casemaker now offers a reasonably priced fee-based citation service, CASEcheck+.⁷ Using this tool, subscribers can find out whether a particular case has been overruled, overruled in part, criticized, granted, modified, reversed, superseded, questioned, vacated, or withdrawn. Citing references are organized by jurisdiction. Selecting a jurisdiction will open a new window with links to the relevant cases citing a specific case. With CaseCheck+, any applicable icons noting the treatment of the case will be included in the listed cases.

Icons to identify...

- Criticized • Granted • Modified • Overruled in whole or in part
- Reversed • Superseded • Questioned • Vacated • Withdrawn

MultiBook Search

The MultiBook feature allows Casemaker users to search across all books within a particular library. For instance, users may search across the complete contents of the Colorado library by selecting the “MultiBook” link on the Colorado library page.

The default is to search across all the books, but users may limit a search by using the provided checkboxes. Simply enter a query in the search box provided directly above the books selected. The total number of results in each book will be listed next to the name of the book.

A “Cross References” heading can be found just below the MultiBook results on the left side of the screen. This section lists Case Knowledge⁸ results and either CaseCheck+ for subscribers or regular CaseCheck results.



CasemakerDigest

CasemakerDigest provides summaries for selected state and circuit court opinions. The CBA is making this service available at no cost to members for one year.⁹ Court opinions are organized by week, allowing users to browse through the relevant opinions as they are released. Users also have the option of entering a keyword to filter results. Users may browse by date and gain access to the case short name, the court, the date decided, the docket number, the judge, and the abstract, along with a link to the full decision.



On the far left of the CasemakerDigest screen is a numerical breakdown of the areas of practice, courts, and judges for the cases released that week. Users can find the jurisdictions that offer CasemakerDigest by selecting the “More” link and then selecting one of the other states listed. CBA members can also set up an RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed for CasemakerDigest to have new information on cases and new content sent to their Outlook inbox, BlackBerry, or iPhone.¹⁰

Federal Libraries

Casemaker continues to expand the individual federal collections and coverage. For a complete listing of federal resources, select the Federal Library tab and then the “Currency” link.

Other State Libraries

Individual state library contents may vary, but at a minimum, each state library contains case law, statutes, and the state constitution. The MultiState Case Law search feature allows for a case law search across all fifty states plus the District of Columbia, with coverage back to 1950. In many states, coverage of case law goes back to 1899 or earlier. Users also have the option of limiting a multi-state search to a selected group of states. Users may view the content coverage of the various states by selecting the state and then selecting the “Currency” link.

User Help

Casemaker’s producer, Lawriter, LLC, offers two resources that explain search strategy and points of Casemaker 2.2: the Casemaker User Guide¹¹ and FAQs.¹² Both documents are available in PDF and HTML format and are short enough to print and keep at any computer desktop for easy reference. Lawriter also offers telephone and e-mail support.¹³

Conclusion

Casemaker has become an even more valuable resource with the release of the 2.2 version. Casemaker has been upgraded to ensure faster navigation and browsing. The MultiBook and MultiState search options save time. The expanded search capabilities available on the Advanced Search screen make it easier to find case law, statutes, and other supporting resources. Lawriter is continually

making improvements and welcomes user suggestions and comments.¹⁴

Notes

1. For an earlier article outlining the features of Casemaker, see McDavid, “Casemaker Revisited—A New Look,” 38 *The Colorado Lawyer* 91 (May 2009). Colorado Bar Association (CBA) members who have questions about the free member benefit may contact Reba Nance, CBA Director of Law Practice Management, at (303) 824-5320, (800) 332-6736, or reban@cobar.org, or may e-mail casemaker@cobar.org.

2. To download the Casemaker mobile application, users should go to mobile.lawriter.net on their smart phone and provide their name and e-mail address.

3. This is done by selecting the box next to “Remember my logon on this computer” on the CBA website’s login page at www.cobar.org.

4. To access a video discussing how to use Casemaker 2.2 and CASEcheck+, CBA members should go to www.cobar.org/casemaker; select the “Help” link located on the blue navigational bar; and select “Recorded Video” under the Training heading.

5. Casemaker refers to the various offerings within a library as books. Other systems refer to them as databases.

6. Cases must be part of the Casemaker libraries to appear in CaseCheck.

7. There are three options for purchasing CaseCheck+: daily for \$4.95, monthly for \$19.95, and yearly for \$199.95. CBA members can purchase CaseCheck+ by selecting the banner just above the contents of the Colorado library or by going directly to the Casemaker Store at www.lawriter.net/casestore.aspx.

8. CaseKnowledge results contain references to relevant publications related to the executed search available for purchase from the American Bar Association, ALI-ABA, and the relevant state bar.

9. To use this feature from Casemaker’s Colorado library page, select CasemakerDigest from the blue navigational bar.

10. The RSS icon is located on the far right side of the Colorado CasemakerDigest site at www.casemakerdigest.com/Home.aspx?pg=lgm.

11. “Casemaker 2.2: Online User Guide” (Lawriter, LLC), available at www.lawriter.net/Casemaker22Manual.pdf or www.lawriter.net/manual.aspx.

12. “Casemaker 2.2 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)” (Lawriter, LLC), available at www.lawriter.net/Casemaker22FAQ.pdf or www.lawriter.net/faq.aspx.

13. Lawriter, LLC now provides help with search logic. Users should call Lawriter for assistance at (877) 659-0801 or e-mail helpdesk@lawriter.net.

14. Users can give Lawriter feedback by selecting the “Tell Us” link on the blue navigation bar and completing the “Tell Us” form. ■