



Saving You Time

In my December article I wrote about the use of sabbaticals to help lawyers recharge their batteries. Surprisingly the article led to many replies by lawyers around the state. To each of you I express my appreciation for the time you took to write.

This month I am writing to you about a very exciting new service the State Bar of Michigan and ICLE will provide beginning sometime in March. This service, Michigan Law Online, is bound to save you research time.

This service is an important demonstration of the Bar's commitment within its strategic plan to help you at your desks. It is also a great example of the wisdom found in that plan to "strengthen our partnership with ICLE."

Over a year ago I had the privilege to begin discussions with Lynn Chard, executive director of ICLE, about our mutual organizations trying to work together to help our members.

Without the joint effort of both entities, this product, if it could have been provided at all, would have cost you money. Working together we are all winners!

To briefly describe its functions, I've provided a summary as follows:

Michigan Law Online is fully searchable and includes:

- Michigan Supreme Court opinions from 1942 to the present



Michigan Law Online

- Michigan Court of Appeals published opinions from the inception of that court (1965) to the present
- Michigan Court of Appeals unpublished opinions from 2003 forward
- Michigan Supreme Court orders from 1966 to present
- Current Michigan Court Rules, and amending orders from 1995 to the present
- Current Michigan Rules of Evidence, and amending orders from 1995 to the present
- Michigan Rules of Professional Responsibility

Michigan Law Online features:

- Convenient 24/7 access from any desktop
- Searchable cases by keyword, date, docket number, case citation, party name, and opinion author
- Links to other cases that cite your case
- And other valuable features

On January 7, 2004 we sent an e-blast to you and the response has been overwhelmingly positive. Representative samples of reactions follow:

- I am so excited. Thank you so much for this great service!!
- This is great news. Nice job! Thanks.
- Yahoo!

The most frequently asked questions with their answers are listed as follows:

1. Is Michigan Law Online fully searchable? Yes, search features include:

- A full-text search of published opinions, unpublished opinions, MCRs, MREs, and MRPCs.
- An advanced search for cases to help narrow down your search by date, party name, judge name, or full citation.

2. What are other Michigan Law Online features?

When you view a case in Michigan Law Online, you can:

- Link to cases cited in your case
- View a list of cases that cite your case
- View the subsequent history of your case (MI caselaw from 1975)
- Print the case

3. Who can access Michigan Law Online?

All active members of the State Bar of Michigan will have 24/7 access to this free service beginning in March 2004 through the SBM or ICLE's websites.

4. How can I sign up?

Members will receive more information on obtaining a user name and password for Michigan Law Online in the coming months. Expect to hear more from the State Bar or ICLE throughout January and February.

Share your thoughts/concerns

Please forward comments to
voice@mail.michbar.org

The institute's director Lynn P. Chard said the organization was "excited to collaborate with the Bar to bring members Michigan Law Online, a significant expansion of our existing electronic practice resources. Collaboration allows us to offer this rich database free to Bar members—something only possible with the Bar's support. We look forward to continued collaboration on behalf of Michigan Bar members."

Michigan Law Online will provide free primary legal research to all 35,000 members of the Bar as an exclusive benefit of membership.

We look forward to your comments on how to make this service even better.

On a personal note I wish to thank Lynn Chard and everyone at ICLE along with everyone at the State Bar of Michigan who made this possible. This joint venture worked because everyone kept their eyes on the goal—providing you help at your desks in order to save you *time!*

Michigan Law Online is a part of a continuing effort of the State Bar of Michigan to provide law practice management tools to members; eJournal, Ethics Hotline, Public Policy Resource Center, and now Michigan Law Online. We truly hope this is a service you feel Bar dues and resources were meant to be used for.

O.K. maybe you still can't take a sabbatical, but how about an extra movie or two with the family at least! ♦

Another great member service, the e-Journal, recently celebrated a milestone—more than 17,000 cases have been summarized since its inception in June 1999.