

Bloomberg Law: New Kid on the Block

By George Butterfield

For many years the main sources for online legal services have been LexisNexis and Westlaw. Although there have been attempts to break into the field, other online services have barely made a dent in the big two's market share. Even though there are excellent resources that specialize in certain aspects of legal research, for example, HeinOnline with its Law Journal Library, Westlaw and LexisNexis have seemed untouchable – until now.

Just this year, Bloomberg Law became available to everyone with an academic law library email address. Students can go to their website and sign up in no time. They can use the service throughout the school year but can also use it during the summer. They can use it to do school work but can also use it on the job. Faculty who came to academia after practicing law find much in it that is geared for the practitioner.

The Bloomberg Law homepage is similar to WestlawNext and Lexis Advance and much of the material available through those services can be accessed on Bloomberg Law. Unlike some online legal services, it has a first-class citator – BCite. Although it has many of the same features as WestlawNext and Lexis Advance, Bloomberg Law has a number of strengths.

Bloomberg purchased BNA and those materials are available, along with the business news and sources for which Bloomberg is well known. Specialized searches are especially

helpful for anyone who needs to do an EDGAR search or, for example, compare contracts signed by various corporations. Bloomberg law will place contracts of companies next to each other and show you the differences. Its transactional law



area allows you to search for key phrases. For example, you have to put a contract together and you need an illustration of a particular clause. You can search for those clauses within actual contracts or see a boilerplate clause. If you need information on a company or a company's employees, that information is readily available, too.

Bloomberg's litigation and dockets material is extremely help-

ful. Get the briefs, complaints, or answers associated with a case of interest. You do not have to login to PACER (Public Access to Court Electronic Records) to get federal materials but can get them through Bloomberg Law. Monitor actions and get news and company information. Through the use of docket tracking, Bloomberg Law will email you updates on the dockets that you are following.

Whether it is Bloomberg's BNA Portfolios that provide in-depth guidance for facing issues, podcasts that allow you to listen to analysis of legal developments by leading practitioners, real-time news stories written daily by journalists in 72 countries, email updates from your favorite Bloomberg BNA Law Reports, or simple federal or state searching for case law, statutes, or regulations, Bloomberg Law has put together a legal services package that appeals to law faculty, students, and legal practitioners.

Although it is the new kid on the block, Bloomberg Law seems well positioned to turn the big two into the big three.



If you are aware of anyone within the Nebraska legal community (lawyers, law office personnel, judges, courthouse employees or law students) who suffers a sudden, catastrophic loss due to an unexpected event, illness or injury, the NSBA's SOLACE Program can likely assist

that person in some meaningful way.

Contact Mike Kinney at mkinney@ctagd.com

and/or Jane Schoenike at jschoenike@nebar.com.