

Another “Did You Know?” from Casemaker Thesaurus Function

Did you know that Casemaker incorporates a **Thesaurus** function in its search engine?

Casemaker’s little-known **Thesaurus** function can provide users with expanded search capabilities. By placing a tilde (~) immediately before a word (*no spaces allowed*), users can find synonyms for keywords. Because the thesaurus allows for the expansion of the number of searchable cases with similar dialogue, this greatly increases the chance of finding case law that is most applicable to your challenges. For example, entering ~**alcohol** into the Full Document Search Query box will yield the case law containing the words, “*liquor*,” “*whiskey*,” “*intoxicant*,” “*spirits*,” and more.

Entering the word ~**car** will yield the words “*car*,” “*automobile*,” “*auto*,” “*vehicle*,” “*train*,” and others. But users need to be careful. Because the word, “**vehicle**” can also mean, “*conveyance*,” this word may also appear in the search. When searching for ~**animal** the surnames “*Hare*” and “*Hunter*” may appear.

The **Thesaurus** function can also be used in conjunction with other search parameters such as **AND**, **OR**, **NOT**, **PHRASE**, and **SUFFIX EXPANSION** searches.

Another “Did You Know?” from Casemaker SuperCODE Feature

Did you know that Casemaker utilizes **SuperCODE** to identify changes to statutes and codes?

SuperCODE is the exclusive Casemaker feature that identifies session laws which may affect the documents that users view. **SuperCODE** appears on the right-hand side of the screen and displays hyperlinks to session laws that reference the document currently being viewed. By clicking on the hyperlink (*if present*) the user is immediately transported to the segment of the legislation that deals with the current document. Users can then quickly determine if the new law will apply to the salient portion of code of interest.

This is just another way that Casemaker keeps our members current and ahead of users of other services.

Another “Did You Know?” from Casemaker Suffix Expansion

Did you know that you can perform a more inclusive search by using the **Suffix Expansion** feature?

Because our search engine is so precise, Casemaker finds only the exact search terms entered into the Full Document Search Query box. However, users may find all word forms of a single word by attaching an asterisk (*) to the end of the word (*no spaces allowed*). By doing so, users activate the **Suffix Expansion** feature. If the term **stalk*** is typed into the Search box, present tense (**stalk**), plurals (**stalks**), past tense (**stalked**), nouns (**stalker**), and progressive tense verbs (**stalking**) can all be found in a single search.

Casemaker is currently available through 28 state bar associations with more on the way!

Another “Did You Know?” from Casemaker casecheck Feature

Did you know that the **casecheck** function allows Casemaker users to determine validity of case law?

Casemaker’s exclusive **casecheck** feature allows legal professionals the opportunity to determine if the case they may wish to cite has been challenged by a later court. To access **casecheck**, simply look on the right-hand side of the screen of the case you are viewing. If there are no hyperlinks underneath the **casecheck** logo, it means that no action has been taken on the case by a later court. If there are hyperlinks, that does not necessarily mean that there have been any rulings against the case in question. However, it will require the user to click on the link to find out.

By clicking the hyperlink, the user is taken directly to the portion of the later case where the older case is cited. By reading the text surrounding the case citation, the user can quickly determine later treatment of the cited case.

Citators can be good, but they may or may not address the finer point that a user would need to have in order to accurately determine the status of a case. Further, there is no guarantee that the citator determination was actually written by a lawyer. In some instances, non-graduate law students may have been assigned to write the citator determination. By allowing Casemaker users to view the specific area of the later case, legal professionals can read the decision for themselves and make their own determination of the value of the case in question. We feel that, although it may be slightly more time-consuming, Casemaker users are the best judge of the applicability of a ruling to their case.

Casemaker is in the business of providing legal professionals with what they need to win!

Another “Did You Know?” from Casemaker Exclusion Function

Did you know that Casemaker allows users to exclude search terms in order to narrow searches?

Casemaker’s **Exclusion Function** can be used to prohibit undesired cases from being offered to the user. By placing a hyphen (–) immediately before (*no spaces allowed between the hyphen and the word to be excluded*) the term to be eliminated from the search, Casemaker will display only those cases which have desired search terms.

For example, **property –commercial** would most likely yield strictly private property cases. Users are able to insert multiple combinations. Entering the words **gross sexual imposition –rape** would eliminate all rape cases. **Drown –swimming –pool** would yield cases in which the word **drown** would appear, but **swimming** and **pool** would not.

This useful feature and other search tools allow Casemaker users the flexibility to quickly discover the cases that accurately put them on point.

Another “Did You Know?” from Casemaker

Browse Feature

The ability to **Browse** through content is one of Casemaker’s more popular features. Users have the ability to view a list of hyperlinks to statutes, codes, rules, and other materials. By being able to view the titles users can determine which item would be of most interest to them. This feature allows attorneys the freedom to search for a desired document without knowing the citation number or even the official document name. And it is completely free to Casemaker members.

Why is this remarkable? **Did you know** that other websites actually *charge their customers* for this service? The Cincinnati Bar Association Report recently did a comparison of a few of the legal research providers. They reported that as of January 2007, one of our competitors began charging \$4.00 per hit in their “Documents in Sequence” feature (A.K.A. **Browse**).

Casemaker wants its members to be able to **Browse** its materials free of charge.

Another “Did You Know?” from Casemaker

Currency of materials

Casemaker is diligent about updating legal research materials in accordance with requirements of individual state bar associations. **Did you know** that a link to the state or federal **Currency Page** is located on each individual library’s main page?

By clicking on the link, users are directed to information that clearly delineates the currency of all material available in that library. Not all of Casemaker’s states’ case law begin in the same year. The level of document history and currency has been determined by individual state bar associations. If you have any questions regarding the release date or currency of any materials, please check the **Currency Page**.

Casemaker wants you to know that you have the most current materials available.

Another “Did You Know?” from Casemaker

Proximity Search

The ability to search for words that are within a defined “distance” to another word can provide valuable assistance. **Did you know** that by using Casemaker’s **Proximity Function**, users can choose how closely multiple search terms appear within a document?

By going to the drop-down menu at the bottom of the Search page, the user can readily select how close in **Proximity** they would like the search terms to be. This feature allows users to rapidly narrow their searches thereby reducing search times.

Another “Did You Know?” from Casemaker

Multiple Function Searches

Most Casemaker users regularly use the **AND** function to narrow searches. This function is activated by simply leaving a space between the two or more search terms. But **did you know** that virtually all of Casemaker’s Search Functions can also be used in conjunction with each other?

Casemaker search parameters for the Full Document Search Query box include: **AND, OR, NOT, PHRASE, THESAURUS,** and **SUFFIX EXPANSION** searches. Here are a few examples to show how Casemaker’s Search Functions work.

AND—leaving a space between the search terms will require **ALL** of the words to appear in the document.
Example: knife gun—»will yield documents containing both **knife** and **gun**. Additional terms may be added to further narrow search results.

OR—put the search terms in parentheses with only a comma between them (*no space*) and **EITHER** search term will appear in the document.

Example: (knife,gun)—»(*parentheses required*) identifies documents which contain either **knife** or **gun**.

NOT (Exclusion Search) —inserting a hyphen (–) immediately in front of the word will ensure that the search term **DOES NOT** appear in the document. Make sure there is a *space* between all of the search terms.

Example: knife -gun—»will find documents that contain the word **knife**, but not the word **gun**.

PHRASE—putting the exact phrase in quotation marks yields documents which contain the phrase.

Example: “next of kin”—»will locate documents with the phrase **next of kin**.

THESAURUS—by placing a tilde (~) just in front of a word (*no space*), documents that have the word, as well as synonyms will be found.

Example: ~liquor—»will produce documents that have the words, **liquor, spirits, whiskey, drink, intoxicant,** etc.

SUFFIX EXPANSION—placing an asterisk just behind the word (*no space*), will produce documents with the word appearing in any amended form (i.e. plurals, past and progressive verb tenses, nouns, etc.).

Example: stalk* —»displays documents with the words **stalk, stalks, stalked, stalker, stalking**.

And virtually all of the above functions will work together in the same search. With just a little experimentation, users can incorporate **Multiple Function** searches into their everyday searches.