

That's Not Legal: Business Information Sources

by **Mark Mackler**

It's always nice to leave the Annual Meeting with memories of a specific program which could be characterized as "outstanding." This year's outstanding program, at least for me, was this one. As a 12-year veteran of the private law firm library trenches, I have had to locate, develop, and refine all sorts of business information for every conceivable purpose. Quite often, I am given a ridiculously short time to do so.

So, I think it's noteworthy that over the course of **Kathy Shimpock's** (Juris Research, Tempe, Arizona) presentation, I found myself realizing how I had forgotten about certain neat resources such as *PAIS International*, or Michael Lavin's book *Business Information: How to Find It*.

Even more valuable was how I learned things about business information which I didn't even know, such as how Investext reports are embargoed. This certainly was a "content-rich" program!

Shimpock began, as any good speaker does, with an overview of what she was planning to cover. She then guided us through topics such as how to evaluate non-legal materials, and how to develop the search strategy itself. (One thing she did not say, but which has proven to be very important to me, is the concept that you have the right to know why the information is needed and how the requester is going to utilize it.)

After discussing how to develop the search strategy, Shimpock shared with us practical tips for conducting the research itself, and then discussed the wide variety of resources available in book and electronic formats. She did this in an extraordinarily well-balanced manner. The culmination of her presentation was something which she called "12 Steps for Compilation."

Her 90-minute presentation, delivered solo, was smooth and well-organized, with touches of humor thrown in at appropriate times. Her visuals were done well, and the time went by quickly.

However, I did have some problems with the session. Leslie Corey Leach's introduction was annoyingly long. It was nice to learn so much about the speaker's qualifications, but that wasn't what I had come to hear.

My second problem, and this was the important one, concerned the handout that was available to us at the door. The reverse of the handout, which was titled "Source Notes," featured a full page advertisement for Shimpock's book, *Business Research Handbook*, published by Aspen. Now, just to be clear about this, I have had this particular treatise since it was first published two years ago. I like it, and I utilize it much like I utilize Leah Chanin's treatise. However, I felt that it was improper for the book to be plugged on the back of an Educational Program handout.

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