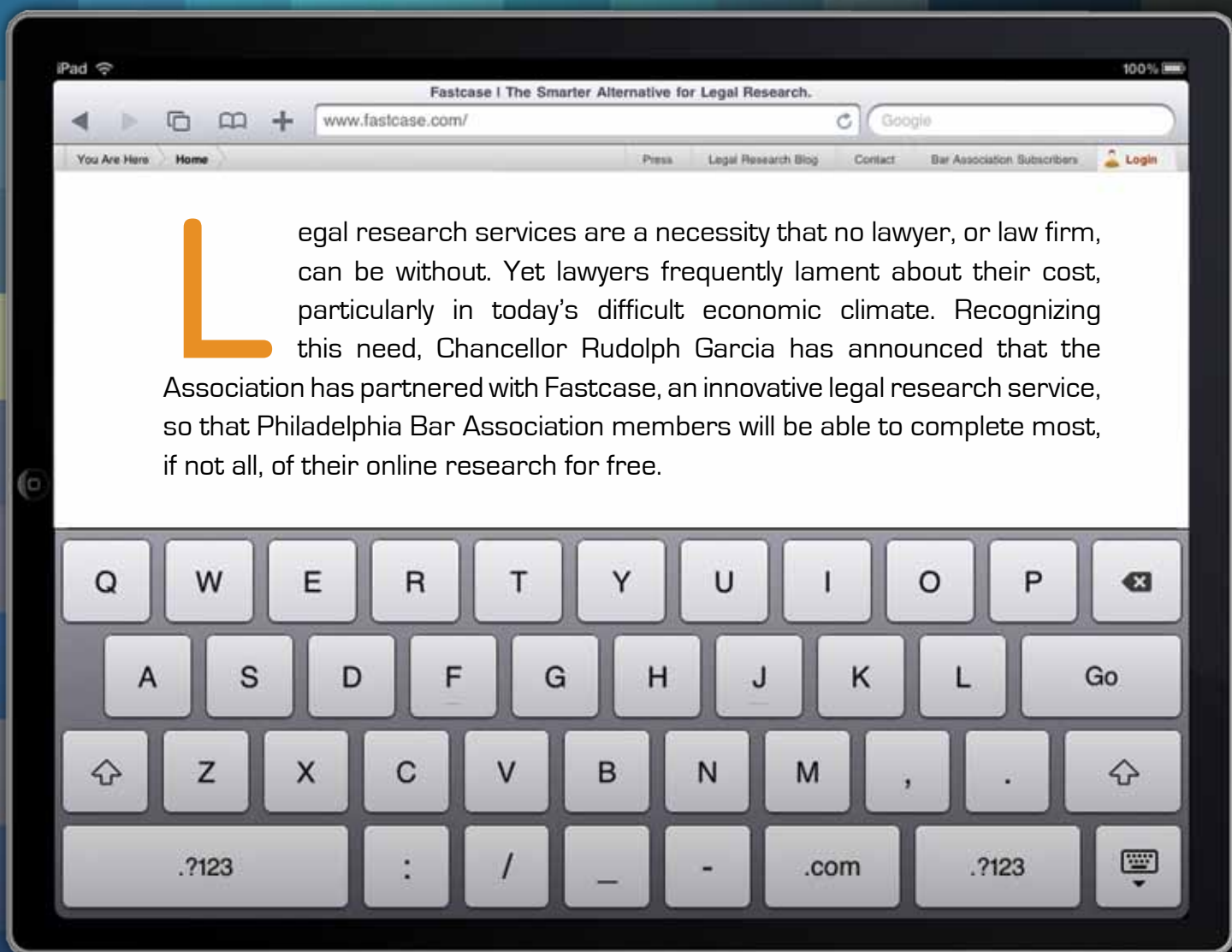


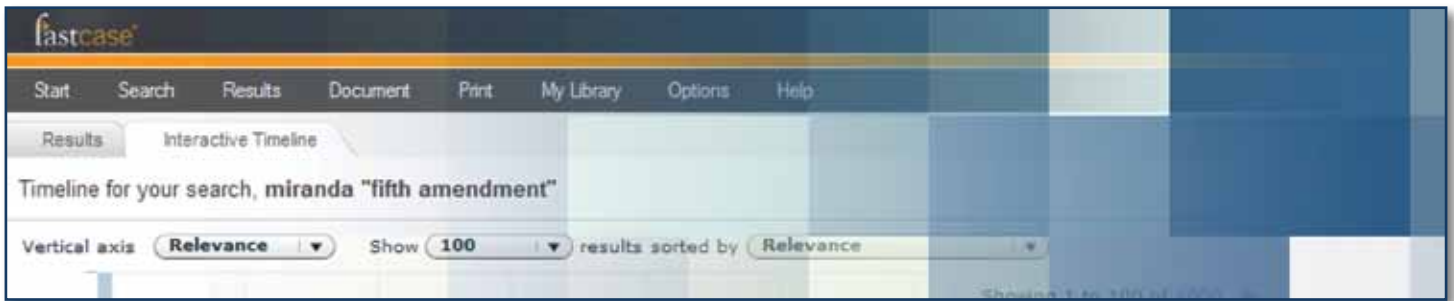
# fastcase<sup>®</sup>



# Research Made Easy

By Daniel J. Siegel





Through this service, the Bar Association will provide online access to Pennsylvania state and federal cases, statutes and rules at no cost to law firms that enroll all of their Philadelphia lawyers in the Association. In addition, Association members will be able to utilize Fastcase’s full nationwide database at a very substantial discount. “Thanks to the Internet, Fastcase has been able to build its database much less expensively than its more traditional competition,” says Garcia. “For that reason, and because we have so many members, we were able to negotiate a price per member that the Association can fully absorb.”

Launched in March, this innovative program is a product of the Membership Task Force created by Garcia and chaired by Matthew Perks and Jacqueline G. Segal. The Task Force recognized that although the Philadelphia Bar Association is doing much better than most other bar associations in retaining members, it cannot take members for granted. The Association knows that it needs to earn their loyalty, and attract new members, by enhancing the value of membership in our association.

Participation in Fastcase will be automatic for those firms whose entire complement of Philadelphia lawyers are members of the Bar. Firms without complete Bar participation will need to sign up the rest of their lawyers. The anticipated increase in membership will help to pay for this new service. “We estimate that if the largest 25 firms in town use Fastcase for as little as 30 percent of the research that they can’t charge to clients, they will save an average of \$35,000 per year, net of the additional dues paid for their lawyers who aren’t yet members,” says Garcia. “Of course, they could also reduce the amounts charged to clients who do pay for online legal research by many times that amount. In addition, sole practitioners and small firms who only need access to Pennsylvania law could cut their online research costs to zero.”

From a user’s perspective, Fastcase is easy to use, and its strength is its ability to find caselaw quickly and accurately. When you log on, you can perform a “Quick Caselaw Search” by entering in your search terms the same way you would in Google. Of course, you can also locate a case merely by entering its citation. Fastcase’s user home page also

remembers your last 10 searches so you can easily resume your most recent searches. There are also helpful resources, including a user guide, tutorials, live chat and e-mail support.

If you need more than a simple search, with one mouse click you can move to the “advanced caselaw search” screen, which lets you perform a keyword (or Boolean) search or a natural language search, just as you would with other online research services. The screen displays examples of some of the most common search phrases (particularly helpful with keyword searches). Thus, for users of other online research services, you will be performing your searches the same way you already do. Fastcase augments its results with tools such as best-case first sorting, integrated citation analysis, and a

visual mapping tool that makes the most important cases jump off the page.

Fastcase lets you search broadly – returning as many as 10,000 cases in response to a search – and then sort the results by relevance, date or authoritative value, to bring the cases you want to the top of your list. Or, you can narrow your searches by date and other criteria. When you find what you need, you can print the list of results or print or save the documents.

Fastcase is also the only legal research service that identifies the most authoritative cases in its results, every time, telling you how often each case in your results list has been cited. In essence, it is like Shepardizing or KeyCiting each case in your search results automatically. Fastcase also gives you the option to view your search

results on an interactive timeline. When you point to a case with your mouse, a synopsis appears. If you click on the case, the full opinion appears, along with links to every case that has cited the opinion. Fastcase also includes a feature called forecite, which uses an intuitive process to identify relevant decisions that did not use your search terms. Those cases are identified in a separate field.

The map’s horizontal axis is time and its vertical axis is relevance. The more a case is cited by other cases, the larger it appears. This makes it easy to identify the most important cases at a glance. The seminal case is on the left and the most recent case is on the right. The most relevant case is the highest and the most frequently cited case is the largest.

From a user’s perspective, Fastcase is easy to use, and its strength is its ability to find caselaw quickly and accurately.

## Access Granted

Members of the Philadelphia Bar Association who use Fastcase will have free access to the following databases:

- Cases of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court from 1 A. 1 (1885) to the present;
- Cases of the Pennsylvania Superior Court in the Atlantic Reporters from 1931 to the present;
- Cases of the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court in the Atlantic Reporters from 1970 to the present;
- Cases from the U.S. Supreme Court from 1 U.S. 1 (1754) to the present;
- Cases from the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit from 1 F.2nd 1 (1924) to the present;
- Cases of the U.S. Federal District Courts for the Eastern, Middle and Western Districts of Pennsylvania from 1. F. Supp. 1 to the present;
- Pennsylvania Statutes;
- Pennsylvania Code;
- Pennsylvania Rules (Rules of Civil Procedure; Orphans' Court Rules; Rules of Criminal Procedures; Rules of Juvenile Court Procedure; Rules of Evidence; Rules of Appellate Procedure; Internal Operating Procedures of the Supreme Court; Internal Operating Procedures of the Superior Court; Internal Operating Procedures of the Commonwealth Court; Standards of Conduct for Magistrate Judges; Rules and Standards with Respect to Offices of Magisterial District Judges; Rules of Judicial Administration; Rules of Professional Conduct; Code of Civility; Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement; Disciplinary Board Rules; Code of Judicial Conduct; Court of Judicial Discipline Rules of Procedure; Rules Governing Appeals from the Court of Judicial Discipline; Bar Admission Rules; Rules for Continuing Legal Education; Continuing Legal Education Board Regulations);
- The Pennsylvania Constitution;
- The United States Code;
- The Code of Federal Regulations;
- The Court Rules for All Federal Circuit Courts;
- The Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure;
- The Rules of the United States Tax Court;
- The Code of Federal Regulations;
- The Federal Rules of Evidence;
- The Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure;
- The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure;
- The Rules of the United States Supreme Court;
- The Federal Register; and,
- The United States Constitution.

This visual depiction of your search results saves both time and money by allowing you to quickly separate the wheat from the chaff. It may also draw your attention to important cases that might otherwise have been missed. Trends are also much easier to recognize when the cases are viewed on the interactive map.

If you need statutes or rules, Fastcase links directly to the official version of the statutes. If you need to find a regulation, Fastcase will send you directly to the Pa. Code to find what you need. Fastcase also offers iPhone and iPad apps; the company claims that these apps provide the largest free law library for these devices. Once a user registers through the Bar Association, he or she will also be able to register for and download the Fastcase app.

To make sure members get the most benefits possible from Fastcase, the Bar Association will present free monthly webinars

to acclimate members to the service. Philadelphia Bar Association members will also receive free, unlimited access to Fastcase training and research support. In addition, resources – from online webinar training to on-demand video tutorials and user guides – are always available as soon as you log on. Members may also contact Fastcase directly, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., at (866) 773-2782 or e-mail support@fastcase.com for more information.

Fastcase was started in 1999 to make legal research easier, smarter, and faster. Twenty state bar associations and dozens of specialty and local bar associations offer free access to Fastcase – making legal research free for more than 500,000 lawyers in the United States. ■

*Daniel J. Siegel (dan@danieljsiegel.com), a member of the Editorial Board of The Philadelphia Lawyer, is a local attorney who operates the Law Offices of Daniel J. Siegel, LLC and is the president of Integrated Technology Services, LLC.*

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