

# The Federal Lawyer In Cyberia

MICHAEL J. TONSING

## Cyberian Sites That Are Both Hot and Cool

This is one of those columns in which I guarantee to mention a program that will help you practice your craft more effectively. If not, I'll eat the column and add Tabasco® sauce. Tabasco you say? That's because these Web sites are so cool.

If you get a relatively large number of e-mail attachments, you may have a problem as to how to store them quickly and efficiently as you move through your day's download dyspepsia. A couple of programs might help this task. Both are add-ons for Microsoft Outlook. One is called Attachment Processor for Outlook. (Not a clever name, but quite descriptive. Go to [www.mapilab.com](http://www.mapilab.com).) The cost is \$24. The other program is EZDetach, which can be found at [www.techhit.com](http://www.techhit.com). The cost is just under \$40. Both products will extract attachments from your incoming messages and house them in a designated folder on your system. As a bonus, both programs can be set up to leave a hyperlink to the attachment in the original message.

Are you looking for a Web site that specializes in converting file formats? One is heaven sent! Take a file to [www.zamzar.com](http://www.zamzar.com) and you can convert it there without downloading a

thing. What a concept!

If you do what you should with your little box filled with programs, you should check now and then for upgrades. Go to [www.versiontracker.com](http://www.versiontracker.com), and it will guide you through the process of checking whether 4.2 of your favorite software is now 4.21.

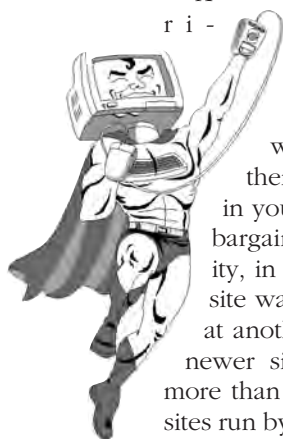
A particularly nifty site for those Cyberians who need to fly and want to do so on a budget is [www.kayak.com](http://www.kayak.com). Let's say you usually use a site like [www.travelocity.com](http://www.travelocity.com) and feel reasonably content with the array of choices you are offered there, but a little nagging voice is whispering in your ear that you still may have overlooked a bargain flight because no one—not even Travelocity, in this case—carries every option. The kayak site was founded by a guy who was a key player at another travel bargain hunter's site, Orbitz. His newer site, begun in 2005, purportedly searches more than 400 travel sites simultaneously—including sites run by individual airlines. Kayak will report back, usually with a long list of options. One cool feature is that, as you scroll through what may be a mind-numbing number of choices, you can flag those that you want to retain for your short-list, second-round consideration. Once you've selected the best option,

Kayak allows you to simply move via a hyperlink to the source and then purchase the ticket. If you're wondering whether you got the best deal from your friendly airline, take your bargain fare to [www.yapta.com](http://www.yapta.com), list it there, and this site will track it during the period before your departure. If fares go down, they'll let you know, and recommend ways you can qualify for a reduction or, perhaps, vouchers from the airline. The new site was trumpeted in the *Wall Street Journal* last May. But you may have missed the article, which was filled with lavish praise:

Have you ever bought an airline ticket only to see the price fall and your anger rise? Now there is something you can do about it. Few customers realize it, but many airlines will give refunds if they cut the price after you have bought a ticket. Alaska, JetBlue, Southwest, United and US Airways all offer vouchers for the full price difference—if the price drops \$200, you can get a \$200 coupon towards a future trip. Others offer vouchers, or cash, after deducting change fees (which can run up to \$100). In industry jargon, it is called a "rollover," and in most cases it only works if you bought the ticket directly from the airline. ... The rollover policies have been in place for decades, but, until recently, it has been tough for consumers to figure out when their flight's price has changed. The catch is you have to call while the lower price is in effect to get your rollover.

That is where [www.yapta.com](http://www.yapta.com) enters the picture. As the *Journal* story indicates, the site "tracks fares on specific flights you select before or after you buy a ticket. That is an improvement over Web sites that just track markets, but don't allow you to specify which flights you really want. You can use Yapta before you buy to alert you by e-mail to pricing changes on a particular trip, or let you know if the price drops after you've bought a ticket and you're eligible for a refund."

If you're looking for a do-it-yourself kit—a place to go for software tips and wondrous new applications—you might want to take a look at a blog run by the folks at *PC Magazine*. Go to [www.appscout.com](http://www.appscout.com) and you will never be far from the cutting edge. The same magazine also runs a site, [www.goodcleantech.com](http://www.goodcleantech.com), that makes it easier to be "green," even if you're not Kermit the frog. The site's stated purpose is to allow environmentally conscious computer users to



adopt better practices. As the site says, “GoodClean-Tech aims to provide you with news, tips, advice, and ideas about how to do more with less. ... With the help of the editors and analysts at *PC Magazine*, we’ll praise those companies that have committed to better ecotechnologies and hold to the fire the polluters and resource hogs. And we’ll keep you informed about the latest environmentally friendly developments in the worlds of computers, automobiles, fuel, power, and more.”

Now for something that may not enhance your practice at all, but is great fun and a wonderful learning experience. A site called Footnote ([www.footnote.com](http://www.footnote.com)) has struck a deal with the National Archives to digitize and upload every document it houses. The collection includes the following national treasures:

- correspondence, journals, committee reports, and records of the Continental Congress (1774–1789);
- the journals of proceedings, early drafts, and other papers relating to the formation of our Constitution;
- the complete Matthew B. Brady photo collection (Brady led a team of photographers who captured thousands of the most memorable images of the Civil War);
- the 1870s compensation claims of Southerners made to the U.S. government for items used by the Union Army (ranging from corn and horses to trees and church buildings);
- an index to pension applications for service in the U.S. Army between 1861 and 1917, grouped according to the units in which the veterans served; and
- the investigative files of the Bureau of Investigation (the precursor to the FBI) from 1908 to 1922.

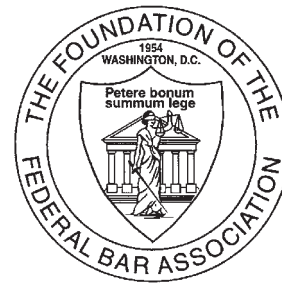
Interestingly, you can upload fresh Footnote content and make your own contribution to this incredible storehouse of information.

**Conclusion**

So far, I am not laying in a supply of Tabasco. But you never know. See you next month in Cyberia. **TFL**

---

*Michael J. Tonsing practices law in San Francisco. He is a member of the FBA editorial board and has served on the Executive Committee of the Law Practice Management and Technology Section of the State Bar of California. He also mentors less-experienced litigators by serving as a “second chair” to their trials. See [www.Your-Second-Chair.com](http://www.Your-Second-Chair.com). He can be reached at [mtonsing@lawyer.com](mailto:mtonsing@lawyer.com).*



## Memorials and Remembrances *Gift Program*

*With a tax-deductible gift to the Foundation of the Federal Bar Association, members of the legal profession, the public, business organizations, charitable trusts, or other foundations may create a memorial to a deceased person. Gifts may also be made in honor of someone, an anniversary, birthday, or any other occasion. Your gift helps fund educational and charitable programs that promote public understanding of the law and enhance the cause of justice.*

---

### Foundation of the Federal Bar Association *Memorial/Remembrance Gift Program*

PLEASE DETACH AND MAIL THE COMPLETED FORM TO:  
 Foundation of the Federal Bar Association  
 2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 400, Arlington, VA 22202

\_\_\_\_\_

*In Memory of*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date of Death*

\_\_\_\_\_

*In Honor of*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Occasion*

***Please send acknowledgment to:***

\_\_\_\_\_

*Name*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Address*

\_\_\_\_\_

*City, State, Zip*

***Donation made by:***

\_\_\_\_\_

*Name*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Address*

\_\_\_\_\_

*City, State, Zip*