

Appendix J - Cost Saving Tips

Send your suggestions to:
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1. Consider the distance to your local public law library before leasing office space.
2. In an age of escalating prices for legal publications, wise initial selection is imperative. Be sure to investigate all available options for appropriate depth of coverage, price, and supplementation cost, among other factors. Don't buy less than you require or more than you need, and don't be caught in the supplementation trap.
3. When entering a subscription to a print legal product, be sure to determine what add-ons may be included in the subscription (e.g. advance annotation service, session laws, law finder, tax volumes, desk book, etc.) or if "related" volumes may be shipped.
4. Be sure you know how often a legal publication is supplemented before making a purchase. Supplementation is a profit-driven enterprise. The sooner you realize that, the sooner you will be able to control your legal information costs.
5. Avoid standing orders to secondary publications unless you intend to consult them frequently or they are in your area of specialization. They should be viewed as starting points for research, not tools for ascertaining the current state of the law. Use your primary law materials and citators to accomplish this.
6. Place supplementation to secondary publications on a notification before shipment basis. If necessary, order latest supplement on a "Rush" basis.
7. If a standing order is dropped, determine in advance how you will update the publication (use library copy, Shepard's, KeyCite, annotated code, case digest, legal newspaper, CD, online service, or combination of these). Remember that you will still be using many of these tools to update the treatise which is on standing order.
8. Avoid telemarketers. If one gets through to you, do not buy anything from them unless you want to end up on the publisher's list of hot prospects. Request a flyer or a link to a web site if you are at all interested. Finally, ask to be taken off of the publisher's telemarketing list.
9. Consider alternatives to a complete set (abridged editions, selected volumes, statutory subject compilations, etc.).
10. Share library and expenses with other firms in your building, or use your public or membership law library.
11. Exercise strict controls over the purchase of duplicate copies. Force lawyers who desire personal copies of items already in the library to purchase them at their own expense.
12. Check amazon.com for discounted law books (e.g. ABA titles).
13. Subscribe to "lawlib" listserv to obtain books for the cost of postage.
14. Buy used books whenever feasible, but be sure to determine fill-up cost and compare with new purchase and accompanying no-charge supplementation. Establish standing orders for supplementation with publisher when appropriate. Be aware, however, that the cost updating a used set can easily exceed your initial expenditure, e.g. National Reporter System volumes from West.
15. Law firms without librarians should assign one staff member responsibility for the library.
16. Evaluate shipments before accessioning or stamping. Be prepared to return if unsolicited and/or unnecessary. If unsolicited, request return label or claim at no cost under terms of U.S. Postal law (39 U.S.C. §3009).
17. Place library subscriptions on spreadsheet and determine appropriate frequency of supplementation for each title. Make sure your standing orders with publishers reflect these determinations.
18. Conduct annual inventory of collection and the expense incurred. Re-evaluate subscriptions based on usage patterns and cost.
19. Set Internet browser to FindLaw or other legal site.
20. Determine which public and commercial Web sites are of greatest value to a practitioner in your jurisdiction and practice areas and bookmark these.
21. Resist publisher demands to purchase more user licenses to CD or online products than absolutely necessary.
22. Determine ways to control your online research expense through fixed online pricing (e.g. WestlawNext PRO, Lexis Advantage, VersusLaw, Loislaw.com, Fastcase, etc.).
23. Consider establishing a VersusLaw account for \$9.95 per month (\$34.95 per month for the Professional Plan). At the very least, consider it as a back-up to a Lexis or Westlaw subscription for primary law outside of your own jurisdiction.