

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Formatting Legal Documents With Word 2007 Book Helps Legal Staff Take Control of Complex Docs

The author, a highly regarded software trainer with 23 years' experience as a legal word processor, says the book, published in May of 2009, provides a look "under the hood" of the program so that legal staff can take control of their pleadings and other complex documents.

LOS ANGELES, January 20, 2011—If you've ever struggled with unruly section breaks, automatic paragraph numbering that won't increment sequentially, or text that doesn't align with pleading line numbers, you'll be pleased to learn that a book called Formatting Legal Documents With Microsoft Office Word 2007, by Jan Berinstein, Ph.D., is available for purchase on Amazon.com and on Lulu.com.

A highly regarded software trainer who has worked as a legal word processor for more than 24 years and has taught numerous computer classes for UCLA Extension since the mid-1990s, Berinstein says that the book has a very specific focus.

"It's not a complete Word 2007 reference," Berinstein acknowledges. "There are plenty of those books already, but most of them don't address the needs of the legal community. As both a legal word processor and a trainer, I know the types of issues that lawyers and their staff face when trying to get their documents out the door. How do they 'suppress' the page number on the caption page of a pleading? Why won't the pages re-number properly? How can they keep body text from being pulled into the Table of Contents along with headings? Why does the format of their numbered paragraphs change suddenly?"

Berinstein, the founder of CompuSavvy Computer Training & Consulting and the developer of UCLA Extension's flagship "Computers & the Legal Environment" class, which she taught for about ten years, notes that the book was "the natural outgrowth of, and is based largely on, the copious handouts I give my training clients." Clients—mainly law firms and government agencies throughout California—routinely praise her handouts as "awesome" and "my word processing 'Bible,'" she says.

The book starts by analyzing Word's "logic." "I take a look 'under the hood,' so to speak," Berinstein explains, "so that people have a better understanding of how the program works. For people migrating from WordPerfect, I also compare Word's logic with WordPerfect's. This 'nuts and bolts' stuff is the key to getting the program to behave the way you want it to—and successfully troubleshooting problems—rather than being at its mercy."

From there, Berinstein gives an overview of what's new and different in Word 2007, offers advice on making the program work more like previous versions, and provides tips for working more efficiently—from using keyboard shortcuts for a wide range of tasks to (among other things) combining differently justified text on one line, changing case, quickly increasing or decreasing font size, adjusting line spacing, inserting the file name and path, working with Paste Special, modifying a style, setting indents, and understanding "Smart" features like Smart Cut-and-Paste. She also points out some potential "gotchas"—including the notorious problem of mutating section breaks—and shows how to work around them.

(more)

The next section of the book, “Demystifying Everyday Features,” touches on functions such as changing margins and tabs, using “Quick Parts” (formerly called “AutoText”), inserting headers and footers, using fill-in fields, creating a simple macro, and working with styles.

There is a separate section that deals with bullets and numbering (for example, multilevel lists as well as SEQ fields that can be used in discovery headings), followed by a longer section on formatting legal documents. Included in the formatting section are instructions for familiar law-office tasks, among them aligning text with pleading line numbers, working with case captions, creating a California Rules of Court Rule 2.110 compliant footer, setting up a style and keyboard shortcut for indenting quotes, cross-referencing exhibit letters or paragraph numbers, creating and generating a Table of Contents and a Table of Authorities, modifying TOC and/or TOA styles, tracking changes, and comparing documents (redlining).

Toward the end of the book, Berinstein briefly covers file conversion, metadata removal, and the location of key Word 2007 files. Finally, she lists selected Internet resources for further research.

The book has gotten several five-star reviews on Amazon as well as favorable comments on a number of legal-related web sites, and is popular with Berinstein’s clients.

“I think the book is an indispensable reference for anyone in a law office, government agency, or corporate legal department who needs to create and format legal documents,” says Berinstein, who currently is working on a similar book for Word 2010. “Although obviously it would be ideal if I could answer everyone’s Word questions in person, I’m not always available to provide guidance on site or over the phone. Now, at least, if you can’t reach me, you’ve got the next-best thing—my book—to help you get your work done.”

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Contact: Jan Berinstein, Ph.D.
CompuSavvy
Computer Training & Consulting
www.compusavvy.com
compusavvy@earthlink.net
Phone/Fax: (818) 776-1228

For Word and WordPerfect tips, visit CompuSavvy’s blog at
<http://compusavvy.wordpress.com>

NOTE: The book can be found on Amazon at <http://tinyurl.com/W2007Legal2> and on Lulu at <http://tinyurl.com/W2007Law>. (There is a description and a preview, including the full Table of Contents, on the Lulu page.)

Ms. Berinstein’s second book, Formatting Legal Documents With Microsoft Word 2010, is available on Amazon at <http://tinyurl.com/W2010Legal2> and on Lulu at <http://tinyurl.com/W2010Law>.