

**Why Best Authority Works for Duane Morris**  
**By Eleanor Carbaugh, Application Support Specialist, Duane Morris LLP**

Two years ago, Duane Morris LLP was in the market for a new software package for generating a Table of Authorities (TOA), which is a list of citations in a legal brief. Until then, our attorneys and staff had been using a product called FullAuthority. Although FullAuthority performed some functions competently, we found it overall to be frustrating and limited for a variety of reasons. The software required a lot of manipulation and was not user-friendly.

With FullAuthority, the workflow required a great deal of manual checking and brute-force effort. Our users had to generate the TOA, and then copy the text into the brief. The TOA then needed to be proofed and edited, and checked against the citations in the document, as well as reformatted. This entire process had to be repeated with each set of revisions.

FullAuthority was subsequently acquired by LexisNexis®, which eventually phased out the product and terminated support for it. At that point, we knew we had to look for a different solution. That's when we began to look at Levit & James' Best Authority product.

Best Authority was initially introduced in June 2006 and had already signed on a number of large and mid-sized law firms. Some of the things we liked about Best Authority were that it integrated smoothly with Microsoft Word, allowed more options for the end-user, and had built-in tools for proofing and editing. It also had fast and efficient technical support.

We decided to purchase Best Authority in October 2006. The installation took some fine tuning. Our network administrator worked with Levit & James' support staff to develop a streamlined installation script. We tested Best Authority for several months in our environment to see how other applications would respond (Word, Outlook, and Interwoven's Document Management System). We also set up firm-wide schemes,

which are used by Best Authority to format the TOA, as well as to test and set up user preferences.

Levit & James' support team was available to us at each part of the development and deployment of the installation. We accomplished the training by setting up an online webinar that our end-users could review. With that training, our users were able to get up and running with Best Authority – it is very intuitive and user-friendly.

Users like that Best Authority creates TOAs in Word within the original document, instead of in a separate document as FullAuthority had done. The Word integration that Best Authority provides was a big change and a huge time-saver for us.

According to Megan Sommar, a Training and Research Specialist in our Secretarial Services department, “One of the biggest advantages of using Best Authority over FullAuthority is that we no longer have to start the TOA from scratch every time the document is sent back to us with edits. Being in the Word Processing Department, we are often asked to create a TOA on a document that is not yet finished. The attorney then continues to work on the document and make numerous changes. With FullAuthority, when the document was returned to us, we would have to start the whole TOA process over. Best Authority allows us to simply rescan the document, and all of the changes we previously made are retained. Therefore, we can complete the TOA quickly and meet the attorney's deadline.”

Sommar notes that the ability to create customized schemes, based on attorney requirements, has saved them an immense amount of time. A number of legal assistants have created schemes formatted to their attorney's individual preferences. Now, every time they need to run a TOA for that attorney, they simply pick the proper scheme, and Best Authority does the rest.

Best Authority has helped Duane Morris with generating a TOA for the firm's Reorganization Department book each spring. Sommar explains that the book is 300

pages long. Best Authority scans the book and routinely finds well more than 1,500 citations. Sommar recalls, “Until now, we have spent many hours making final revisions to the book’s TOA as a deadline loomed. This year, we ran an initial Best Authority scan on the book and could immediately begin editing the TOA. We also created a customized scheme that breaks the citations into very specific groupings. Because of this prep work done in Best Authority, the last minute revisions for this year’s book were minimal.”

Best Authority is easy to use from an end-user’s standpoint. Firm schemes can be developed to streamline production and standardize formatting. The Levit & James’ software support professionals are highly responsive and they actively pursue answers to any problems that arise. Also, they offer a great deal of training material about and resources for Best Authority. Lastly, Best Authority is easy to maintain on a network, which is especially attractive for our IT department. Changes to user preferences and firm schemes are easily disbursed to end users. In summary, switching to Best Authority was a good move for our firm, and it continues to provide benefits to our staff and attorneys.

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