

Test Drive Casemaker 2.0

by Jodi McKenzie

Over the past year, the people at Casemaker have been diligently working on releasing a new version of the program. Casemaker 2.0 promises to have more user-friendly features, a stronger search engine and access to more libraries. It has been an ambitious undertaking but worth the effort for our members. The final product will be more competitive with other online legal research vendors but will still remain free of charge to State Bar of Georgia members.

You can take a sneak peek at Casemaker 2.0 by going to the Georgia Library of Casemaker and scrolling to the bottom of the page. Here you will find some tips on how to use the new system, as well as a link to give you access. While Casemaker 2.0 is still in the development process, this sneak peek allows our members to get a first hand look and make comments that will help shape the final development stage (see fig. 1).

Some of the biggest changes to be made in the new version are listed before you access the program (see fig. 2). This includes the necessary use of “and” between words when you are doing a multiple word search in which you want all the search terms to appear in the resulting documents. A reminder of these new search formats will appear on the search page of Casemaker 2.0 as well.

When you enter Casemaker 2.0, you will open a search screen that is automatically set on the Federal content page. You will choose the library you want to search in by clicking on the pull-down button indicated by the upside-down arrow (see fig. 3).

This will give you a list of all the searchable libraries. Casemaker 2.0 offers the flexibility of searching multiple state libraries at the same time. Simply click on the multi-state link to begin your search. To access the Georgia library, click on the Georgia link in the pull down list (see fig. 4).

Once you have selected the library you wish to search, you then select the book you want to search. Again, click on the pull down button on the Book field (see fig. 5). This will give you a list of the books available in that library.


Here we have selected the Georgia Library and are able to view the books available in that library including Caselaw, the Georgia Code and state and federal court rules. Let’s choose to search the Caselaw library.

If you are already familiar with Casemaker, you will notice that the new search page for the Georgia Caselaw library is very similar to the advanced search screen of Casemaker 1.0. You still have a full document search query field to find cases by key words and phrases near the top of the page. What is different is that you now have separate fields for finding cases by citation number or case name. The case name search now has its own field, which it did not have in Casemaker 1.0 (see fig. 6).

A search for *property liability* in the full document query field will give you a results page listing documents that contain the phrase *property liability* in them. You no longer have to put quotation marks around your phrase to make it an exact phrase search (see fig. 7).

If you want to find documents that have the words *property* and *liability* in them, but not necessarily the phrase *property liability*, you now have to put an *and* between the two words to get the correct results (see fig. 8).

The right hand side of the search screen will give you a reminder of the new search formats for Casemaker 2.0. Here, you will notice that you can do an “Or Search” by simply typing the word *or* between your search phrases. You can also do an exclusionary search by typing the word *not* in front of the word you wish to exclude (see fig. 8).

Casemaker is constantly working to improve its libraries in order to make Casemaker one of the most valuable member benefits the State Bar offers. Your input is important to the development of Casemaker. After you’ve had a chance to use Casemaker 2.0, please let us know what you think. Your input will help in the development of the final version of Casemaker 2.0. You can submit your input through the Feedback button on the bottom of the Casemaker 2.0 search page, or you can contact Jodi McKenzie, member benefits coordinator at jodi@gabar.org. We look forward to hearing from you. 



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