

OUTSOURCE NEWS FOR THE LEGAL OFFICE

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The End of Summer



Whew—what a summer:

This summer we've seen gasoline prices jumping 10-15 and 25 cents a whack, but only coming down a penny at a time. I personally have cut my driving in half, and dug my bicycle out of the garage (that I haven't ridden since the '80's). My bike has become my means of transportation

for short runs to the post office, milk runs to the grocery store and to the bank.



This summer has seen Denver break all sorts of records — the number of days of 90+ temps and the number of days without rain. Even though Colorado is considered an arid state, it has never been this dry. I am ready for fall, cold and snow — you can always put more clothes on to keep warm, but limited as to what you can do once you remove them to cool off.



Thanks to everyone that has asked about

my Mom's knee replacement. The surgery seems to have been a complete success, and this is the first time in over five years that she has been able to walk and without pain.



Yes, we did take our annual Memorial Day road trip on the motorcycle — I just haven't gotten around to getting the photos/videos posted to my website.



Since changing my business focus to strictly outsourced audio/video verbatim transcription, there are some days that I miss the office atmosphere — but not so much that I am ready to go to

back to the 9-5 business day. Working offsite away from the distractions, interruptions and office politics allows me to produce more transcripts in less time — working smarter but not harder and allowing my clients to see a huge money savings over recruiting, hiring and training, employee-related benefits, salaries and overtime. Outsourced transcription allows improved accuracy of completed transcripts and turnaround times are faster.



Upcoming Dates:

9/1/08—Labor Day

9/15/2008—Jury Duty

Legal transcripts vs. general transcription

Legal transcripts are different from general transcription. Accuracy is absolutely essential. An incorrect or missed word or improperly placed punctuation can change the entire meaning of what was actually said. Police

interviews, recorded phone calls, or depositions are not necessarily "spoken" as grammatically correct.

We have been trained our entire lives to not hear unnecessary words. As secretaries

we have been trained to correct improper grammar. Thus, it's a special skill to not only hear the exact words being spoken, but to also type them exactly as spoken — even if (continued ...)

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(...transcripts continued)
grammatically incorrect. In fact, it goes against the grain of everything we've ever been taught. That is why there are very few "great" transcriptionists because they simply can't "unlearn" what they have been taught.

Legal transcripts include false starts, ahs, ums, hmmmms, uh huhs, huh uhs — transpose the "uh" and "huh" and you've changed

the entire "yes" and "no" reply.

It is not uncommon for two or more people to be speaking at the same time. It is essential to separate the voices and get "everything" said put on paper.

A legal transcriptionist has to have the ability to recognize, differentiate and identify voices because seldom do they identify themselves before speaking. If a tran-

script misidentifies "who said what" the entire transcript becomes worthless.

Video transcripts include demonstrating or showing something — touching a part of their body or hand motion, gesture, etc.

Legal transcripts include if someone laughs, sobs, clears their throat, in addition to noting a long hesitation before answering.

It takes special skills and talents to be a legal transcriptionist.



Accuracy, confidentiality, privacy and security

Confidentiality and privacy are very important to me. A legal transcriptionist is responsible for being the "gate keeper" so to speak of confidential, private and privileged information.

We've all heard the saying "loose lips sink ships" — any transcriptionist's slip of the tongue could be more than disastrous for both sides.

Clients put a lot of trust in me. Do an Internet Google or Yahoo search of transcription companies and you will find that the majority hire subcontractors— confidential transcripts are being farmed out, usually without your knowledge and/or permission to some unknown person putting privacy, security and confidential material at risk. The

integrity of the transcription process is of paramount importance. The chain of custody needs to be preserved.

I do not use subcontractors or farm out any work. Rest assured that your audio/video files stay in my possession and no one else has access to seeing or hearing either the spoken or written words.

**I protect
privacy and
confidentiality
as though it
were my own.**

Reading and comprehension

I am proud of the fact that when I'm given audio/video files that my clients have one person to deal with—ME.

As I mentioned in the above story, I don't subcontract the work out, and there are at least four statements on my website stating that I don't use subcontractors.

However, I am barraged daily with a minimum of

three to four emails wanting me to hire them as subcontractors.

This shows me that people don't read or don't comprehend.

I blow the emails away and don't even review the skills or qualifications. If someone can't follow a simple instruction to not contact me for employment, how or

why would I ever trust them to follow my instructions if I were to give them work?

Because I do all the work myself I am limited as to how much work I can accept—however, the work I do accept is done professionally, confidentially and accurately.

We Do Three Types of Jobs Here...
GOOD, FAST AND CHEAP
You May Choose Any Two!

If It Is Good and Cheap
It Will Not Be Fast.

If It Is Good and Fast
It Will Not Be Cheap.

If It Is Fast and Cheap
It Will Not Be Good.



But the tape is only 30 minutes

I type quite a bit faster than the normal typist. In fact, one of the first jobs I ever had was with a company where the President chose three of us “lucky ones” out of a secretarial pool and plopped herself down in a chair in front of us and talked — and we had to type what she said.

She talked and we typed from anywhere from no less than three hours to five or six hours at a time. She would finish with one of us

and then move to the next. This was a day-in/day-out process and didn’t just stop at Friday night, but included several Saturdays.

Then we’d give our type-written pages to the remaining secretaries and they would retype and finalize. They learned not complain about our made-up typed shorthand because, if they did, they would find how easy it was for us to really give them garbaged words to retype.

She had no speed control, no reverse and no stop or pause.

The average person speaks over 160 wpm. I honestly believe Mrs. “A” spoke closer to 200 wpm.

Even though I still type well over 100 wpm, I get callers that don’t understand that a 30-minute audio takes a minimum of 4:1, although sometimes I can do it in 3:1. Why?—The clarity of the recording; the surroundings—background noise, i.e., traffic, paper shuffling, coughing, sneezing, etc. When there is more than a one-on-one interview, speakers are normally not identified, however, they must be identified in a transcript. Microphones are placed haphazardly where one speaker is quite loud and others can barely be heard.

My transcripts are 98.5% accurate—something I take pride in. If I use [inaudible], it’s because it absolutely can’t be deciphered.

The IRS crackdown

An increase in the number of people filing Independent Contractor (IC) status has led the IRS to “suspect that companies are misclassifying workers in greater numbers than ever before.”

The IRS is upping its vigilance on companies that hire ICs who perform the work from the client office.

“The person/company hir-

ing the IC has the right to control or direct only the RESULT of the work, but not the method of accomplishing it.”

One of the biggest red flags for the IRS is the IC working at a client’s office, sitting at a client’s desk/chair, using the client’s computer, printer, photocopier, fax, telephone, and any other equipment.

The majority of ICs working from client offices don’t just come and go throughout the day, but have set hours pretty much in place — another factor the IRS claims qualifies them as an employee and not IC.

The fines and penalties are pretty steep if the IRS makes a decision that the IC is an employee.

I’ve written a White Paper on the IRS/ Independent Contractor crackdown. If you’d like a copy, please let me know.

Offshoring legal services

Legal process outsourcing (LPO) has me fuming mad and makes absolutely no sense at all.

Pressure on law firms to reduce costs has led some firms in the United States to outsource transcription to India. Currently, India is generating \$61 million in revenues and expected to reach \$605 million by 2010

and \$1 billion by 2015.

India claims that outsourcing reduces costs for US customers as the rates for Indian legal workers are about 10-20% of American counterparts.

Indian outsourcing touts the following economic advantages: significant wage differential, savings in perks,

overhead and working conditions and 24/7 operations due the time zone differences.

While I agree that there is a need to cut costs, the cuts can be accomplished without giving India \$61 million to \$1 billion of US dollars.

The US is on a verge of a recession, so don’t you think we should find ways to keep our money here?



What about identity theft, attorney/client privilege and confidentiality?

September 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

During the months of **Sep-tember** and **October** 2008, 30 minutes FREE will be credited to all transcripts.



WANTED: News About Your Firm

I am looking for news — whether it be office moves, expansions, new hires, a big case just won ...

We all deserve a pat on the back and like to see our name in print. Let me know what's happening with your firm, upcoming dates — anything you'd like to say and use my newsletter to spread the word.

If you've recently updated office equipment and looking to sell the old equipment, let me post it.

If you're looking to buy something, let me know and we'll see if it's something some firm has sitting and gathering dust.

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