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Lawyers develop rules app for commercial litigators

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Commercial litigators who need state codes and court rules on the go can reach for their smartphones.

A new Web app is available that allows lawyers to search the pertinent Illinois Code of Civil Procedure and Illinois Supreme Court rules on their smartphones and tablets as well as on their desktops.

The free Illinois Rules Finder app created by Andrew D. Campbell and Christopher S. Moore — both partners at Novack and Macey LLP — can be found at IllinoisRules.com.

Campbell and Moore, whose practices focus on commercial litigation, came up with the idea more than a year ago.

The two had “a joint ‘aha’ moment,” Moore said.

They wanted an easier access option to the rules instead of paging through books.

“It’s organized in a way that we can easily access again and again,” Moore said. “And, as an added bonus, we can take a 600-page book out of our trial bag.”

Campbell said, “The focus of

it is for commercial litigators. But any civil litigator will find it useful because it covers general topics like discovery, motions and pleading practice.”

A tab on the app — which does not include a comprehensive list of the Code of Civil Procedure provisions or Illinois Supreme Court rules — applies to responding to an initial pleading or answer. One category addresses deadlines, including Supreme Court Rule 181, relating to appearances, answers and motions.

That tab also lists 735 ILCS 5/2-1007, addressing extension of time and continuances.

“Oftentimes there is a code of civil procedure provision and a Supreme Court rule” involving the same topic, Moore said.

Robert E. Browne Jr. — of counsel at Troutman, Sanders LLP — opposed Campbell in a case several years ago. Last month, Browne was arguing a motion on a procedural issue in a commercial case at the Daley Center when he pulled out his smartphone for help.

“It’s very easy to go to the app and quickly find what you’re looking for,” Browne said. “I used the rules app to figure out the correct rule that applied to that



Andrew D. Campbell

procedure.”

The current version of the app relates to pretrial procedures up to the point of trial.

“We’re working on version 2.0, which would expand that through trials and to the end game of appeals,” Moore said.

“We’re trying to stay on top of, or ahead of, legal developments. And we’re trying to stay on top of, or ahead of, technological developments.”

Campbell and Moore spent more than 100 hours of their own time developing the app. They also worked with Jell Creative, a branding and digital marketing firm, to design the app.



Christopher S. Moore

After the app is downloaded onto a connected mobile device, it remains fully available even when an Internet connection is no longer available at a facility like a courthouse. Users can also bookmark the app so it remains on their home screen.

Novack and Macey fully supports the app but does not make money off it.

“Lawyers here use the app, so it has that benefit,” Campbell said. “We see this as a service to the legal community, particularly to commercial litigators.”

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