

Who Should Use This Book

The Cybersleuth's Guide to the Internet is meant to be a guide to free and low-cost resources for anyone who needs to conduct investigative/background and legal research on the Internet. The book starts off at the “beginning” by explaining Web browser functions that some Web users might be less familiar with. It then lays the groundwork for understanding how search engines locate and retrieve the information you’re searching for. The book then moves on to discuss more sophisticated search techniques and how to apply those techniques to other Web sites to locate the investigative/background and legal sources you are looking for.

Because the vast majority of sites discussed in this book are freely available on the Internet, many of these resources could be located through Web searches—if you had the time to conduct those searches, sift through all of the results, and test out the sites until you had culled down the millions of potential sites to a list of the most credible, relevant, and useful ones. That’s where the authors of this book come into play: we’ve done the test searching and sifting for you so now you can learn about the most credible, relevant, and useful sites and how to quickly master them.

How to Use This Book

The Cybersleuth's Guide to the Internet is a reference book; it is not meant to be read cover to cover. We have tried to organize this book the way researchers think—by keeping like topics together. There are a number of concepts and search strategies that are applicable to numerous types of research, which we discuss in different chapters. Therefore, some strategies appear in more than one place in the book to keep the back-and-forth page flipping to a minimum.

Throughout the book we have adopted a number of conventions to distinguish different types of information:

- Web site names are **boldfaced** to make them stand out on the page when you’re scanning for them.
- We italicize certain words to make them stand out from the site descriptions, including:
 - text that appears on Web pages, such as the labels on pull-down menus or search fields (e.g., *Search* or *Last Name*);
 - the word that describes an unlabeled icon or button (e.g., *Apps Launcher*); and
 - the *search terms, keywords, or phrases* that we enter into search boxes in our sample searches.
- Because many of the Web site addresses for the sites discussed in the book are so long, we have used a URL shortening service to make them easier to type into your Web browser. So, while you’ll see many URLs that look like this – <http://linkon.in/9uihD4> – they really do point to the Web site described and will then display the actual URL.

We’ve made locating all of the Web sites in the book easy by creating a full index of more than 2,300 entries. Sites are indexed by site name (e.g., [Google.com](http://www.google.com)), type of site (e.g., Search Engine: Google), and type of information they contain (e.g., Bankruptcy Dockets: PACER).

What’s New in the 13th Edition

For those of you who own prior editions of *The Cybersleuth's Guide to the Internet*, you will notice that this new edition no longer contains legal research topics that were unrelated to investigative research (e.g., statutes, ordinances, etc.). We have retained information about case law databases (but only free ones) and dockets (free and low cost) as part of the discussion of how these sites can be used for investigative and background research. The content from those deleted chapters became the basis for a new Internet legal research book, *Internet Legal Research on a Budget* (American Bar Association Law Practice Division, 2014; <http://linkon.in/1jbLQZn>).

The three things we can count on when it's time to revise *The Cybersleuth's Guide to the Internet* are:

- many of the sites in the book have changed some features or functions;
- there are a number of new useful Web sites to add; and
- some Web sites no longer exist.

The 2015 edition is no exception. In addition to all of those changes, the following is just some of the new information covered in this edition:

Archived Web Pages

- **Archive-It:** A keyword searchable collection of over 5 billion Web pages from state and local government agencies, public and private libraries, academic and court law libraries, and other institutions.

Assets

- Limitations of locating bank accounts and balances and ethical issues.
- Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA).
- Locating information about company Employee Benefit Plans.
- **FreeErisa.com**

Bankruptcy

- **Inforuptcy.com:** Docket database.
- **Freecourtdockets.com:** Docket database.
- **Search Systems Premium:** Offers a nationwide *Bankruptcies-Judgments-Liens* database search (for \$5.00)
- **Bloomberg Law Dockets**

Blawgs and Blogs

- **ABA Journal's Blawg 100** (annual survey)
- **Tumblr**
- **WordPress**
- **Google Blog Search:** We've discovered a work-around to access the blog-only database that Google no longer makes (easily) available.

Case Law

- **Google Scholar:** Updated discussion and all illustrations to explain/show new search menu and also the new bar icons in the *How Cited* list of cases (to rank the importance of citing cases).
- **Fastcase App:** Free to everyone.

Cell Phone Numbers

- **Spy Dialer:** Free Cell Phone Number Search Tool.

Criminal Background Information

- State criminal history reports links: Internet For Lawyers' list of links to the official state sources for these reports in the states where they are available.
- State DUI databases.

Death Records and Obituaries

- **Social Security Death Index:** Renamed as the **Limited Access Death Master File (LADMF)**; New federal law limits access to **LADMF**; How to become certified to access **LADMF**.
- **FamilySearch.org:** Learn how the new federal law limiting access to **LADMF** has affected **FamilySearch.org's** usefulness.
- **Legacy.com:** Free access to obituaries published in over 1,500 newspapers worldwide.
- **TLOxp.com:** How to find death records less expensively than at **LADMF**.

Discussion Groups

- **Google Groups:** The advanced search page has been disabled so we can no longer create as targeted searches.

Domains

- **Domain Tools:** Expanded discussion with illustration.

FOIA

- Expanded Discussion of FOIA and FOIA resources.

Images

- **Instagram**
- **Instagram** search sites: **GramFeed, Webstagram, Findgram, and WorldCam**
- **Pinterest**

Lawyers and Judges

- **ABA Journal's Blawg 100** (annual survey)
- **ABA Legal Technology Resource Center:** Law journal search engine.
- **JD Supra:** Source for articles by and/or about lawyers and judges.
- **Judgepedia.com:** Source of judicial profiles.

Licenses

- **FINRA:** Broker licensing and discipline search.
- **National Futures Association:** Trader licensing and discipline search.
- **North American Securities Administrators Association:** Directory of state securities regulators.
- **SEC's Investment Adviser Public Disclosure (IAPD) database:** Investment adviser registration and discipline search.

Pay Investigative Research Databases

- **LocatePLUS:** Deleted.
- **Merlin:** Deleted. This site is no longer in business and was subsumed by **TLOxp.com**.
- **OPENonline.com**
- **Publicdata.com**
- **SearchSystems.net's Premium** investigative research databases
- **Thomson Reuters CLEAR**

- **TLOxp.com**: Expanded information about how to search this investigative research database; added the *Vehicle Sightings* database and the *Business Plus* databases; and detailed **TLOxp.com's** new (increased) pricing.

People Meta-search Sites

- Deleted **123People.com**: No longer in business.
- Deleted **ZoomInfo.com** and **Spokeo.com**: Now fee-based only.

Political Campaign Contributions

- **Followthemoney.org**

Search Engines

- **Bing**: Updated information about how to exclude keywords.
- **Google Alerts**: Added a new *Regions* label, renamed *Result Type* to *Source*, and renamed *Everything* to *Automatic*.
- **Google Blog Search**: Google disabled its “simple” blog search but we provide you with the “secret” URL.
- **Google Info Search**: This allows you to run an informational search to retrieve details about a particular Web site.
- **Google Knowledge Graph**
- Search Engine Features Comparison Chart: Updated.

Social Media (new chapter; expanded coverage)

- **AAML**: Survey regarding their member's use of social media as evidence.
- Added eleven new ethics opinions regarding: (1) whether a lawyer can research social media profiles, and (2) a lawyer's duty to find, collect, and use evidence from social networking profiles.
- Added copy of the full-text of the Pennsylvania Bar Association Formal Opinion 2014-300 as Appendix A.
- **Facebook's Graph Search**: Take a deeper dive.
- **Myspace**: Changes in searching the site.
- How to download your social networking account data from **Facebook**, **LinkedIn**, and **Google** (includes **Google+** and other **Google** accounts' data).
- Service of process via social networking sites and other electronic means.
- Services that collect and store social networking profiles:
 - **ArchiveSocial**
 - **Nextpoint**
 - **PageFreezer**
 - **ReedTech**
 - **X1 Social Discovery**
- Stored Communications Act explained in more detail.
- Whether you can use a civil subpoena to obtain profile content and/or Subscriber Reports.