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1. Public Access to Supreme Court of Canada Records

In a [Notice to the Profession](#) dated February 2009 the Supreme Court of Canada has announced a new [Policy for Access to Supreme Court of Canada Court Records](#). Under the policy the SCC will provide public access to its court records in a manner that balances the constitutional requirement of open courts against the privacy and security rights of individuals and the proper administration of justice. As of February 10, 2009, parties will be required to provide an electronic version of a factum that omits personal information, information that is subject to a publication ban, or any other information that is not part of the public record. This version will be posted on the court's website.

2. Beta Site Legislation on CanLII

CanLII has [announced](#) an improvement to its legislative information system: a beta site for federal, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Quebec legislation which offers point-in-time access and searching, version comparison, weekly updates and RSS feeds. See the CanLII [help page](#) for further information and examples of the new features.

3. More on Metadata

The article [Metadata - What Is It and What Are My Ethical Duties?](#) by Jim Calloway, published January 5, 2009 on [LLRX](#), reviews opinions on the acceptable uses of metadata in the American legal ethics community. Calloway concludes that consensus on this issue is not only unlikely, but problematic as well, since any agreed upon standard for lawyers could not be imposed on non-lawyers. He concludes: "The best rule is for law firms to develop best practices internally to keep metadata from "escaping" in the first place." See item 6 in [last month's update](#) for suggested best practice resources and tools.

4. Online Branding

The January/February 2009 edition of *Law Practice* is a Practice Development Special Issue on *Branding Yourself Online*. It explores the many ways lawyers can use the internet to build a personal or firm brand, including:

- [*Branding Yourself Online: Tips for Spinning Your Story with Blogs And Other Social Media*](#)
- [*Web Sites as Branding Tools: Quick Tips for Creating a Positive Experience for Prospects*](#)
- [*Playing the Ratings Game: Perspectives on the Lawyer-Accolades Industry*](#)
- [*Riding the Net's Second Wave: How Lawyers and Their Firms are Applying Web Tools in Game-Changing Ways*](#)

And, if your firm is considering a new web site design, take a look at what some consider "the best law firm web site on the planet." (Mitch Kowalski, [FP Legal Post](#)). [Borenus & Kemppinen](#), one of the largest law firms in Finland, has garnered a lot of [attention](#) for its innovative and edgy web branding.

5. The Canadian Perspective on Surviving the Downturn

Stories of the battered economy continue to dominate headlines and surviving this new reality is a common theme of much current practice management advice. Past updates have referenced several American sources on this subject. For a Canadian perspective see the article [*Hard Times: Managing risk in a troubled economy*](#), an Insurance Issues: Risk Management article on the Law Society of British Columbia website or the Winter 2008/2009 issue of [LAWPRO Magazine](#), which is titled *Surviving the Slide: Dealing with the Tough Economy* and features articles on:

- [*Surviving the slide: What firms should \(and shouldn't\) do to ride out the economic storm*](#)
 - [*Building a better clientele*](#)
 - [*Technology in trying times*](#)
 - [*Supplement: Managing a Better Professional Services Firm*](#)
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6. The Lowdown on Smartphones

In [*The Rise of the Smartphone*](#), a legal technology roundtable published in the January/February 2009 edition of the [National](#), an expert panel of lawyers and practice management specialists takes a look at what you should know before purchasing a smartphone. The online version of the article provides links to ten smartphone resources, including comparison charts and product reviews. It also contains sidebars on VOIP (voice over internet protocol), voice recognition tools, and videoconferencing.

7. American Legal Research Online: MBA CLE

The Legal Research Section of the [Manitoba Bar Association](#) is presenting a program on American Legal Research on Thursday, February 19, 2009 from 12:00 noon - 1:15 p.m. at the Law Society of Manitoba classroom, 219 Kennedy St. The featured presenter, [Sabrina Pacifici](#), is a law library director, award winning blogger, adjunct professor at the University of Maryland and publisher of two leading free online resources for legal information, [LLRX](#) and [beSpecific](#). To register, call or email the Bar Association.

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