



# CaseSoft Reviewed THE FEDERAL LAWYER

REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION

JUNE 2001, VOLUME 48, NUMBER FIVE

## CaseSoft Does It Again

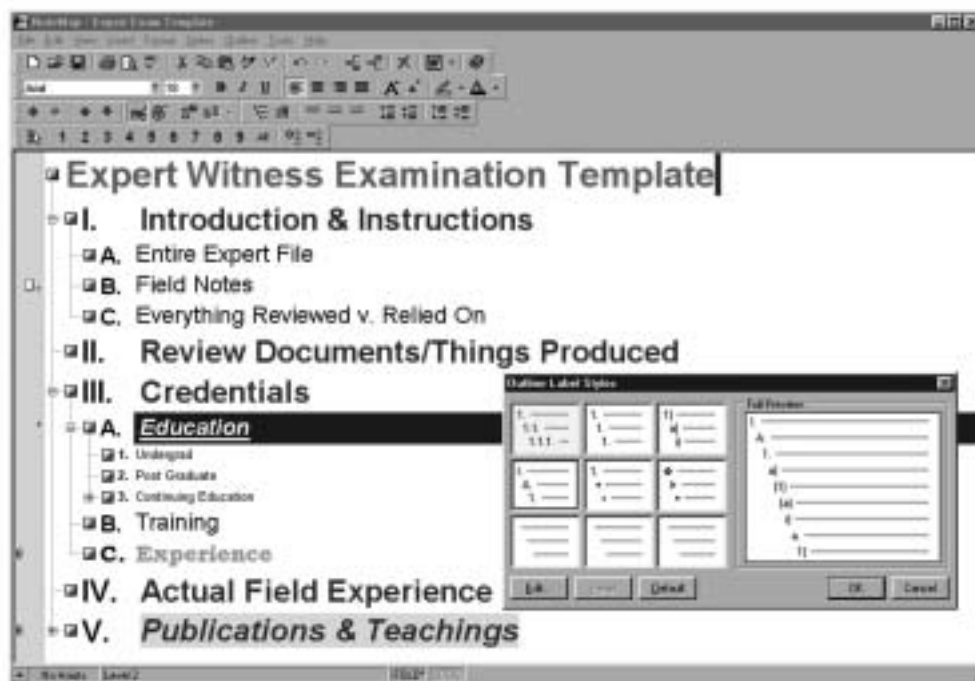
BY MIKE TONSING, ESQ.

Here in Cyberia, we have previously examined two excellent products from CaseSoft, CaseMap™ and TimeMap™.

CaseMap, as regular readers of this column know, is a leading example of “knowledge management” software. It helps litigators organize, sort, evaluate and explore the facts, players, documents, deposition testimony and issues in a case. In my happy experience, it can lead trial lawyers to find relationships among case related facts that would have been nearly impossible to see before. While it requires some experience to make CaseMap really hum, it can be up and running and genuinely useful within a very few hours. (CaseSoft provides free tutorial assistance.)

TimeMap is a freestanding product that performs a much more limited function. It creates timelines. And, it creates them very well. In any situation where it would be helpful to portray a series of events in a chronological sequence, TimeMap can help immensely. I have taught classrooms full of litigation support paralegals how to use this product—and had them producing handsome, professional looking results in less than fifteen minutes. TimeMap is that simple.

Now, the folks at CaseSoft have rolled out a third product. It is an outliner called — you guessed it, NoteMap™. (Even without assistance from their trusty computers, the more discerning Cyberians will see a pattern developing here.)



Create NoteMap outlines while interviewing your clients, organizing your deposition examinations, and preparing your opening statements.

Anyone who has ever used a legal pad will attest that starting one's preparation for a presentation or a brief by creating an outline can help lawyers capture their thoughts more effectively and to organize them more coherently and forcefully. Unfortunately, until now there has been little other than legal pads to help lawyers create outlines.

I, for one, have found the outlining features in both Word™ and WordPerfect™ to be very stifling and altogether disappointing. And previously available but now defunct products, like ECCO, always seemed to me as though they had too steep a learning curve or that they did not lend themselves well to the specific needs of lawyers.

To coin a phrase, CaseSoft has built a better mousetrap. It is called NoteMap.

Now, I find myself, sans legal pad, merrily dashing off more systematic and strategically organized lines of deposition questions and drafting more tightly reasoned and better flowing legal briefs.

I am also using NoteMap to take notes during client meetings, interviews and (on my laptop) while brainstorming on a plane flight or while sitting through a deposition conducted by another attorney. More recently, I have started using NoteMap as a tool to prepare first drafts of PowerPoint™ presentations. It works well for that, too, producing outlines that can be easily exported and amplified.

NoteMap makes outlining as easy as, well, as easy as creating timelines on TimeMap. It is so intuitive and it fills such an obvious need that I can't help but ask myself why I didn't invent it myself. (Don't answer that, dear readers.)

I encourage you to "test drive" NoteMap yourself, but beware. It just might become your favorite piece of software. Visit [www.casesoft.com/notemap/index.htm](http://www.casesoft.com/notemap/index.htm). A one-month free trial version can be downloaded from this site.

Like other CaseSoft products, NoteMap comes with a great tutorial built right in. In this instance, the tutorial is (again, you guessed it) in outline form. It is called NoteMap 101 and painlessly teaches you how to do such innovative things as linking your outline notes to external files, such as images. As the tutorial outline itself illustrates, a paperclip icon in the margin of the outline denotes that an external file has been linked at that point in the outline. In the example used in the tutorial, the linked file is a "gif" image of a TimeMap chronology graph. Neat! Double-clicking the paperclip icon launches the program associated with the file — TimeMap in this instance — and displays the timeline. (The creative litigator's mind races ahead to an outline of deposition questions with the pertinent documents attached at just the right places, while the creative presenter's mind races ahead to a presentation outline with digitized images attached to the ideas they represent, etc.)

The onboard tutorial demonstrates how to export outlines to Corel's WordPerfect or to Microsoft's Word with just a single click. TimeMap 101 also shows you how any less-than-zippy WordPerfect or Word outlines you may have produced earlier can be easily brought over to the NoteMap garage

and given a major overhaul and a lube job. Lawyers who have produced outlines using ECCO can also bring them over to NoteMap. (In such instances, the process involves cutting and pasting rather than exporting and importing; nonetheless, it is quite easy.)

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As the tutorial outline itself illustrates, minor subheadings can be displayed or hidden with just a mouse click. Contracting an outline-in-progress to its one or two most important levels, and then gradually expanding it to include subsidiary ideas or arguments can be of genuine assistance as one organizes and prioritizes one's thoughts. Fully expanded, an outline can be as many as nine levels deep. Given the relatively small size of the program itself and the way it is engineered, it is easy to have two copies of NoteMap open at the same time, to place them side by side, and to cut and paste text across the two open windows.

The tutorial also shows how an author can easily change his or her outline's font sizes, type colors, typestyles, etc. with respect to any part of a note or line, allowing for new forms of emphasis and for new kinds of "flags" within text. Again, the mind races ahead to improved outlines of presentations, speeches, oral arguments and opening statements and

closing arguments, where large format fonts can be tweaked and colored to create coded cues for a speaker.

The program also contains what it calls "hoist," "fold" and "lock" notes and features. In NoteMap jargon, hoisting means expanding the visibility of the subsets of major outline headings by clicking on a "plus" icon that appears unobtrusively in the margin.

The NoteMap 101 tutorial suggests that a presenter can use hoisting to turn NoteMap itself into a rather novel presentation tool. One could create an outline of one's presentation points and then hook NoteMap directly up to an LCD projector. One could then begin a presentation by showing the outline of the entire presentation collapsed to only top level topics. After the speaker provides an overview based on this display of just the top-level topics, he or she could, with a mouse click, hoist the first section — and, voila, its subpoints would appear. After presenting the subpoints, the speaker could then "dehoist" the section, collapsing it. The speaker would then go on to the next major heading, hoist it and dehoist it, repeating the process for each of the other items in the presentation. Especially where a speech or an opening or closing needs to keep the listener or the jury informed as to where it has been and where it is going, this form of presentation could be very powerful indeed.

Folding an outline results in just the first few words in each subheading being displayed. And, locking an outline makes it a "read only" document, not subject to change by anyone.

The bottom line is that CaseSoft has done it again. This is a product you need.

See you in Cyberia again next time.

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*Mike Tonsing is a member of The Federal Lawyer Editorial Board and an attorney in San Francisco. He can be reached at [tonslaw@attymail.com](mailto:tonslaw@attymail.com).*

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