

Searching With Dolphins

LexisNexis e-Discovery Solutions powered by DolphinSearch

DolphinSearch Inc., LexisNexis

(805) 585-2102
www.lexisnexis.com/dolphinsearch/
litigationsupport
Price: Varies by megabyte.
Internet Explorer 5.0 or higher

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Discovery requests today can produce unlimited numbers of electronic documents and e-mail messages. While there are applications that organize scanned images and collect everything in a nice, neat database, it's going to take tools such as DolphinSearch to lead the way to more intelligent search and retrieval methods.

The quirky name for this search tool originates from studies on how dolphins use their natural sonar capability to identify fish by their species. The research produced a computer that mimicked the dolphins' abilities. The computer could be "trained" to understand words and phrases in their proper context and perspective.

This is phenomenal when you realize the technology is actually recognizing words and phrases as we humans comprehend them. For example, when we read the word "strike," we immediately know if the word refers to baseball or disgruntled employees depending on the context of the sentence. If we searched for the word "strike" on a set of documents, we would still have to go through and look at each result to select the documents that use the word in the context we require.

The magic behind DolphinSearch is it can do some of this work for us. One of the main features of the DolphinSearch technology is the "Concept" (or "Context") search. When I

entered the word "trash" as a concept search, the initial results included documents containing the word "trash." But as I went down the list, I discovered documents that didn't have "trash" in them at all. Instead, I was receiving results with documents mentioning "solid waste" and "commercial waste." DolphinSearch understood what I was searching for and looked at words in context to give me relevant results.

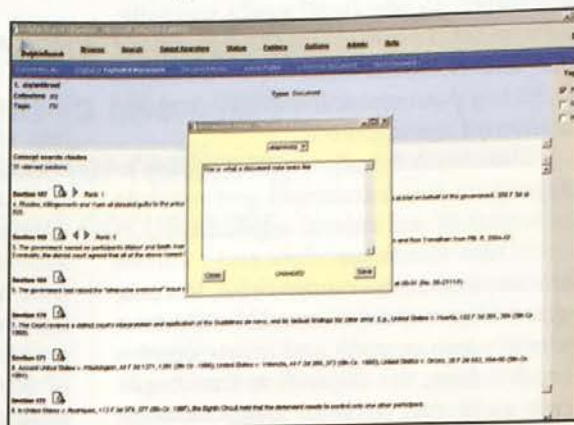
If you prefer a more standard approach to searching, DolphinSearch offers "Word" and "Field" searches that can be used on their own, or in conjunction with the other search methods. The word search accepts traditional Boolean queries while the field search allows you to search within coded fields. The DolphinSearch administrator can customize these fields. Once you run a search, your results are "scored." This score tells you how relevant the listed document is to your search on a scale from one to 100. Under "Options," you can select other fields to display and you can change the number of results that appear on each page.

Viewing a document is as simple as clicking the appropriate link. Most of the time, you will be looking at a hypertext markup language rendering of your document although you easily can view the document in a native file format. Other options appear at the top of the page, allowing you to print, add notes or add the document to a folder. The most notable option is another of DolphinSearch's prime features called "Exploded Doc." Clicking this option jumps you to the specific section of the document that is most relevant to your search query. The "exploded" part simply means the document is broken apart into sections and thrown back to you in plain text. If there is more than one rel-

evant section, arrow icons allow you to navigate forward and backward.

While the Exploded Doc feature is incredible, the most surprising fault is there is no way to jump back to a specific section in the original document. If you return to the "Original Doc," you will be staring at the top of the document. Regardless, if you are in Original or Exploded Doc view, you can add issue-relevant "Tags" to a document with a simple click in the appropriate box on the right side of your screen.

I certainly found a handful of splendid reasons to use DolphinSearch, but frankly I don't see the product gaining wide use. For one, DolphinSearch isn't an application you can purchase or



The "Exploded Doc" feature allows you to view the most relevant section of a document for your search terms.

download. Your documents are usually stored on a special souped-up server hosted by DolphinSearch or LexisNexis. Second, from what I can see, it's really only marketed to larger law firms. Lastly, I am just not sure the litigation world is quite prepared to stomach such revolutionary technology. Sure there are gasps of wonder when a concept search returns some remarkable results, but is this enough to entice a purchase?

For just the few impressive features, I can only recommend DolphinSearch to the large firms that can afford to run an extra search tool on their document collections. **DM**

Review Policy

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Closing Argument

Pros: Good navigation and fast access. The concept search can provide some amazing search results on your documents.

Cons: You can't jump to document sections from "Exploded Doc" view. Documents are required to be stored on a separate server.

Verdict: I recommend it only for large firms that have extremely large document collections.