

Listserv 2001—Advanced Listserv Techniques

by Don Knight and Lawton Langford

So you've figured out how to sign up for the Listserv. Now that you've got this baby cranked up, how about we take it out for a quick spin and see what she'll do? For this column, Lawton Langford, the President of Municipal Code Corporation, which hosts the IMLA Listserv (at no cost—thank you very much!), has agreed to give us some tips on the advanced use of the Listserv. Lawton's contribution follows, with the exception of the snappy headings (which are all mine, so don't blame Lawton!).

First, the Secret Password...

To make maximum use of the Listserv, including researching archives and managing your profile to suspend messages while on vacation or changing the mode in which messages are received (digest or index format), you must have a password. Establishing a password is easy and you can do it online. Here's how:

- go to *www.municode.com* and click the eighth bullet, "Listservs,"
- click the FAQs link in the top middle of the screen,
- click "Establishing a Password," and then on "Click Here" adjacent to "Attorney List,"
- enter the e-mail address you used to subscribe to the Listserv with and a password,
- click the "Register Password" button at the bottom of the dialogue box—you should see a "Confirmation Sent" message,
- open your e-mail and reply to the confirmation e-mail sent to you by the Listserv.

It's Time to Go Exploring

At the completion of these steps (it takes about a minute) you'll have a password and can, among other things, search the archives. Past Listserv messages are stored at municode.com for your perusal. The length of time messages are available is not limited (MCC guarantees at least six months). To search the archives:

- go to *www.municode.com* and click the eighth bullet, "Listservs,"
- click the "List Archives" link in the middle of the screen,
- log in using the e-mail address you subscribed with and your password,
- click the "Search Archives" link at the bottom of choices under the title "options," and
- enter your search word in any of the dialogue boxes and click "search" at the bottom right.

Searches can be by author, date range, or key word. A "hit list" of messages meeting your search criteria will be returned, along with an excerpt from the original message. Clicking on the "Item #" to the left of the hit list will open the original message.

Impress Friends and Co-workers with Your FTP Skills

Another useful tool available to Listserv members is the File Transfer Protocol (FTP), a way to share documents. Because the Listserv does not allow attachments to messages for security reasons, an alternative method for sharing documents is available. FTP-ing documents is easy, although to view any file on the FTP server, the software in which the document was created must be available to the viewer (i.e, a Word document on the FTP server would require the person downloading the document to have Word on their computer).

To access the FTP server, go to *ftp://ftp.municode.com/attorney-listserv*. There is a username and password requirement, and all members of the Listserv are entitled to know them. However, because this magazine has wider circulation than just Listserv members, we're asking List members who want the username and password to e-mail *AttyList-FTP@municode.com*. To open a document on the FTP site, double-click it—this will automatically launch the software necessary to display the document (assuming your computer has that software loaded).

That Wasn't So Hard, Was It?

So why don't you try out your new skills searching the archive for messages about solar-powered trash cans? No kidding...really! (Would I steer you wrong?)

Thanks to Lawton for making it easy to use the advanced features of the Listserv!

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Lawton Langford is President and CEO of Municipal Code Corporation (MCC). MCC is the nation's leading codifier of local government ordinances, and serves more than 3,000 cities and counties in 48 states. The company is considered a leader in publishing (electronic and hard copy) looseleaf documents. **ML**