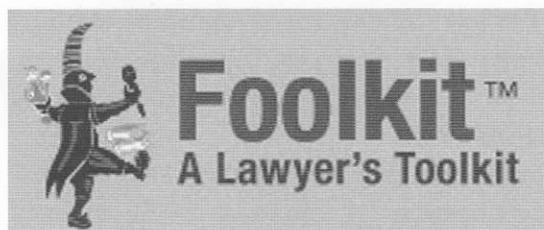


Publisher's Column

Andrew Rogers



If you have not come across foolkit then it is worth a look – see <www.foolkit.com.au>. It is so comprehensive that it's difficult to sum it up in a few paragraphs. Think of it as a one stop shop for free online legal information.

Lawyer, Andrew Rogers initially wrote the website for the benefit of the lawyers and legal secretaries in his firm. His goal was to put everything that they used on the Internet in the one place.

Andrew has since developed separate editions of Foolkit for each of the States (Western Australia in progress) in consultation with local librarians and legal practitioners.

The colourful website is well laid out and has good instructions. It is so simple that "any fool can use it". Over 13,000 URLs are updated regularly.

Andrew has selected primary material that is most useful in daily practice and made it more accessible. With one click Foolkit takes you straight to a section of an Act. There is a search tool for AustLII that is as easy as the familiar Google Advanced Search. It constructs complex searches without using Boolean terms.

The Courts pages have legislation and rules, contact details, forms and fees, daily lists and more.

There are collections for different areas of law that also include information about the agencies that lawyers will deal with, searching free databases, tools, forms and the other people who may be able to help their clients.

There are pages on the practice of law and on the management of law firms and the articles are often topical.

There is personal information for people working in the law including on issues affecting their well-being. There are also shortcuts to Facebook, banking, newspapers, TV guide and bus timetables.

Foolkit has hundreds of tools including a CPI calculator, life tables, school holidays, metric conversions and business modelling. Desk top Detective locates and checks the background of another party – and then keeps an eye on them.

There is a second side to Foolkit. For community groups, service organisations, public interest agencies, or the general public, there are DIY legal kits, Legal AID information and legal basics and tips written in plain English for the layperson. The search tool for local legal and counselling services is excellent.

Foolkit sits happily alongside a corporate website or intranet with its focus on practical information and free external resources.

A link to <www.foolkit.com.au> would be a useful resource for your users and for the public.