

Yes, You Can Even Get Contracts on the Web

Does it really matter where legal contracts come from? If you write a contract on the back of a napkin, does it make it any less binding than one produced formally in a lawyer's office? The short answer is no. As the saying goes, a contract is a contract is a contract. One written by two chefs in the back of a kitchen is as legally binding as that produced by a top law firm.

The question then arises: "Well, just because a contract is legal, does it make it any good?" And it's a good question. It's also why a deeper examination into issues involving contracts and contract forms can only be beneficial to the enterprising business professional. A person in business who knows how to take care of their contracts will be more efficient, more reliable, and carry fewer worries around with them. Its how most business owners want to practice business isn't it?

Indeed, at the very heart of the issue of contract forms and legal contracts is not only a question of how you enter into agreements with others, but it's also a question of how business itself can be conducted. On the one hand, a provider who engages in a good contractual agreement can be more at ease knowing that terms of payment are outlined in writing. This in turn, ensures that the service or product provided will be delivered in an environment of confidence.

On the other hand, clients and customers also benefit from the establishment of a good contract agreement involving things like well designed contract forms. Having contracts drawn up gives them more confidence that the time and effort they spend on the good or service isn't wasted. As they say, time is money. From the customer perspective, a good contract can save both, and it doesn't even have to take up that much time, either.

One thing to remember is that good contract forms and legal contracts are of benefit to all parties involved. They set in writing the duties and obligations of those parties, so that any potential for dispute some time down the road can be met with predetermined conditions and dispute resolution mechanisms. Indeed, the more one thinks about it, the more one wonders why anyone wouldn't get in the habit of engaging in business arrangement with contracts and contract forms. Doing otherwise can cost you in terms of dollars and reputation. No good business owner wants to do that.

Once a business owner starts to realize how important legally binding contracts are, the question then becomes this: Where do you go to get them drawn up? As tempting as it is for some to think that an improvised document containing the words "buyer" and "seller", that has the proper date, and has both signatures scrawled on it can serve as good legally binding contract forms, the astute business professional will probably know better.

On the other hand, the temptation might also be to believe that only expensive lawyers are qualified to draft legal contracts for professional businesses. This, too, would be the kind of thinking that the astute business professional would want to avoid. In fact, the rate a law firm charges for a contract service might not be much of an indication of the quality of the contract you get. It might not be their specialty, nor might they have the experience in dealing with your kind of company. Sure, they'll take your money. It doesn't mean that they're the most cost efficient option of having your contract forms and legal contracts drawn up for you. Sometimes, the exact opposite can be true.

One of the emerging trends in contract services can be found on the Internet. Some people might cringe at the idea of getting a service like contracts done on the Internet. Alternatively, some Web-savvy business people might be all too eager to take what they can find in cyberspace and consider the result to be an example of good contract making. As with dealing with all aspects of the Internet, doing a bit of digging can go a long way in making sure you protect your interests. If you can order important software for your business on the Web, there's no reason why you can't get a decent contract service to meet your needs for things like contract forms.

The fact of the matter is that professionally run Web sites exist that can meet a business' contract needs. In fact, they can sometimes be as simple as a click of a mouse. What's important to look for is if they use lawyers to draft up their templates, if they offer enough flexibility to cater to your company's specific needs, and if a simple Google search shows that you're not dealing with a shady outfit. Indeed, the same care you use for all things Internet related is the same care you should use in the finding of contract professionals. It's why there's no reason why you can't find contract forms and legal contracts for your business on the Web.

About the Author

James Cochran is the founder of ContractEdge, a provider of [legal contracts](#) and agreements designed specifically for IT professionals and contractors. Created by attorneys who specialize in Information Technology law, ContractEdge contractor agreements and [contract forms](#) go beyond the standard provisions and include critical special provisions unique to the IT industry.