

# 2012 Annual Convention

## SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

### Let's Get Real

*With Vickie Main and Donna Urlaub, RPR, RMR, CRR  
(Written by Linda S. Fifield, Doris O. Wong Associates, Inc.)*

Writing realtime is what sets this profession apart from voice and digital reporters. Trainer extraordinaire Vickie Main and NCRA Speed Champion Donna Urlaub, RPR, RMR, CRR, discussed not only setting up realtime in Case CATalyst but also writing realtime for themselves and for counsel. As a trainer, Vickie discussed the ins and outs of the software. As a court reporter, Donna shared her insights as to what she did to prepare herself as a reporter to write realtime, along with her fears of writing "naked" for the first time.

The first topic of discussion dealt with your connection options as a reporter. There are many ways to connect your writer to your notebook. There are even more ways to connect with counsel. You can connect via cables, StenoCast or Bluetooth, which are all serial connections, USB cables and/or WiFi. Whatever your option, make it a habit to set up for realtime at each assignment. The key: Know your software. When you set up realtime for the first time, understand the Case CATalyst translation "Options." Click on the "Input" and "Realtime" tabs and set up the software that best complements your writing. Understand the software and what it can do to make you a better writer. Once the software is set up correctly, save the options.

As a reporter, get comfortable hooking up to your notebook. Write realtime for yourself at all times. Repetition is the key to your success. Getting comfortable with the realtime hookup is the first step. Writing realtime is the next. As you see your notes translate in realtime, you will see your strengths and weaknesses as a writer. When you improve your proficiency as a writer, you will have less fear writing for counsel.

The second topic dealt with writing realtime for clients. From Vickie's perspective, it's all about making the connection. This is where understanding Windows software comes in handy. If you are connecting serially, you need to know what COMM Ports are being used by yourself and counsel. Get familiar with navigating Windows and Device Manager. If you are connecting via WiFi, understand how to select the Wireless Network. When sending realtime to counsel, CaseView is the out-

put and you are transferring at 2400 baud. To set up Case CATalyst correctly, you need to go into "Translate," "Options," and click on the "Output to Realtime" tab.

Writing realtime is a scary proposition for even the most seasoned reporters. Donna has been a reporter for over 30 years and is a speed champion with NCRA and ILCRA. One would think that writing realtime shouldn't be a big deal for her. Well, it is. The biggest fear among reporters is letting counsel see your writing. It's very personal and you feel exposed. Just remember that counsel are not going to get upset about an untranslate. As a matter of fact, some counsel are proud of themselves when they can figure out misstrokes. Where you find an untranslate devastating, counsel often read over it since it's the overall content that they're concerned about, not the minutia.

Make the experience a positive one for both sides. That means preparation ahead of time. Get as much information as you can before you get to the assignment so that you can build your dictionary. Get names and spellings from exhibits. Visit websites. The more you prepare, the cleaner the translation.

Lastly, make yourself indispensable. Be prepared for all scenarios. Whether it's providing throw-downs in the form of laptops or iPads, having software downloads for CaseViewNet or drivers on a thumb drive or CD when they bring in their own laptop, providing alternative connections to connect serially or via WiFi, or throwing down directions to their software, all of this shows counsel that you know what you're doing. It instills a level of confidence and conveys to counsel that you are truly a professional.

Sadly, the seminar went by all too quickly. Special thanks to Vickie and Donna for an outstanding job. When attending seminars like this, I personally get excited about the opportunities available to court reporters. My suggestion to the profession: Write Realtime. Take pride in knowing that you are the superior method of producing verbatim transcripts and with Case CATalyst and ICVNet you now have the tools to be the best in the profession.