

How can my PC Help with Contracting Issues?

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Examples:

1) A contractor received the following legal opinion about a contract wherein we had shortened the contractor name by using an acronym instead of the full name. (names have been changed to protect the innocent).

*This is not a valid acronym for our company name. I understand the concern of using **Animated Association of Automotive Audiophiles** over and over in a contract. However, under no circumstances do we want to start using AAAA. The reason for this is that we have a brand name in the market place and don't want it diluted by acronyms.*

2) NPR story about a contract dispute – resolved by the courts, over the placement of a comma.

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=6383383>

Both situations should serve as reminders that we are issuing legal documents. Cavalier wording or punctuation which creates ambiguities or doubt can, and will, be used against us in a court of law. I jest with my lawyer friends about using too many words, but sometimes using too few can be a problem. In the first case, our contract referring to the AAAA company, could be proven invalid since there is no such company. In the 2nd case, clarifying comments seem to have been left out of the English version of the contract. Someone assumed that their (unwritten) interpretation of the text would suffice.

In these examples WORD can help us to fill up the contract with precise words while at the same time avoiding repetitive typing. Here are two easy ways:

1) Set the Word autocorrect feature to always replace a specific acronym with the full text.. I have mine set, for example, to always replace DOE with the Department of Energy. To resolve the first problem I could set up Word autocorrect so that every time I type AAAA Word automatically replaces it with the full contractor name. In Word open the tools menu and select AUTOCORRECT. Add the acronym and text you want to replace it.

2) Store clarifying or explanatory text in a separate “scrap” file. Then reverse the processes to insert the scrap file words in as many places as you want. In a Word Document highlight the paragraph or sentence that you want to save, and drag it to the desktop. Word will create a “SCRAP” icon. Now you can drag that scrap back into any word document to insert the text. Note: I can also drag the scrap text I create from Word into an Outlook email message or Excel file.