

Five (5) Reasons to Stop Writing Numbers Like This

“With precedent being the bedrock of the legal industry, lawyers sometimes fall into the trap of mirroring conventions that they have observed other lawyers follow. Many times, this mirroring occurs without much thought by the writer about the value of the convention. Instead, the writer simply takes for granted that the convention is the ‘right’ way to do things because someone else has done them that way,” warns Andrew B. Schrack in Butler Snow’s *BizLitNews*.

“Such conventions are not necessarily incorrect, but they last long beyond their usefulness. One (1) such outdated convention is the doubling words and numerals, as illustrated in this sentence. It is completely unnecessary in typed documents.”

“The convention originated with handwritten documents, in which it was easy for numbers to be confused. (I’ve personally had my scribbled ‘9’ mistaken for a ‘7’). Numbers also could be altered easily by inserting extra numerals or attempting to transform a 3 into an 8. In fact, the easy alteration of numerals is the reason that we spell out the numbers on our checks (for those of us who still use checks). Still, numerals are easier to read at a glance, and so early legal writers included both.”

Read the article.