

Drawing the Line

CompareRite and DeltaView battle to be the best.

By Richard C. Belthoff Jr.

I never had to redline legal documents by hand, at least not after I graduated law school. I suspect the best way to do it is to have one person read the revised document out loud while the other marks the changes on a copy of the original. This is actually how we used to proof journal articles in law school.

The process must be even worse if you have to do it alone. I can only imagine the errors that arise when you get tired and miss something.

Times have changed. Computers have revolutionized the practice of law. While computers have replaced typewriters for creating documents, document comparison software has replaced the human. Since the computer is faster and doesn't object to performing tedious and formerly time-consuming tasks, the

computer will rush through creating a redlined version of a legal document in seconds. It also can do it with fewer mistakes because it doesn't get tired or distracted.

Document comparison software is a must for every busy attorney. You always need to know what changes your opponent has made to one of your documents. If you can't get the document by e-mail, you can always scan it and then run a comparison. Although Microsoft Word and WordPerfect have built-in document comparison features, they aren't quite as robust as stand-alone document comparison software.

CompareRite vs. DeltaView

For this shootout, I tested CompareRite 7.1 from Lexis-Nexis (with the 9a patch applied from the Lexis-Nexis Web site). Over the years CompareRite has more or less dominated this market.

However, there is now competition available: DeltaView, from Workshare Technology. The latest release of DeltaView I tested is Version 2.5 (Version 2.51 arrived just as I was finishing up this article). Both of these programs compare two versions of a document and create a redline version within seconds, showing additions, deletions and moves. So, within a minute or so of getting a revised document by e-mail, or shortly after scanning it, you

Shootout Winner


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LAW OFFICE Computing

Program Information

CompareRite 7.1
Lexis-Nexis
(800) 227-4908
www.lexis-nexis.com
Windows 95/98/NT/2000
\$189 single-user copy

DeltaView 2.5 
Workshare Technology
(888) 404-4246
www.workshare.net
Windows 95/98/NT/2000
Sold as an Enterprise site license

can figure out if the other side is trying to slip something past you.

I tested CompareRite and DeltaView with Microsoft Word 2000 and WordPerfect 9 files, although I focused more on CompareRite's and DeltaView's ability to work with Word 2000 files. WordPerfect files tend to have fewer formatting glitches after running through a comparison program, particularly when it comes to auto-numbered paragraphs. The embedded code paradigm used by WordPerfect, versus the style interface used by Word, may have something to do with this.



Figure 1: DeltaView "Comparison Display" screen.

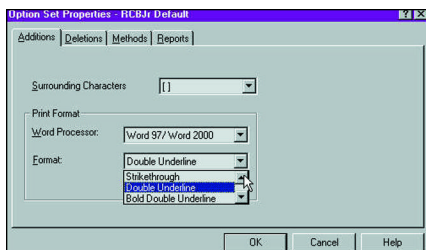


Figure 2: CompareRite inserted text options.

The Comparison

CompareRite and DeltaView work similarly. For both, you must keep a disk copy of your original document and your revised document for comparison. You select the original and revised documents at startup and run a comparison.

CompareRite also requires you to select an output file for your redlined document. After you create your redlined document on disk, you have to switch to Word or WordPerfect and open the redlined document manually. DeltaView displays your redlined document on screen. You can then save it to a disk in a variety of formats (the native DeltaView format is not compatible with Word or WordPerfect).

You can display just the redlined document, or add two other window panes to display the original and the revised document at the same time (see Figure 1). Then you can scroll among the three windows to view changes. DeltaView also can display a summary of changes at the bottom of the screen.

Although CompareRite allows you to set a default folder for documents, DeltaView does it better by remembering the folder you just used. Say your default folder for CompareRite is u:\docs, and you select an original file from u:\docs\articles. When you select the revised file, CompareRite will

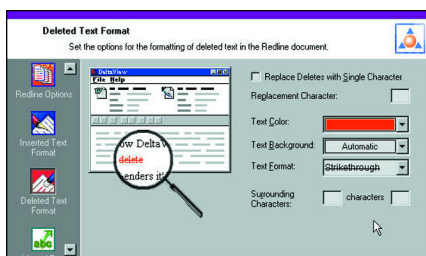


Figure 3: DeltaView inserted text options.

default to u:\docs. DeltaView will default to the u:\docs\articles file for the revised document if that's where you selected your original document.

Inserted Text Options

Both programs have options for displaying changes in your redlined docu-

ments. These can be set individually for each document you compare or saved in a set of options for later reuse. CompareRite calls these Option Sets. DeltaView calls them Rendering Sets.

CompareRite can display inserted text as "Bold," "Underlined," "Double Underlined" or "Italics" (see Figure 2). You can add surrounding characters to differentiate your inserted text, but your selection of characters is limited.

DeltaView has more formatting options than CompareRite for inserted text. For example, "Superscript and

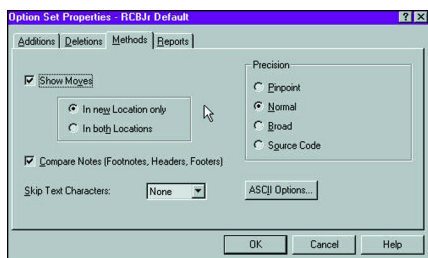


Figure 4: CompareRite moves, notes and methods screen.

Italic" and "Strikethrough" (see Figure 3). CompareRite does have "Small Caps," an option DeltaView lacks.

DeltaView also allows you to use any character to surround your inserted text instead of just a few characters like CompareRite.

Deleted Text Options

CompareRite's formatting options for deleted text are identical to its inserted text options (*i.e.*, you can use "Bold," "Underline," etc.). The same holds true for DeltaView.

CompareRite has the same limited number of surrounding characters available for deleted text. DeltaView allows you to use any character as a surrounding character, just like for inserted text.

Historically, inserted text has always been displayed as full text (and if you think about it, this is the only logical way to do it).

Deleted text, on the other hand, has either been shown as full text or indicated by the insertion of a character where the deleted text used to be (such as by the "^" caret character).

CompareRite includes several options for showing deleted text. Besides full text, you can substitute a "^" caret character or a "#" character, or list deleted text at the end of your redlined document.

DeltaView again includes more flexible options. Besides the full-text option, you can substitute any charac-

ter for deleted text as well as use any character to surround the deleted text.

Moved Text Options

CompareRite's moved text options are limited (see Figure 4). If you want to show moved text in your redlined document, CompareRite can either show it in both places (*i.e.*, the original and moved location) or just at the moved location. The moved text is marked as deleted and inserted text, but then CompareRite inserts asterisks followed by numbers with a note that the text was moved "from here" or "to here."

DeltaView has some additional moved text options (see Figure 5). Like inserted and deleted text, you can color moved text and add a colored background. You also can set the formatting for the "from" location text and the "to" location text (*e.g.*, you can make one "Italic and Strikethrough" and the other "Italic and Double Underlined"). You also can use different surrounding characters for the "from" location text and the "to" location text (*e.g.*, you could use <> for "from" text and ** for "to" text).

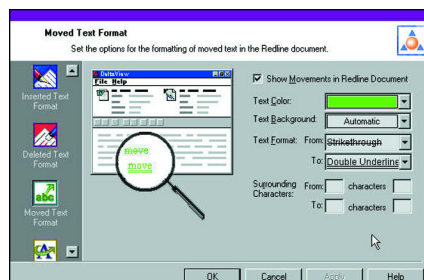


Figure 5: DeltaView "Moved Text Format" screen.

Table Change Options

CompareRite doesn't have any specific table cell, row or column change formatting options.

It will redline text changes in a table, using the inserted and deleted text options, but it won't indicate whether a row, column or cell has been inserted or deleted. If it has been deleted, the text will be included in another row, column or cell and redlined as deleted text.

If a row, column or cell has been inserted, the text will be redlined as inserted text, but no other redline indication will be shown.

DeltaView includes multiple table formatting options (see Figure 6). It will color separately inserted, deleted, moved, merged and padded rows, columns and cells. These options allow you to see the changes made to a table more accurately.

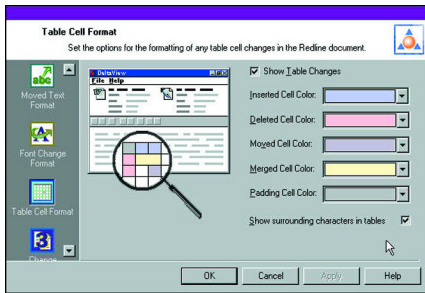


Figure 6: DeltaView "Table Cell Format" screen.

Other Options

CompareRite has included an option to redline changes in headers, footers and footnotes for a long time (see Figure 4). However, the redlined changes are listed at the end of your redlined document instead of in the actual header, footer or footnote. This isn't as convenient as DeltaView (or even Word or WordPerfect, for that matter).

In DeltaView, redlined changes are displayed directly in the header, footer or footnote itself. This makes it much easier to view the changes.

Both programs include report options. You can choose a short- or long-form report in CompareRite (see Figure 7). Each report lists redlined changes in varying detail at the end of your document. You can use the CompareRite report to prepare a letter to your client listing the changes in your document. This way you don't have to type all the changes by hand. A lot of the typing is done by CompareRite, right down to the page and paragraph changed.

DeltaView also includes a summary report option. You can display the report on screen or include it at the end of your document. If you turn on the "Change Numbering Format" feature of DeltaView, you can refer back to specific changes in your document, using these numbers. Clicking in the online version of the summary report will highlight and display the redlined changes in your on-screen document.

Each program also can insert a short description listing the names of the documents compared and the for-

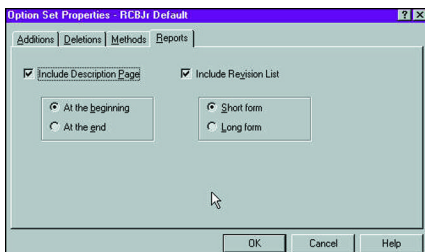


Figure 7: CompareRite "Description/ Reports" screen.

matting options selected for inserted, deleted and moved text in your redlined document (see Figure 7). DeltaView's report also includes row, column and cell change color display options, as well as color options for inserted, deleted and moved text. The report can be inserted at the beginning or end of your redlined document in both programs.

DeltaView includes some modern integration options not available with CompareRite. For example, DeltaView can integrate with several document management programs such as Docs Open, iManage 4.x or 5.x and Wordox. My company doesn't use a document management system, so I could not test this integration.

DeltaView also integrates with Windows Explorer (file manager) as well as MAPI (Messaging Application Programming Interface), SMTP (Simple Mail Transfer Protocol) or Lotus Notes e-mail systems. When you get an e-mail with an attachment, a "compare docu-

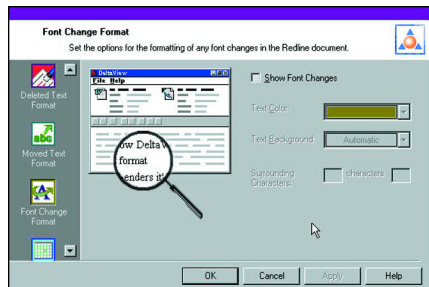


Figure 8: DeltaView "Font Change Format" screen.

ment" button is at the bottom of the e-mail window to run DeltaView. On my system, Outlook 2000 now shows the "Compare Document" button.

CompareRite includes a "Skip Text" option not available in DeltaView (see Figure 8). You can mark an area of text with characters and CompareRite will skip this area when it creates a redlined document. This is useful if you have heavily formatted text, such as a table or spreadsheet, that you don't want CompareRite to mess up in the redlined document.

DeltaView can redline font changes within a document (see Figure 8). This feature isn't available in CompareRite. In DeltaView, you can redline text containing a font change by using a different color or adding a background color or surrounding characters.

Precision

Both programs include options to change the precision of the comparison.

CompareRite has four options including: "Pinpoint," "Normal," "Broad" and "Source Code" (see Figure 4).

"Pinpoint" compares at the character level. "Normal" compares at the word level. "Broad" compares at the sentence and paragraph level. "Source

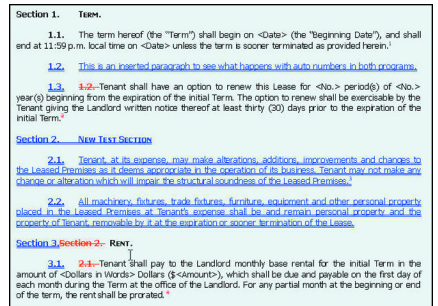


Figure 9: DeltaView "Auto-Number Comparison."

Code" is even more precise than "Pinpoint" and is generally used for only ASCII software source code (you won't notice much difference between "Pinpoint" and "Source Code" on a Word document).

For instance, if you select "Normal" and you change "defendant" to "defendants," it will redline "defendant" as deleted and "defendants" as inserted. If you select "Pinpoint," CompareRite will redline only the "s" in "defendants."

DeltaView has two options, the default "Normal" comparison and "Character" level. These correspond to CompareRite's "Normal" and "Pinpoint" comparison options.

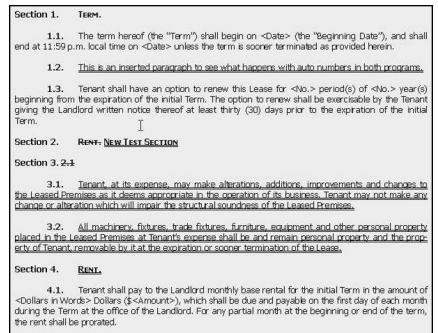


Figure 10: CompareRite "Auto-Number Comparison."


Sample Comparison

I created two documents to compare these two programs. I lifted text from a lease containing auto-numbered paragraphs. The document also included footnotes.

I then inserted the sample documents included with DeltaView, which include changes to words, sentences,

continued

COMPARISON CHART

	CompareRite 7.1	DeltaView 2.5 
Formatting Options	Normal, Bold , Bold Underline , Strikethrough , <u>Double Underline</u> , Bold Double Underline , SMALL CAPS, <i>Italics</i>	Normal, Bold , Bold Underline , <u>Double Underline</u> , <i>Italics</i> , Strikethrough , ^{Superscript} , _{Subscript} , Bold & Underline , Bold & Double Underline , Bold & Italic , Bold & Strikethrough , <i>Italic & Underline</i> , <i>Italic & Double Underline</i> , <i>Italic & Strikethrough</i>
Surrounding Characters	None, [], {}, \\", \"\", \"\", <>	Any character (user selected)
Inserted Text Options	Full Text Only	Full Text Only
Text Color Options	N/A	Text color and background color options available
Deletions		
Formatting Options	Normal, Bold , Bold Underline , Strikethrough , <u>Double Underline</u> , Bold Double Underline , SMALL CAPS, <i>Italics</i>	Normal, Bold , Bold Underline , <u>Double Underline</u> , <i>Italics</i> , Strikethrough , ^{Superscript} , _{Subscript} , Bold & Underline , Bold & Double Underline , Bold & Italic , Bold & Strikethrough , <i>Italic & Underline</i> , <i>Italic & Double Underline</i> , <i>Italic & Strikethrough</i>
Surrounding Characters	None, [], {}, \\", \"\", \"\", <>	Any character (user selected)
Deleted Text Options	Full Text, Replace Text by ^, Replace Text by #, No Text, Text at End or Abbreviated Text	Full text or replace with user selected character
Text Color Options	N/A	Text color and background color options available
Moves		
Move Options	Show Moves in New Location Only, Show Moves in Both Locations	Show or Don't Show Moves
Formatting Options	Uses options selected for inserted and deleted Text	Normal, Bold , Bold Underline , <u>Double Underline</u> , <i>Italics</i> , Strikethrough , ^{Superscript} , _{Subscript} , Bold & Underline , Bold & Double Underline , Bold & Italic , Bold & Strikethrough , <i>Italic & Underline</i> , <i>Italics & Double Underline</i> , <i>Italic & Strikethrough</i> (options for "from" and "to" locations can be selected separately)
Surrounding Characters	Uses options selected for inserted and deleted text	Any character (user selected) (options for "from" and "to" locations can be selected separately)
Text Color Options	N/A	Text color and background color options available
Font Changes		
Show Font Changes	N/A	Show or Don't Show Font Changes
Surrounding Characters	N/A	Any character (user selected) (options for "from" and "to" locations can be selected separately)
Text Color Options	N/A	Text color and background color options available
Table Changes		
Text Formatting Options	Uses options selected for inserted and deleted text	Uses options selected for inserted and deleted text
Row, Column, Cell Deletions & Additions Formatting Options	Inserted and deleted text shown, but no additional indication for row, column or cell deletions or additions	Inserted and deleted text shown, and inserted, deleted, moved, merged and padded rows, columns and cells are shown with separate colors
Methods		
Precision	Pinpoint, Normal, Broad, Source Code	Word, character
Skip Text	Skip Text characters: , @, @	Has Skip-Rendering Set text option
Reports		
Description Page	At beginning, at end (includes names of files compared, general statistical information and information about options selected)	At beginning and end (includes names of files compared, general statistical information and information about options selected)
Revision List	Short form, long form (includes detailed list of changes made) – optionally included at end of redlined document	Optionally displayed on screen as a floating text box after redlined document is created or included at the end of a document (each change is numbered)
Other Features		
Rendering/Option Sets	User can select above options and save in user-named option set	User can select above options and save in user-named Rendering Set or administrator controls access to Rendering Set options available to users
Document Formats Supported	ASCII, AmiPro 2.x/3.x, Word 1.x/2.x for Windows, Word 6.x/7.x for Windows, Word 97/Word 2000, WordPerfect 4.x/5.x for DOS, WordPerfect 6.x/7.x/8.x for Windows	Word 6.x to 2000 and WordPerfect 7.0 and later
Document Management System Integration Supported	N/A	DOCS Open, iManage 5.x, iManage 4.x, Worldox
E-mail System Integration Supported	N/A	MAPI, SMTP, Lotus Notes
Compare Notes	Optionally compare Headers, Footers and Footnotes, but comparisons are shown at end of redlined document	Optionally compare Headers, Footers and Footnotes in Header, Footer or Footnote itself
Number Changes	N/A	Numbers each change in document (displayed onscreen in redlined document or saved with redlined document).
Line Numbering	N/A	Yes

paragraphs, footers, headers and table cells, rows and columns.

DeltaView is more precise when it comes to auto-numbered paragraphs, at least in Word. In my sample documents, I added a new numbered section to the revised document.

DeltaView accurately redlined the changes (see Figure 9). CompareRite has trouble with auto-numbered paragraphs (see Figure 10).

Like Word, it sometimes adds additional numbered sections, probably because it adds extra hard returns, which, in Word, can generate additional numbered paragraphs. The revised document contained three numbered sections, and DeltaView displayed exactly three numbered sections. CompareRite, on the other hand, displayed four numbered sections. It included an additional Section 3.

I also added additional numbered subsections in the revised document. DeltaView correctly flagged the additional subsections, including the paragraph numbers, as inserted text.

CompareRite redlined the additional text as inserted text but didn't indicate the paragraph numbers had

changed. Thus, it's more difficult to track changes in auto-numbered paragraphs with CompareRite.

Both programs handled the other changes in the documents well, although header, footer and footnote changes were listed at the end of the document with CompareRite, while DeltaView redlined the changes within the header, footer and footnotes.

DeltaView handled a numbered list better than CompareRite, at least from a formatting perspective. DeltaView showed the deleted and inserted number on the same line, while CompareRite used separate lines.

In the table, DeltaView accurately redlined with color the inserted, deleted and moved rows, columns and cells, while CompareRite just redlined the text within the table as having been inserted or deleted.

And the Winner Is ...

The winner of this shootout is unquestionably DeltaView.

DeltaView has a more up-to-date interface than CompareRite. It supports more of the file/folder features of modern operating systems.

It also integrates with modern document management systems as well as Windows Explorer and several e-mail systems.

Further, DeltaView handles table row, column and cell changes better than CompareRite.

CompareRite shows the text changes, but it doesn't indicate the changes to the row, column or cell.

With DeltaView you also can compare formatting changes, including font changes.

Last, DeltaView is more precise, particularly when it comes to redlining auto-numbered paragraphs.

CompareRite has been around a long time, and it's still a great program, but it suffers from some neglect in the upgrade area.

If you're looking for a great document comparison program, look to DeltaView first. **E:]**

A B O U T T H E A U T H O R



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