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For Mississippi native son and attorney Philip Thomas, blogging about law, politics and topical issues in the state extends a conversation he's been **MORE...**



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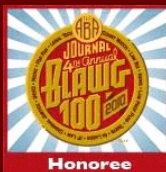
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## Corporate Law Departments Paying \$1,000 Per Hour Crack Down On.....Photocopies?

 Posted on October 22, 2012 by [Philip Thomas](#)

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Files this one in the o' brother department. The Wall Street Journal reported today that in-house law departments are cracking down on outside lawyer's expenses such as meals, photocopies and legal research expenses.

*"You're paying a partner \$800 to \$1,000 an hour and they're charging you because they ordered sushi."*

### My Take:

This is funny.

Rather than find a good lawyer in someplace like Nashville, Birmingham or Jackson who bills at \$500 an hour, big corporations still run to the over-priced East Coast firms, get raped on fees and then brag about getting tough on lunch.

It's like the guy in the casino playing blackjack for \$25 a hand bragging about getting free drinks. Dude, what you're doing is nothing to brag about.

So why do they do it? In my opinion it's because many in-house lawyers do not have the competence confidence to go out and find a good lawyer. So what's the fall back? The fall back is to go out and hire the most expensive New York lawyers they can find. That way when things go wrong, the in-house lawyer can say: "don't blame me, I hired the most-expensive best lawyers money can buy."

This will not last forever. Some corporate law departments have figured it out and are bypassing New York firms for lawyers who are just as good—probably better in some practice areas—and much cheaper. There is an opportunity for the regional law firms to compete with the national East Coast based firms on price.

There are already regional firms with a presence in Mississippi doing it. Bradley Arant and Butler Snow are two that come to mind. Others would be smart to figure out how to market their firms to take advantage of the opportunity. At \$500 an hour they could even throw in the lunch and copies.

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