

iPad

Not Just a Cool Toy



By Mary Lynn Wagner

The iPad has become incredibly popular because it is easy to use and requires so little training.

For attorneys, the device has proven very beneficial because it literally allows you to have your office at your fingertips.

At the recent Association of Legal Administrators semi-annual educational seminar, Brett Burney of Burney Consultants spoke about many of the technology trends in the practice of law and the best iPad apps for lawyers.

Below are some of the cool iPad apps discussed during the presentation. Unless otherwise indicated, all apps are available for the iPad. Apps that work on other devices are also noted.

Dropbox [Free]

Dropbox is a free, web-based file hosting service utilizing cloud storage so that users may store and share files with others utilizing file synchronization. The service does require a free account and has an app for the iPhone, iPad, Android and BlackBerry devices.

Goodreader [\$4.99]

Goodreader is a reading application for PDF documents for iOS (Apple's mobile operating system). This PDF reader has advanced reading, annotating, markup and highlighting capabilities. The service syncs with Google Docs, Dropbox and other file-sharing services. It contains an autosync function that allows you to standardize documents in multiple locations. Although this app may not always play well with other iPad apps, *PC Magazine* recently voted it the best

PDF reader, file manager and annotator on the market.

PDF HD [\$1.99]

PDF HD is an easy to use application that allows you to read large PDF files and highlight/bookmark specific passages. It also allows you to navigate through tables of contents and search for relevant phrases. The newest version contains improved text selection, page turning and zooming.

Documents To Go [\$14.99]

Documents To Go is considered an office suite for mobile devices. It allows you to view, edit & create files right on your smartphone or iPad. It supports Word, Excel, PowerPoint, PDF and TXT files as well as .JPEG and .BMP files. The service provides apps for iPhone, iPad, Android and BlackBerry devices.

Quickoffice [\$14.99]

Quickoffice is another easy-to-use productivity suite for viewing, opening and editing Word documents, Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoint presentations. It offers integrated access to multiple cloud services such as MobileMe, Dropbox and GoogleDocs. The service provides apps for iPhone, iPad and Android devices.

PhatPad [\$4.99]

PhatPad allows you to convert handwritten notes and shapes into digital text. Your text can then be shared with others via email and Dropbox. The newest version of this app includes improved synchronization with Dropbox, im-

proved copy/paste functionality and a new command for allowing unknown words to be imported into the system for future use.

Sound Note [\$4.99]

SoundNote for the iPad provides users with the ability to take notes, sketch objects and make an audio recording all at the same time. Tapping one of your written words will jump you to that exact spot in the audio so you can listen to the speaker making sure you didn't miss any important information. Your text and audio notes may also be shared via email or downloaded to your PC/MAC.

SignMyPad [\$3.99 - \$99.99 Pro Edition]


SignMyPad is a simple-to-use PDF reader and annotation tool. It allows digital signatures to be recorded directly onto PDF documents without printing them first. With SignMyPad, you can load PDF's right from Dropbox or your email, add text and a signature. From there, you can email the document back out from the app to Dropbox or an individual. The Pro version of this app also contains a GPS location feature that records where the document was signed and saves that information within the metadata. SignMyPad is compatible with iPad and Android devices.

Atomic Web Browser [.99]

Atomic Web Browser is a browser for all iOS devices and contains many advanced features left out of Apple's Mobile Safari browser. Some of these features include:

unlimited tabs, password protection, in page searching, adjustable font size and Facebook/Twitter integration. Atomic Web has the ability to trick websites into thinking the browser comes from a desktop computer using Mozilla or IE. There is a free “lite” version of Atomic Web, but it does have some limitations. Downloading the free version would allow you to test the service and see how it works before actually purchasing.

Mobile Apps For Law [\$25]

Last year, Infosources Publishing rolled out a new service called Mobile Apps for Law. This service tracks legal research and utility apps for all types of mobile devices regardless of whether you use an iPhone, iPad, BlackBerry or any Android device. The database includes more than 800 different mobile applications for law and lawyers and is growing rapidly. Entries can be searched by the type of device that you own and include a description of the app, pricing information, availability and links to reviews. 

Wagner serves as the director of information resources at Keating Muething & Klekamp. She is responsible for managing all aspects of the firm's information resource center. She is a member of the Association of Legal Administrators.