

## **Looking at 11 useful mobile apps that attorneys may have never heard of**

These free apps can help attorneys find ways to increase efficiency and cut expenses without sacrificing quality

by Patrick Soon and Rebecca Bellow

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Let's face it: In this economy the pressure is on for attorneys to find ways to increase efficiency and cut expenses without sacrificing quality. The free apps below can be very helpful in this regard. And while most of these apps are not specifically designed to aid the practice of law, they should nevertheless be included in every lawyer's digital tool box. Here are the top 11:

### **1. Asana (Free for teams up to 15) Android; iPhone**

Asana is an easy-to-use, web-based group-project manager that makes it easier for attorneys and paralegals to work together on a big case. Each team member gets a workspace where they can add comments, attachments and tags to the tasks on which they are collaborating. Each user also gets their own inbox which organizes and updates new information in real time, so e-mailing is not needed. The most important benefit is that the lead attorney can spend more time working on the case itself and less time checking up on the other members of the group.

### **2. Documents 5 (Free) iPhone**

This app represents an overhaul of Documents, by Readdle. It has many applications for law offices as it is designed for optimal file management, document viewing and media playing. It allows users to read, listen to, watch, download or annotate just about any kind of file. It is a download manager, external storage device, cloud service manager and full browser with the ability to download files from the web all wrapped up into one. A team of attorneys that make full use of this application can streamline efficiency and productivity.

### **3. Word Lens (Free) Android, iPhone**

It may be a stretch to include Word Lens on a "legal app" list, but this is one of the most incredible apps created to date, and every lawyer should download it. Just point your phone at street signs, billboards, magazine covers, etc. and this app will translate the words into your native language. No wonder Google acquired Quest Visual, the maker of Word Lens, as this app is ideally suited for Google Glass. Possible uses include translating foreign script on an exhibit, or ordering from a foreign-language menu at an attorney-client lunch.

### **4. iTimeKeep (Free) Android, iPhone**

It is a simple fact of life that lawyers' lives are governed by the world of 6-minute time increments that require tracking and diligent recording. As much as we may *love* our work and our clients, it's our billable hours that keep food on the table and gas in the car. Most importantly, this app can be integrated with most billing systems.

#### **5. Hootsuite (Free for up to 5 social profiles)** [Android](#), [iPhone](#)

Every modern attorney uses social media, even if it is just to market your firm or personal services. Hootsuite lets you use a single dashboard to view and respond to up to five social media sites, including Facebook, Twitter, Google+, FourSquare and Instagram. This app helps you keep track of your social media presence and makes it much less likely that you will miss responding to a question from an existing client or a request for more info from a potential client

#### **6. Evernote (Free)** [Android](#), [iPhone](#)

By now, most people have heard of this amazing note-taking app, but lawyers may not appreciate how useful Evernote can be. For example, you probably know that you can save, sync and share notes, to-do lists and files across all of your devices. But did you know you can also search for text inside images and add sketches to notes? This functionality has many applications during a trial or interview.

#### **7. ScanBizCards (Free)** [Android](#), [iPhone](#)

Even in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, exchanging business cards with clients and colleagues is still important for lawyers. With ScanBizCards, you will never have to worry about losing or misplacing a business card again. This app doesn't just scan and add contacts to your address book, it allows you to use premium features to add calendar reminders, sync all of your devices, and follow up with quick e-mails to potential clients or colleagues you meet while networking. But make sure you inform the person that you have scanned their card before you hand it back, otherwise, they may think you are just being rude.

#### **8. Onavo Extend (Free)** [Android](#), [iPhone](#)

This app is a wonderful money saver for lawyers on a budget! Onavo compresses unencrypted data so that you only consume as little as one-fifth the amount of data as you normally would. This is a great way to avoid overage if you are on a limited data plan, and it will also let you work faster if you are on a slower 2G network. Combine the benefits of this app with the benefits you get from the other apps on our list and you have a winning combination.

#### **9. Wild About Trial (Free)** [Android](#), [iPhone](#)

Wild About Trial is great for criminal law attorneys or law school students who want to follow big cases in the news. This app provides up-to-the-minute news, insider legal perspectives and unlimited access to the facts of the country's most captivating criminal

trials. Users also get biographies of the major players from judges to defendants, documents directly from the court file, and live feeds of court proceedings when available. This app provides information that is both educational and interesting.

#### 10. **Fastcase (Free for smartphones)** [Android](#), [iPhone](#)

While the full version of Fastcase requires a subscription, like Westlaw or Lexis Nexis, the iPhone and Android apps are free. The smartphone application is a lighter version of the complete Fastcase service, but it is nevertheless an extremely powerful research tool. It is a great way to do a quick search of recent cases or for pulling statutes when you are out of the office — perhaps during your commute or while you are on a break at the courthouse. Also, many local bar associations offer the full-service version of Fastcase a free benefit for members.

#### 11. **Legal Newsance (Free)**[iPhone](#)

This app is like a multi-functional Swiss Army knife; it offers essential legal news, practice tools, legal forms, general know-how, CLE info and even job listings. For the solo-practitioner, Legal Newsance can be an especially valuable source of helpful information.

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