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Litigation War Stories— Using the iPad and TrialPad in a High Stakes Class Certification Hearing

Posted on January 26, 2013 by Bill

This past week I was in federal court opposing a motion for class certification on behalf of a major corporate client— high stakes. After plaintiffs' counsel presented their initial argument, I moved to the forward counsel podium with just my iPad. Using the TrialPad App (\$89.99 App Store), I displayed key documents and testimony on the court's own electronic presentation system as I presented my argument. The presentation went without a hitch with one exception— a reminder popped up on my screen half-way through the argument to remind me I was 30 minutes overdue for my class certification hearing [Lesson learned-- turn all notifications off prior to using the iPad for a hearing].

The Setup— as noted, this particular federal courtroom was wired for video presentations. Each counsel table was equipped with a monitor and a VGA cable for connecting that counsel's computer to the system. There were screens for the judge, his clerk, and even courtroom spectators. There was a central podium for counsel with another connection station and an Elmo presentation device (think of it as a glorified overhead projector that can display documents).

In this case, I chose to use Apple TV to make the presentation. Apple TV (\$99.00) allows you to mirror your iPad screen to an external monitor.



To make this work, the iPad and the Apple TV device need to be on the same WiFi network. While the courtroom had WiFi access, I have found it to be more reliable to bring my own WiFi either using the hotspot on my phone or as in this case, a separate WiFi card. Unfortunately, Apple TV's only output is a digital HDMI cable. This is great if you are using a HDMI projector or monitor, but not so good if your projector or monitor is of the older and still more common

analog VGA variety like the set up in this courtroom. In that case, you need a digital to analog converter to use the Apple TV. Because the court's system was several years old it was of the VGA variety and the use of a converter was required. So here is the set up:

1. WiFi hotspot connected to Apple TV by WiFi from Hotspot
2. Apple TV HDMI output connected to converter by HDMI Cable
3. Converter connected to Court VGA system by VGA Cable



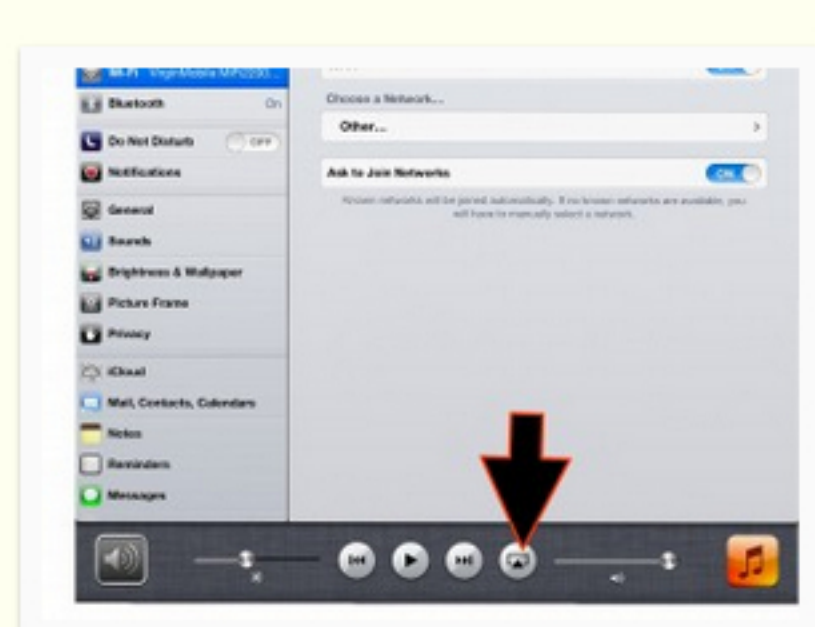
VGA



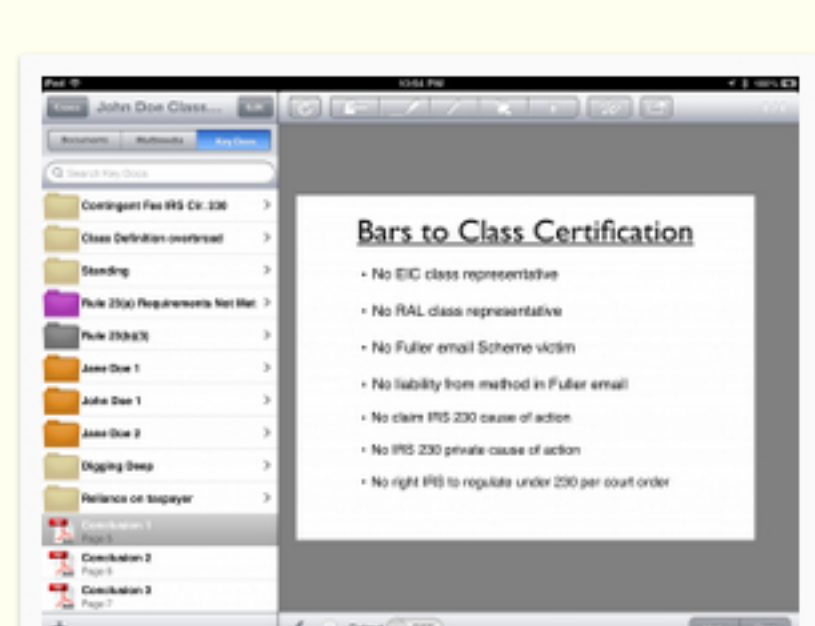
HDMI



Once everything is up and running the next step is to connect the Apple TV via WiFi. To do this you must double click your home key. Then scroll to the mirror icon that should be located next to the volume and play controls. Select Apple TV and then mirroring and you are on the air.



I had the documents organized in folders in outline form so that I could adjust to the issues raised in the argument of opposing counsel or those that were of particular interest to the court. It looked something like this:



The main folders actually served as my argument outline. Each of folders contained documents labeled for easy identification that argument point. This organizational method allows the presenter to custom tailor the presentation on the fly— which I had to do when plaintiffs counsel abandoned their entire briefed theory and presented a new one in response to my argument.

In our next installment we will examine the preparation of exhibits using TrialPad and the additional presentation features of the App, including a video demonstration of the software in operation. Also See our prior review of TrialPad.

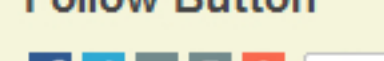
UPDATE: We Won— Motion for Class Certification Denied.

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