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# Today's Tech: How A Litigation Attorney Uses An iPad

By NICOLE BLACK

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One topic I re-visit in this column on occasion is how lawyers are incorporating tablets into their practices. I do this because different lawyers own different types of tablets, and depending on their practice areas and needs, use them in unique ways. Since my end goal with this column is to help attorneys figure out how to use technology effectively in their practices, I find that focusing on how various lawyers use tablets in their law firms is often a helpful exercise and enables me to achieve that goal.



So when James Nieset reached out to me after reading one of my columns about iPads (and yes, you too, can do that — I welcome emails from lawyers using technology in creative ways), I was eager to learn more about how he incorporated iPads into his New Orleans litigation practice.

According to James, he's been using iPads for more than 4 years, and due to the nature of his litigation practice — mostly insurance defense for personal injury and product liability matters — the iPad works well for him. "My practice involves a high volume of smaller cases so I don't need the power to sift through many thousands of documents at one time," he explains. "Because of the iPad, I'm much more efficient and I can take more of my work with me when I leave the office. I don't have to chase around paper or pay someone else to do it anymore. Everything is at my fingertips all of the time and the search features on digital documents let me find exactly what I want in seconds without having to fumble around in stacks of paper. It is also a lot easier to carry to court on hot New Orleans summer mornings."

James uses the iPad in a variety of different contexts, ranging from mediations and depositions to trial. Here's how he uses it in mediation: "My latest iPad discovery was to use it to present to a plaintiff at a mediation. Rather than bringing a projector and dimming the lights, I created a Keynote presentation, gave my new iPad Pro to the plaintiff to view and used my old iPad to control the presentation from the other side of the table. The iPad Pro's larger size allows for easy viewing and the plaintiff only has to watch. They were connected via Bluetooth and the Keynote remote feature is built in to the most recent version of the software. I think this may be the best way to present evidence in non-tech friendly courtrooms."

He also finds that iPads work well during depositions when used in conjunction with the right apps. "I've been taking my iPad to depositions for several years and use an app called iAnnotate to present pictures and documents," he says. "I let the witnesses annotate scene photos and the like right in the deposition. It is a much more effective way to get testimony rather than asking them to draw a picture on a blank piece of paper."

The iPad streamlines the presentation of his clients' cases at trial, too. "I use TrialPad to present at trial. It's a great app that allows me to make a paper trial more interesting to the jury by using easy highlights and call-outs." He continues, "During depositions, the occasional opponent will object to my use of a scene map or vehicle photo on the iPad, but I've never had that problem at trial. In fact, I even brought it to the bench for a bench conference with the judge to allow her to rule on an objection during trial."

He offers the following advice for lawyers who have not yet taken the leap, but are thinking of using tablets in their practice: "Jump in with both feet and get started. It doesn't take long to learn and is the present, not the future, of my area of the law. So unless you're very close to retirement, you might as well learn it today."

So that's how a litigation attorney uses an iPad in his practice. As always, if you or an attorney you know is using technology in a creative or unusual way in your law firm, drop me an email at niki.black@mycase.com. I'm always looking for new attorneys, law professors, or judges to feature in this column.

*Nicole Black is a Rochester, New York attorney and the Legal Technology Evangelist at MyCase, web-based law practice management software. She's been blogging since 2005, has written a weekly column for the Daily Record since 2007, is the author of Cloud Computing for Lawyers, co-authors Social Media for Lawyers: the Next Frontier, and co-authors Criminal Law in New York. She's easily distracted by the potential of bright and shiny tech gadgets, along with good food and wine. You can follow her on Twitter at @nikiblack and she can be reached at niki.black@mycase.com.*



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