

“SCIENTIA POTENTIA EST”

By Linda Fifield, Doris O. Wong Associates, Inc.

“Know your equipment. Know your software.” This has been my office mantra since the early 1970s when Doris O. Wong Associates, Inc., got into computers. Since then, the evolution from Baron Data mainframes to smartphones and ASCII to PDF files have changed the way we do business. It’s a full-time job keeping up with the technological changes and applying them to the business. There is so much out there so it’s important to incorporate only those applications that make sense to you and improve your productivity on a day-to-day basis.

First and foremost, take the time to learn your Case Catalyst (CC) software and writer. Did you know that Stenograph has a blog with tech tips? What about the Integrated Training Videos and Self Study Guides under the HELP menu in CC? Attend a STAR convention and go to the CC seminars. Learn a great editing feature? Share it with your peers. Why be a good reporter when you can be a great one?

NCRA’s listserv forum is another wonderful resource. It’s amazing what gems of information I glean from reporters around the country. I pick out something that interests me, research it and see if it applies to the firm. If I like it, it gets incorporated.

Facebook and LinkedIn are other great resources. There are so many forums and pages that you can easily follow all of which help you keep a pulse on what’s happening around the country. Whether it’s a new service idea, a promotion, how-to scenarios, or a new product update, all of this is valuable information. For example, have you checked out FB sites like Steno Briefs for Court Reporters or Case Catalyst Reporters and Users? Your peers are amazing!

Just recently the office got into the iPad craze. There are a lot of APPS for the iPhone, iPad and the Android. For simplicity, I’ll concentrate more on the Apple products, but you will find that there are similar applications for other devices out there.

First of all, when you get a new device, take the time to learn how to navigate the product. All new technology has a learning curve. If you don’t take a lesson, go online and find a site(s) with tech tips. For example, here’s a helpful site that gives you a quick tutorial on how to navigate an iPad. <http://www.techsupportalert.com/content/ipad-tips-and-tricks.htm>.

Once you know your device, you’ll want to add applications or APPS that add value to your day. Whether it’s a news feed, PDF reader or a mindless game, download the APP and give it a try. Most APPS are inexpensive, but I still rely on my network of gurus to point me in the right direction. That means going to STAR and NCRA conventions, signing onto the NCRA listserv and other CR forums, subscriptions to journals and magazines, and finding blogs that

relate to court reporting and the legal profession.

Some of my favorite APPS or APPS of interest include:

- iCVNet – what a game changer for reporters writing realtime. Counsel love it and hookup is a breeze.
- iAnnotate PDF – this is a great PDF editor for \$9.99
- GoodReader – PDF editor for \$4.99
- PDFpen for the iPad and iPhone – similar to the other PDF APPS with different functionality.
- Evernote – a great organizer that syncs over multiple devices and platforms
- Goodnotes – sometimes typing on a device or breaking out a keyboard is cumbersome and using a stylus makes sense.
- Flipboard – personalized news magazine. Pick your topics of interest and stay up to date on the latest and greatest.
- Scanner Pro – If you don’t carry around a ScanSnap or true portable scanner, turn your smartphone or iPad into a scanner using this APP. Take a picture of business cards, receipts, documents and save them in Dropbox for when you need them.
- Air Display – turns your iPad into another display screen.
- Dropbox – cloud storage
- Kindle – e-books
- SKYPE – video conferencing on the fly
- Grocery IQ – I never have to go back to the grocery store because whenever I think of something I need, I instruct Siri to put it on my list.
- Flashlight – I can’t see like I used to so a “flashlight” brightens things up so that I can see what I’m doing.
- Magnifying Glass – What a great find for these tired eyes!

Technology I can’t live without:

- ScanSnap S1500 for scanning. Also comes with a “free” version of Adobe X Standard.
- Andrea Pure Audio USB Sound Card to boost sound on notebooks
- iPhone

Technology to be on the lookout for:

- Imore.com is coming out with a Griffin PowerDock 5. It will charge five devices from one dock. Thanks, Mike Miller, for finding this gem.

“Scientia potentia est” (Knowledge is power). Embrace it and you’ll go far.