Court Technology

Trial Presentation

iPad App Reviews, Legal Technology, High-Profile Trials

The Court Technology and Trial Presentation Blawg features articles, reviews and news of interest to lawyers and other legal professionals. This blog is published by Ted Brooks, Trial Presentation and Legal Technology Consultant, Author and Speaker, with experience in hundreds of civil, criminal and family law matters, for Plaintiff and Defense. High profile trials include the Los Angeles Dodgers McCourt divorce trial (with David Boies), and People v. Robert Blake (with M. Gerald Schwartzbach). Offices are located in Los Angeles and San Francisco.
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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2012

Popular Cloud File Storage Apps Compared

It is estimated that nearly 300 Billion emails are sent worldwide daily, according to a 2010 study by the Radicati Group, Inc. The massive amount of data and web traffic is mind-boggling, with some highlights shared in Internet 2010 in Numbers, an interesting compilation of facts and figures. While email was once one of most efficient methods of moving relatively small amounts of data from one point to another, nowadays, with plenty of convenient alternatives, you don't have to choke both sender's and recipient's email servers with ten pound email attachments. Here a few services you can use, each offering a free level of storage and service, along with full-featured paid upgrades. I've also included a handy comparison chart at the end of this article.

Dropbox

I'll list Dropbox first, since it's the one I personally use most often. This is a referral link which gives you an extra 250MB on your free account. Dropbox is primarily a cloud-based storage service, but now also features a decent method of file-sharing

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Ted Brooks
Trial Presentation Consultant (Robert Blake, LA Dodgers, David Boies); Law, Tech & iPad Blogger; Speaker; Author; Cyclist

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Ted Brooks is one of the most widely-recognized figures in Trial Presentation and Legal Technology. He is a successful high-profile Trial Consultant, Founder of Trial Consulting Network, Litigation-Tech LLC, Trial Technology LinkedIn Group, author of the Court Technology and Trial Presentation Blog, and winner of the Law Technology News Award for Most Innovative Use of Technology During a Trial. He is actively involved in developing and presenting Continuing Education and Certification programs with the NCRA OLP, and ALSP.

With a National Trial Consulting Network and offices in Los Angeles and San Francisco, Ted has provided trial presentation services in numerous high-stakes and high-profile matters, including the Los Angeles Dodgers divorce trial (with David Boies, Dennis Wasser, Bruce Cooperman, Mike Kump), People v. Robert Blake (with M. Gerald Schwartzbach), Western MacArthur v. USF&G ($3 Billion), May-Carmen v. Wal-Mart (Defense Verdict), PG&E v. U.S., People v. Dr Hootan Roozrokh, Shropshire v. City of Walnut Creek ($27.5M), Liou v. Caltrans ($12.5M) and a number of others on both sides in civil, criminal and family law cases.

Ted is a Committee Member of the National Court Reporters Assn, Organization of Legal Professionals Advisory Council and Trial Presentation Certification

at the folder level, and also happens to be perhaps the most popular method of moving files to and from iPad apps. There is a version for the desktop of your PC as well, which automatically remains synced to the cloud. So, you can actually use this as an offsite backup. The file-sharing occurs when you select others to share a work folder with, and then you can add or remove files for all to have access. Bear in mind, if you delete the files from your desktop version, they will also be deleted from the shared folder. You can also share individual files an unsecured "Public" folder via a link, such as I've done here with my bio. Just be aware that there are no password requirements for anyone to download from your Public folder, so anyone choosing to download and distribute my bio is free to do so. Go ahead, try it.
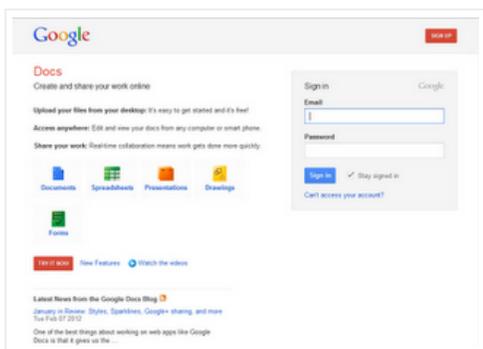

YouSendIt

YouSendIt started off as more an email replacement for sending large attachments, but now they also offer free storage. You are able to send files to their server, which then generates an email sent to your recipients with a link to download the file, or files may be saved in the cloud on their server. With upgraded versions, you can select multiple files, or even entire folders. The zip feature is actually much faster than locally zipping your files in my experience, and you have options as to how long the file will remain on the server, and how many downloads are permitted. This is probably the easiest method of sharing files with others, since the recipient doesn't have to have an account.

Box

This service is similar to YouSendIt, although their initial focus was more storage-based, with the option to send a link for sharing. This service started as box.net, and has been around quite a while, as one of the first services of its kind available to the public. One advantage of Box is that it features 5GB of free storage, more than doubling the YouSendIt free account limit. There are lots of great features in both free and upgraded options. Sending a file link via Box does not require the recipient to have an account. I hadn't used this service in a few years, and am impressed with all of the updates and functionality.

Committee. He is a Certified inData TrialDirector Trainer and a member of The American Society of Trial Consultants.

A frequent speaker and author, Ted has written and presented legal technology topics for the California State Judiciary, CAOC Forum Magazine, Plaintiff Magazine, The Advocate Magazine, For The Defense, Defense Comment, Journal of Court Reporting, SF Trial Lawyer Magazine, ASTC The Jury Expert, U.C. Berkeley, NITA, ABOTA, LawNet, ADC, DRI, ILTA, SFTLA, American Lawyer Conference, Paralegal SuperConference, Law Technology News, Law Office Computing, Litigation Educators, Lorman Seminars, numerous Bar Associations, Government Agencies, and law firms.

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Google Docs

This was designed primarily as a cloud-based working document collaboration tool, where someone can post a document, and others can review and update it. The key here is that the documents do not require you to have any other office software. In other words, you could use you phone, iPad or Android tablet for full editing ability. They have also recently rolled out a new Presentations app. Upon checking, I just noticed there is a new feature currently being Beta-tested, which will allow you to save a local read-only copy of the document. It appears that although each of these cloud storage sites began with some unique features, they are all becoming more alike. Overall, Google's options are becoming very attractive, with the ability to automatically upload photos from your phone, a calendar, Gmail, and a full suite of features.

iCloud

Surprisingly late to the table, and also lacking in some of the best features noted in the above apps is Apple's own iCloud. In any event, you'll find the familiar suite of email, contacts, and your calendar, plus an option to "find my phone" (or iPad), and an iWork icon, which is a cloud-based document storage area for Keynote, Pages, and Numbers, while also serving as a backup for your iPad data with 5GB of free storage available. Upgrade options are available. Although this service is pretty much a no-brainer for iPhone and iPad users, the interface with the computer doesn't seem to be quite there yet. After logging into my account, I would have expected to have access to the same set of contacts, calendar, and email that I have on my iPad. Instead, they were empty, and I could not locate a method of getting it all to sync up. Not sure if that feature is available yet, but it's not practical to assume that anyone is going to manually update their contacts again. Remember doing that each time you got a new cell phone? That is so 1980's.

Conclusion

I would suggest getting at least a free account for one or more of these. You will likely find yourself naturally gravitating towards one or more to the point you'll want to pay for an upgraded version. This may be a result of discovering which works best for you, or because a client is using it, requiring you to upgrade to more storage or functionality. Each brand offers several upgrade level options and some include personalized branding, although the comparison chart below shows only the least-expensive upgrade option for each. There are many other options available, which a quick search on "Cloud Storage" will demonstrate. All of them include a login and web-based interface.

Provider	Free Account	Upgrade (monthly/annual)	Upgrade Storage	Versions
Dropbox	2.25 GB	$9.99; $99.00	50 GB	PC, Mac, iOS, Android
YouSendIt	2 GB	$9.99; $49.99	5 GB	PC, Mac, iOS, Android
Box	5 GB	$9.99; $99.00	25 GB	PC, Mac (soon), iOS, Android
Google Docs	1 GB	N/A ; $5.00	20 GB	PC, Mac, iOS, Android
iCloud	5 GB	N/A; $20.00	10 GB	PC, Mac, iOS

Click on chart to enlarge

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Carolyn Feb 9, 2012 07:16 PM
Hi Ted, I'm also a big fan of Dropbox. It's good to see a comparison of all the

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all my first reviews of the iKeyboard , which were both written prior to release of the final version. Even working with the p...

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Author's Comment – Well, as soon as my reviews of iJuror and JuryTracker were safely in the hands of Technology Editor Sean Doherty of Leg...

iKeyboard Update: Touch Typing On Your iPad
Today's post will be a little different, in that I will be typing it entirely with my iPad 2 (first time for that, although I have written o...

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Comparison of TrialDirector, Sanction, and

major apps to confirm I'm using the right one.

A friend recently told me about SugarSync that gives more free space than Dropbox, but I like that Dropbox has integration with so many other sites and apps.

Thanks for sharing this!

Reply

Ted Brooks   Feb 9, 2012 07:24 PM

Glad you enjoyed it, Carolyn! I've also heard that SugarSync is supposed to be faster than Dropbox, but as you've pointed out, it doesn't have as many options or compatibility.

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Visionary (plus iPad and legal video info)

This past weekend, I enjoyed the opportunity of presenting at the National Court Reporters' Association Trial Presentation Symposium , in A...

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