

Working Better Faster And Cheaper: 60 Tips in 90 Minutes

Presenters:

Julia E. Cornish, Q.C.

Sealy Cornish Coulthard
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
jcornish@scclaw.ca
scclaw.ca

Richard G. Ferguson

Lynass Ferguson & Schoctor
Alberta Business Lawyers
Edmonton, Alberta
rferguson@altabusinesslaw.com

Donna S.M. Neff B.A. (Hon.), LL.B., T.E.P.

Barrister & Solicitor
Neff Law Office Professional Corporation
Ottawa, ON K2S 1B9 Canada
donna.neff@nefflawoffice.com

Dan Pinnington

Director, practicePRO
Lawyers' Professional Indemnity Company (LAWPRO®)
Toronto, Ontario
dan.pinnington@lawpro.ca
www.practicepro.ca and www.lawpro.ca
Blog: www.avoidaclaim.com

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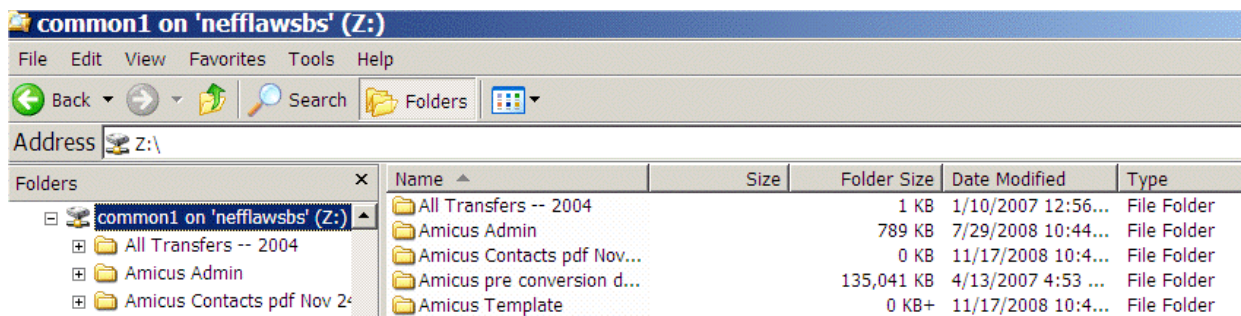
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Donna's Tips

Know, at a Glance, the Size of a Windows Folder

Hard drive getting full? Wondering if there is an easier way to see the size of folders without having to right-click on Properties for each folder? A free utility called FolderSize is just what you need. Download from <http://foldersize.sourceforge.net> and install on your computer. Open Windows Explorer, right click on the titlebar above the list of folders and files. In the drop-down list, select 'Folder Size'. A column displaying the size of all folders is now included (see below).



Windows Shortcuts

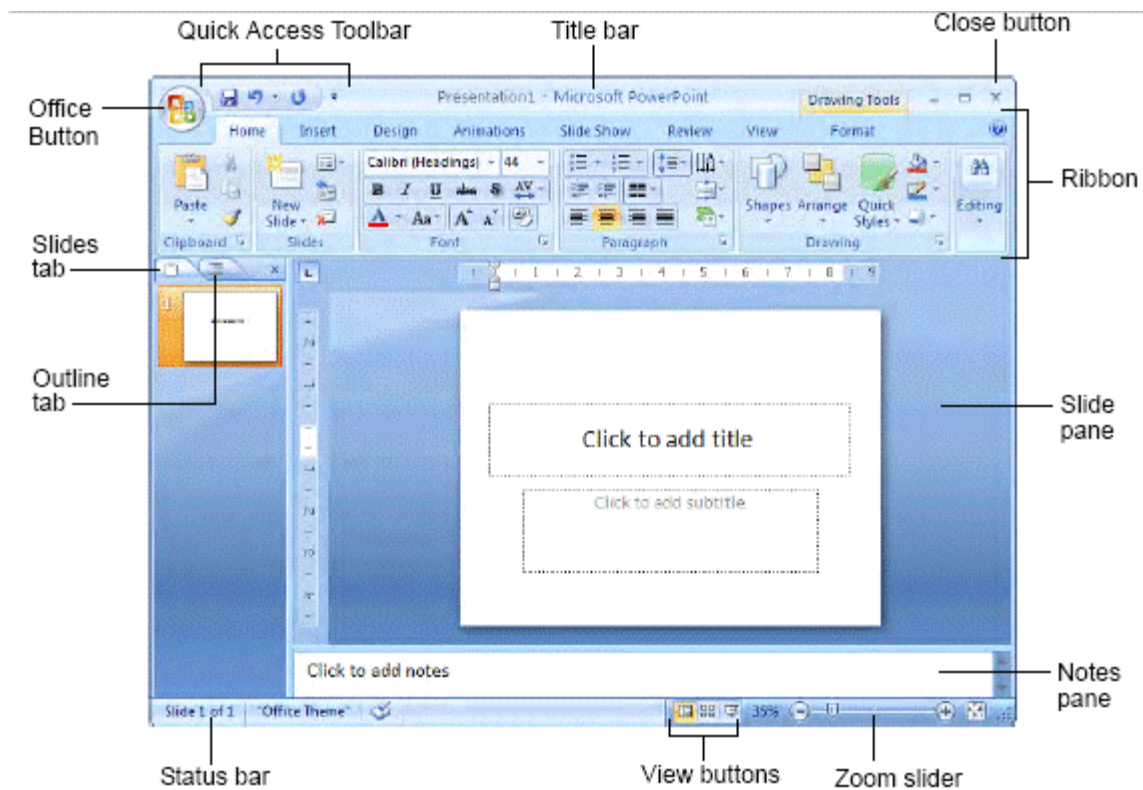
Save time by giving computer commands without moving your hands from the keyboard. Learn the keyboard shortcuts that are built into Microsoft and other products. Here are several that I use regularly.

- WIN + L = Locks your keyboard so that you can walk away leaving your computer protected. When you return, just type in your password to pick up where you left off.
- WIN + D = Displays the desktop. Use this to view the desktop, rather than shrinking each window that is currently open.
- WIN + E = Opens a new Windows Explorer window
- Ctrl + Esc = Opens the Start menu
- Alt + Tab = Displays icons for every open application. Use this keyboard shortcut to quickly switch from one application to another. Hold down Alt and repeatedly press Tab to cycle through all open applications. Release both keys when the application you want is highlighted.

Free Two-Page Quick Reference Guides Provide Inexpensive Training

Learning new software? Upgrading to a newer software version and need to figure it out quickly? Check out these excellent, free two-page summaries of the most popular Microsoft, Adobe, and Mac software products including Windows 7, Word, Powerpoint, Excel, Access, Acrobat, Photoshop, and more. Use a colour printer to maximize the usefulness of these guides – colour screen shots and colour-coded text make them especially easy to use. Provide individual colour

copies to each user in your office. These guides helped us find features we didn't know existed and helped us make better use of essential features that we often used but didn't fully understand. Below is a screenshot from the PowerPoint 2007 Quick Reference Guide. Locate and download these guides from: www.customguide.com/quick_references.htm



Display More When Surfing With Internet Explorer

To increase the viewable display area when using Internet Explorer, press F11 for 'full screen mode' (removes navigation bars & menus). Press F11 again to return to the previous display.

Before

Continuing Legal Education - e-Transactions - Windows Internet Explorer

http://ecom.lsuc.on.ca/cle/

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

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Need Help to Escape Chatty Callers?

Do you need help escaping from callers who have more time on their hands than you do? To cut a call short when you can't get a word in edgewise, turn up your computer's speakers, visit www.sorrygottago.com, select 'At the Office...' and select the "My cell phone is ringing" or other fake emergencies.

**Business Office**

Someone's at the door	There's my conference call
My ride is here (honking horn)	Fire drill !!
Can't hear you - (jets)	My pager just went off
Can't hear you - (street)	My cell phone is ringing
Can't hear you (talk)	I have a customer
The car alarm!	The boss just came in
My computer is acting up	Do you hear static?
The office party is starting	Can't hear you - workmen

Reviewing and Commenting on Word 2007 Documents

If you are using Word 2007 to review and comment on draft documents prepared by your assistant (and you don't have Adobe Acrobat software), use the Full Screen Reading feature in Word 2007 for quick and easy review and mark-up as follows:

- Open the document to be reviewed.
- Select View.
- Select Full Screen Reading.
- Review and mark-up using the highlight tool and inserting comments as needed.
- When done, close and save.

Want to Increase Productivity Quickly & Easily? Add Second Monitors

The single easiest way to increase productivity in your office is to add a second monitor at every user's desk. Productivity increases have been demonstrated by a number of studies including a recent study for NEC conducted by the University of Utah.

http://www.necdisplay.com/Gowide/NEC_Productivity_Study_0208.pdf. Both Windows and Mac operating systems have built-in capability to allow you to easily add a second monitor. Check your laptop for a monitor port that allows a second monitor to be plugged in and used at the same time as the laptop's own display. Desktop computers may need to have a video card added to allow a second monitor to be plugged in. The video card costs less than \$50 and is easily installed. The second monitor itself can be purchased for less than \$150.00. No one in my office would ever go back to one monitor. The second monitor can even be one that swivels 90 degrees to suit the user's needs even better.

Fixing Bulleted and Other Lists in Word 2007

When you add bullets or a numbered list, Word automatically sets the indents. If you don't like the default indents, change them as follows:

- Anywhere in the list, right-click
- Select 'Adjust List Indents'
- Change the settings as desired
- Select 'OK'

Turn off the Display of Formatting Changes when Tracking Changes

Most lawyers leave the formatting of documents up to their staff. If you use Word 2007's Track Changes to review documents and you don't need or want to see formatting changes, turn them off as follows:

In Track Changes:

- Review
- Track Changes
- Change Tracking Options
- Deselect 'Track Formatting'
- OK

To remove formatting changes from the 'Final Showing Markup' display:

- Review
- Click on the small arrow after 'Show Markup'
- Deselect 'Formatting Changes'

Need a Flashlight? Use Your Blackberry's Camera Lamp

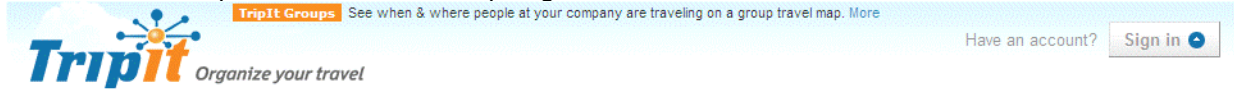
A neat trick I picked up at the 2010 TechShow in Chicago came in handy when I arrived home one night recently and found our porch light was off. I needed a bit of light just long enough to find my key and insert it into the lock. If you briefly need a bit of light and you have a Blackberry, open the Blackberry video application, select Options (in the Blackberry menu), and set the 'Video Light' to On. Save the setting and the camera light turns on.

Tracking and Sharing Trip Details Using Triplt

Triplt is a useful free application that can be used anywhere that you have an internet connection. It can also be installed on your Blackberry, iPhone or Android. Go to www.Triplt.com and open an account. Once your Triplt account is active, you can manually enter details of trips. However, there is a much easier way to get the information into Triplt. Just email your itinerary exactly as it was emailed to you to plans@tripit.com – any itinerary or confirmation of flight, hotel, car rental, etc. will do. With amazing accuracy, Triplt is generally able to plug the information into the right spots. You can selectively give other people access to trip details. Helps your

spouse figure out when to pick you up at the airport! The email address that Triplt has for you must match the email address that you use to send information to Triplt.

Triplt can insert maps, weather information and other details into each trip. I've used Triplt for several years and find it invaluable for keeping my family and staff informed as to where I am and for having a ready reference of all trip details available on my Blackberry. The Triplt Blackberry app provides me with key trip details even when my Blackberry is offline – very helpful when the Blackberry is out of range or when I turn off the mobile radio to avoid roaming charges especially if I need the hotel phone number or a map to get to the next destination.



All your travel plans in one spot.

Just forward your travel confirmation emails to plans@tripit.com.

Build your itinerary

Email Triplt your travel plans—airline, hotel and more—it doesn't matter where you book.

Get Organized

Triplt organizes your plans in a master travel itinerary that's easy to share and access.

Stay informed

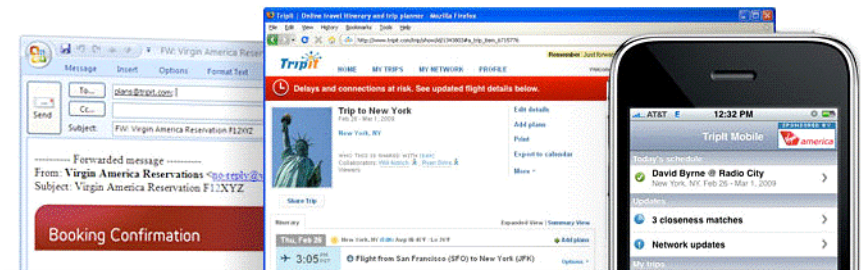
Automatically monitor your Triplt itineraries and get alerts about any travel delays with Triplt Pro.

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T "Easy-to-edit itinerary"
Frugal Traveler, NY Times

TIME "Everything is organized in one place... you'll be totally prepared."
Time.com 50 Best Websites 2009

TC "A simple travel service that is absolutely awesome."
TechCrunch

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Dynamic Marketing in Your Reception Area

Purchase a digital photo frame. Load it with information and photos about your law practice, who works at your firm, what each person does, seminar announcements, awards, etc. Display the photo frame in your reception area. Update the information regularly to keep it fresh and interesting and ensure that announcements for seminar dates that have passed are removed in a timely fashion.



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March 2010 | SUCCESSION PLANNING

Law Practice TODAY

THE MONTHLY WEBZINE OF THE ABA LAW PRACTICE MANAGEMENT SECTION



FEATURES: SUCCESSION PLANNING

The Dollars and Sense of Successful Succession Planning
By Edward Poll
Whether they want to sell their practice or groom a successor partner to take it over, lawyers need to know how the value of their practice will support their retirement years.

Building an Effective Retirement Path for Firm Partners
By Ed Flitton
A former managing partner explains the keys to making succession planning happen with the senior lawyer's well-being in mind.

Estate Planning for Your Digital Assets
By Dennis Kennedy
Given the wealth of information we have housed on our computers and the Internet today, smart estate and succession planning includes addressing how to handle digital assets.

Keys to the Succession Process: A Success Story
By Linda R. Walker
The best approach involves properly choosing and grooming your successor and working diligently together to effect a smooth outcome.

Exit, Stage Left! A Succession Planning Checklist for Lawyers
By James S. Bolan
To prepare the practice for a purposeful transition, study up with this abbreviated list of action items and other points for consideration.

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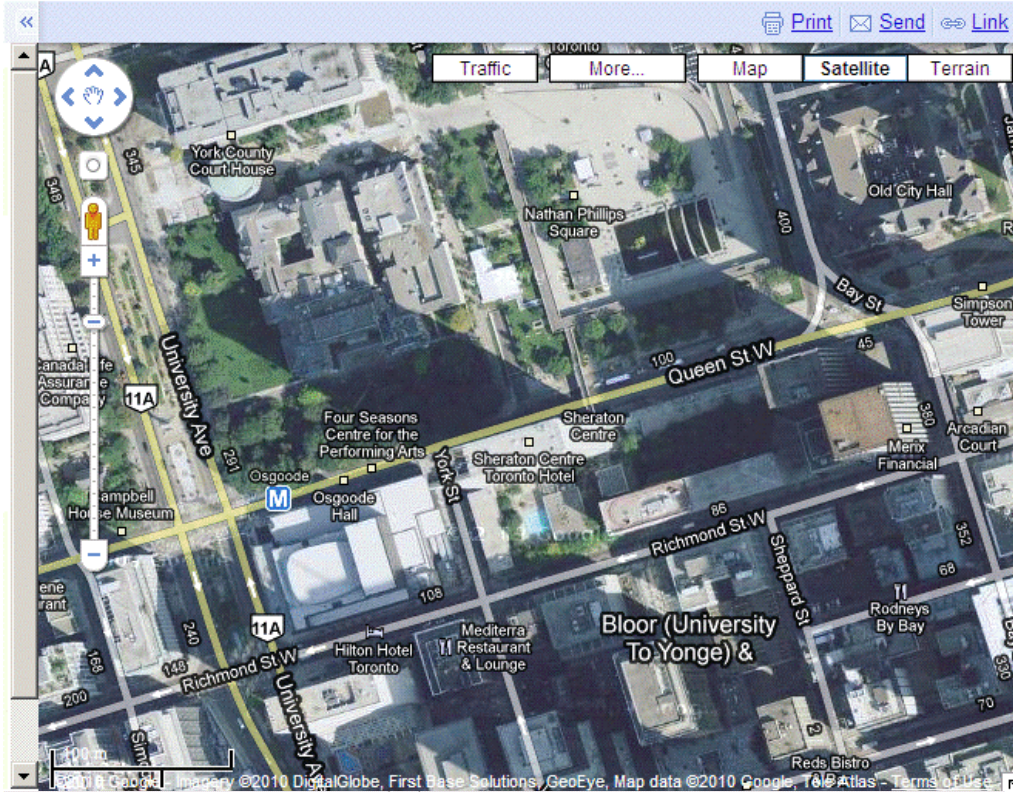
NEXT WEBCAST > Creating a Culture that Reduces Stress
NEXT EVENT > Don't miss LPM Spring Meeting, April 28 - May 1, Las Vegas

PODCAST

Check Out the Property and Terrain for Real Estate Purchases

Use Google Earth satellite photos and Google Maps with Streetview to see what the area and the terrain looks like when clients (or you) are purchasing real estate. However, be aware that the satellite and streetview photos may have been taken some time ago and may not reflect exactly what is there now.

Here is a satellite view of the Law Society building in Toronto. The next photo is Google's Streetview showing the laneway between the Law Society building and Toronto City Hall.



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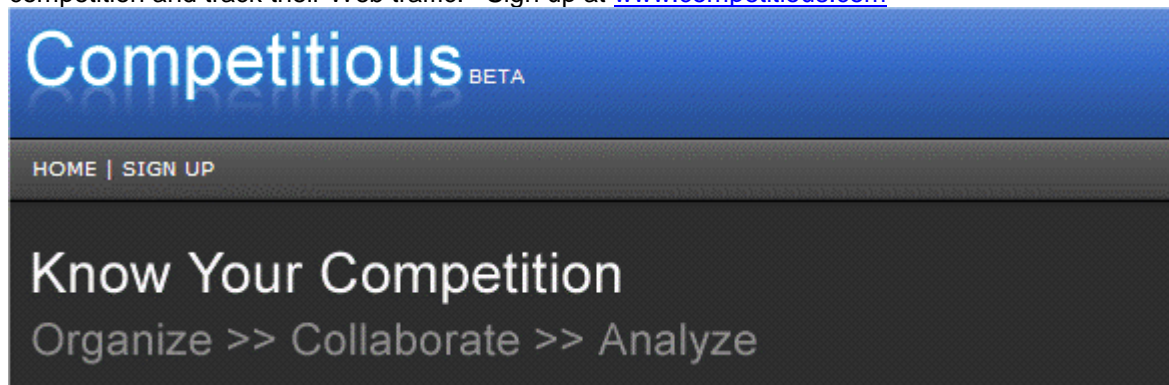
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This is a Street View image of a city street in Toronto. The view is from a low angle on a sidewalk, looking down a paved road. On the left, there are lush green trees and a red octagonal 'No Entry' sign. In the distance, several tall city buildings are visible under a cloudy sky. A yellow Street View pegman is visible in the distance on the road. A small inset map in the bottom right corner shows the current location on a larger map of the area.

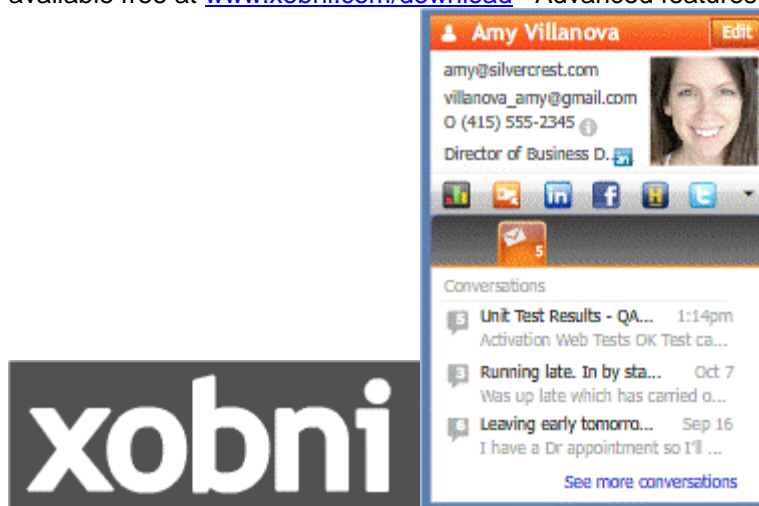
What is Your Competition up to?

Use this free web-based application, Competitious, to track what the competition is up to. Build charts comparing what you offer versus what they offer. Collect news stories about the competition and track their Web traffic. Sign up at www.competitious.com



Getting a Handle on Outlook and Social Media for Your Contacts

Try Xobni (Inbox spelled backwards) to save time spent in Outlook. After installing Xobni, it indexes your Outlook messages. When you open an Outlook message, the sidebar will show a list of your last few conversations (email strings) with that person, how many messages you've exchanged, and any attachments. Provides super-fast search for email, extracts contact information from email signatures, finds and organizes attachments and tracks your contacts' activity in Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and other social media. Basic Xobni features are available free at www.xobni.com/download. Advanced features about \$30.



Computer Taking Too Long to Boot Up?

Use this free utility available from PCWorld, <http://tinyurl.com/5y83g4> to delay the startup of programs that you don't need right away. As a result, your computer can boot up (turn on) more quickly. It lets you decide which programs should sit tight and run a little later after essential programs have run first. To delay a program's startup, drag it and drop it in the white bar at the bottom. Be careful when you decide which programs should be delayed as you won't want to delay anything essential to the operation of your computer. To be safe, only delay programs you recognize and which you are sure are non-essential.

Client Giving You Grief?

All clients are not necessarily good clients and any work at all is not necessarily good work. If you don't enjoy working with particular clients, it is a safe bet that your staff don't enjoy working them either. Unpleasant clients are demanding, waste your time, are slow to pay your bills or never pay at all, file complaints about you, and file malpractice claims. They are not profit centres. Have your staff make a list of their least favourite clients and make your own list. If anyone shows up on both lists, fire the client. You'll have more time to work with clients who appreciate what you do, are willing to pay, and your stress levels will drop. Your staff will also be most grateful.

Job Stuck in the Printer Queue?

If you have ever had a job get stuck in the printer queue and it just couldn't be deleted, here is a free utility that you will find useful. A stuck print job can block subsequent items from printing and sometimes requires a re-boot just to get the stuck job out of the queue. This utility solves the problem but be aware that it will clear all jobs out of the print and fax queues. You can download the zip file to your computer or to a USB flash drive or both so that you always have it handy. Download this utility here: <http://tinyurl.com/22vudy9>

Dan's Tips

The dumbest Windows feature ever: Full menus off

Many installations of Microsoft Office have "Full menus" disabled. What does this mean? To look for a menu command that you don't use often or have never used before, you have to click the two downwards pointing chevrons at the bottom of the menu – this will force Windows to show all the available commands on that menu. You can also double-click the menu to expand it. When you expand one menu, all of the menus are expanded until you choose a command or perform another action. When you click a command on the expanded menu, the command is immediately added to the short version of the menu. If you do not use the command often, it is dropped from the short version of the menu. Duh! This has to be the dumbest feature ever. Why hide menu

items from yourself. In any Office application, click on Tools, then Customize, then the Options tab, and check "Always show full menus".

Build a better "Page not found" page

Have you ever clicked a link or typed a URL only to find the page you were looking for is not there? When this happens you will get a "page not found" or "404 error".

Needless to say, this can be annoying and frustrating because you didn't find the information you were looking for.

Why do pages go "missing"? The common reasons include

- Typos in a link
- Your typo went entering a URL
- The page was moved or renamed
- Search engine index data is out of date

Why are lost pages a concern? First impressions are lasting impressions: the people looking for something on your site will get bad vibes about you and/or your firm. They may not take the time to dig further to find what they are looking for, and they may never come back to your site or your firm.

How do you deal with this concern? It is very simple: create a customized "404 page".

It will have the same look and feel as the rest of your site (banner, NAV bars etc.), and more importantly, will have descriptions and links for the most commonly visited pages or resources on your site. Include obvious links to your home page, a site map, site search. These links will help someone find what they are looking for. If you want to go for five star service – give people a automated link that will let them easily tell you that they couldn't find something. You can take this information and fix the problem so others won't have to deal with the same problem. This can be helpful in a situation where a current magazine article has a typo (in this case you might be able to create a new URL with the typo that will take people to the correct page).

Banish the new e-mail pop-up

Most people computer's present that little "new message" pop-up window come up every single time an e-mail message arrives in their Inbox. Stop the insanity - it's just a huge interruption. You know, the beep goes off, and you get bounced out of whatever you were working in, and your train of thought gets interrupted. Turn off that notification window!! Go with just the beep if you have to. And, if you don't need to know the instant when something arrives in your inbox (and most of the time you don't), consider turning off the beep too. You're going to check your inbox reasonably regularly anyway.

Virtual Meetings

While there is something to be said for a face-to-face meeting, you can get just as much or more done at a virtual meeting, especially if you use some of the new tools that let you collaborate across the web. Virtual meetings have several benefits: you can hold them on an ad hoc basis without leaving your desk, and you don't incur the time and expense of traveling to an in-person meeting.

I am a user and big fan of GoToMeeting (www.gotomeeting.com). It allows me to show the contents of my computer screen to one to twenty other people as fast as I can send an e-mail link to them. At least once a week during a phone call I say to someone, "hey, why don't we just a bit of time right now fleshing this out." I send them a link via e-mail, which they click on to open a browser window and it displays what is on my screen. They instantly see everything I type, and I can give control of the keyboard and mouse to them if they want to type something.

I also find GoToMeeting is great for virtual brainstorming sessions. You can write a document or create an outline much more quickly when everyone can simultaneously view and comment on it as the draft as it evolves. On numerous occasions I have concluded a phone call with a decent draft or outline of a document that normally would have taken many e-mails and redrafts over days or weeks to create.

WebEx (www.webex.com) and the new Acrobat Connect (www.adobe.com/acrobatconnect) are other widely used virtual meeting products. Pricing for the basic versions of these products is extremely reasonable at around \$50 per month. If you avoid just one in person meeting a month you are more than paying for them. Most of these products share common features, including instant messaging, free teleconferencing through a central number that meeting attendees can use (they pay long distance charges). Many let you share work with both PC and Mac users, and some will transmit video as well.

Backchannel lobbying

Hand signals and passing notes can work well at in-person meetings – but they don't work at all for virtual meetings. For this purpose instant messaging or IM comes to the rescue. In fact, you can communicate and lobby one or more attendees of a virtual meeting (and a live one for that matter) far more effectively with instant messaging.

For those that aren't familiar with it, IM is like real-time e-mail. One person types a message on their computer, and when they hit Enter, it instantly appears on the other person's screen. The most commonly used IM programs include AIM, Yahoo!, MSN Messenger, Google Talk, ICQ and Jabber. All of them are free.

Note that many IT departments have blocked IM as in the past people have tended to use it to socialize on non-work related things with friends and family, and IM can allow dangerous content such a viruses and worms into a firm. You may need to convince your IT department that IM can have a legitimate business purpose, and they may have to configure your firewall to allow you to use IM. Note also that communications conducted through chat applications are not secure, unless you use an application like SimpLite by Secway (www.secway.fr) which encrypts the chat session. It is free.

And for those of you that are already IM savvy and have friends that use different IM services, checkout Meebo (www.meebo.com). It allows you to simultaneously connect to all the major IM programs. The advantage of Meebo is that no application needs to be downloaded and installed on your computer. It works directly from your web browser, and will help you avoid problems with firewalls and block ports.

Trillian (<http://www.ceruleanstudios.com>) is another application that allows you to combine multiple IM services into a single application. A free version is available, and a pay version provides additional functionality.

For IM Mac users can use iChat (www.apple.com/ichat), and Adium (www.adiumx.com/) will allow MAC users to chat with people on PC platforms using the major IM services listed above.

The Best Free On-Line Clip Art

One of the best ways to make a presentation, newsletter or website look more professional is to add some clipart or photos to it. There are thousands of sites on the Internet that offer free and pay clip art. While there is some good content in many of those sites, many force you to deal with large amounts of advertising and pop-ups. The best source of free on-line clip art photos, animations and sounds bar none, is the Microsoft Office Online Clip Art and Media page. It has thousands of free images and media files, which you can very easily search by key words and topics.

The licensing agreement for the site provides that you can freely re-produce the images as you wish without having to worry about copyright or royalties. See this page at <http://office.microsoft.com/clipart/>.

Email Signature

No doubt you send out hundreds or even more than a thousand e-mails over the course of a year. In sending out these e-mails you should keep in mind two things, first of all each e-mail should contain full contact information for you, just as your letterhead does, secondly, each message gives you a great opportunity to market yourself in some way to your client. Most e-mail programs have a feature that will automatically add a block of text to the end of every e-mail message, at the so-called signature. In Outlook you can configure the signature to be added to every e-mail message by clicking on Tools, selecting Options, clicking on Mail Format and clicking on the Signature Button. This will open up a window that will give you a box for entering a signature in and options for configuring it. After entering in a signature it will appear automatically in every new e-mail message that you create. In terms of the content that goes into that signature please be sure to include your full name, address, phone number, and e-mail address. A phone number should include area codes and extensions, if necessary. Include both an e-mail address and the URL your firm's Web site if you have one. Also add a little blurb after your contact information that markets you in some way. It could refer to an upcoming presentation that you are doing, or other useful, practical or helpful content that appears on your Web site. Remember to add three or four blank lines to the start of your signature so that you have a blank space within the e-mail to type your contents in. This will save you having to bump your signature down in every new message.

E-mail form letters

Outlook, and many other email programs, actually allow you to create more than one signature – this is helpful if you have different signatures that you want to include on different messages. Maybe you set a default signature if you use the same one the majority of the time, or maybe you manually pick one on each message if you use a number of signatures.

But don't stop there: Do you have one or more blocks of text that you frequently include in your messages? Consider saving the text for these as signatures. Then, the next time you want to include one or more of these text snippets in your message, place the cursor where you want to

text to appear and insert the signature that contains the text you want. It is just like using a macro or autotext feature within an e-mail. Cool!

Training

One last word of advice – and this goes for every new piece of software you purchase, as well as those that have been on installed on your computers for many years: give people proper training. I guarantee 80% of the people in your office are using less than 20% of the features in the software that is installed on their computer. You will get a far greater return on your technology investment if you spend some time and money on training.

Remember that different people have very different learning styles. For those that like a formal learning environment, community colleges have excellent and very reasonably priced courses on widely used software programs. Those that like self-study can learn from a good book or multi-media tools such as the DVDs that Keystone Learning Systems (www.keystonelearning.com).

Lastly, if you have a technology savvy person in your office, encourage and reward them for their efforts, and make them the go-to person for technology issues. They can really help to improve the technology skills of other staff members.

Lots to think about here, and loads of new ways to do old tasks. Keep some of the above options in mind next time you need to hold a virtual meeting or collaborate on a matter or the creation of a document. Many of these applications can be used at no cost, and even those that cost something have many of their basic features available for free, even if just for a short term trial. Once you try working and collaborating online, you will be hooked.

Your best source of LPM advice and info: (ABA) Law Practice Management Section books and publications

The American Bar Association (ABA) Law Practice Management Section has dozens of books on legal technology and other law practice management topics, including firm management, practice finances, and marketing. For a complete list see www.abanet.org/lpm/catalog.

Law Practice Magazine is ABA LPM's flagship printing publication. It is published 8 times a year, and is available by subscription to non-ABA members. www.abanet.org/lpm/magazine/home.shtml

The LawPracticeToday webzine (www.lawpracticetoday.org), the ABA Law Practice Management Section's E-zine, contains many articles on various law practice management issues. It is published monthly and there is free access to all (you don't have to be an ABA LPM member).

Don't be the Last to Know

The Google Alerts service is one of the most helpful Google apps. It will send an e-mail alert to you of Google news or Web search results based on a query or topic that you specify. On the news side, it searches several thousand news sources that the Google news page indexes. On the Web search side it searches all the Web pages that the Google search engine indexes. You provide the alert service with a text string that contains the name of the person or topic you are interested in. The Google alert service then delivers to you via an e-mail message with a brief description and link to the news item or Web page that has met your criteria. You can configure it

to deliver the alerts to you instantly, daily or weekly. This is a great way to make sure you are aware if there is news or content posted on the Web that is about you, your clients, your firm or other topics of interest to you. I find Google Alerts is often faster and finds more than our expensive clippings service.

Be a Better Geek

For those of you who wish to learn more about technology generally can consider getting a subscription to the Smart Computing magazine. It is a great magazine that has helpful and practical content, including product reviews and educational content that come on all sorts of hardware and software. It contains advice for people at all levels.

Great books for learning Microsoft Word

Anyone who grew-up using WordPerfect will struggle at times to make MS Word do what they want it to. For an awesome resource to learn about Word in a law firm setting, see Word 97 for Law Firms, Word 2000 for Law Firms, Word 2002 for Law Firms, Word 2003 for Law Firms or Word 2007 For Law Firms. These excellent books, all by Donna Payne, will teach you basic, intermediate and advanced skills for using Microsoft Word in a law office. Get the book that corresponds with the version of Word that you are using as the books are specifically written to address the differences in the different versions of MS Word.

Alt+Tab for switching between programs

Switching between open programs is one of the most frequent things we all do as we work on our computers. For this task most of us use a mouse to select a button on the task bar. There is a much faster way. Pressing Alt+Tab will open a rectangular grey pop-up window in the centre of your screen. It will have an icon for each program that is running on your computer. Hold down the Alt key, and repeatedly press Tab to jump from one icon to the next. To help you find the window you want, the text from the title bar of each window appears in a box at the bottom of the pop-up. Simply release both keys when you get to the window you want. In this pop-up window, the icons are presented, from left to right, in the order you last looked at their respective windows. This means that the window you were in previous to the current ones just one Alt+Tab away. This lets you jump back and forth between two programs in the blink of an eye.

Cut, copy and paste

Why retype things when you don't have to? The ability to transfer text or other data from one program to another via cut, copy and paste is one of the most powerful features of Windows. To move or copy text or other data (e.g. a picture) you must first select or highlight it. Next, to move the text, press Ctrl+X or Cut on the Standard toolbar (the button with scissors). To copy the text, press Ctrl+C or click the Copy button (two white sheets of paper). The text you are moving or copying is now in the Windows Clipboard, a temporary holding area. Now move your cursor and click where you want to place the text you are moving or copying. This can be somewhere else in the source document, another document in the same application, or even a completely different program. To add or "paste" the text in the new location, press Ctrl+V or click the Paste button (a clipboard with a sheet of paper). The text will appear in the new location. If you want to clean up the format of pasted text, use Paste Special.

Use Paste Special to Clean-Up Text

Moving text with the cut and paste commands, either from one application to another, or within the same application, is one of the most powerful features of Windows. It can also be one of the most frustrating features, especially when the pasted text doesn't appear as you had expected or wanted.

In many programs you can control how Windows pastes data with the Paste Special command. This tip reviews how this command works in Microsoft Word. The steps outlined for Word are identical for pasting text in many other Windows programs.

At one time or another, all Word users will have had problems pasting data. Many lawyers will have experienced this when moving text from WordPerfect to Word, or vice versa. Often the alignment and spacing of pasted text make it very difficult to read.

Here's how you can use the Paste Special command to control the format of pasted text. First, highlight the text that you want to copy, click Edit, then Copy (or Ctrl+C if you prefer using this keyboard shortcut). This puts the highlighted data into the Clipboard. The Clipboard is just a temporary place for holding text that is being moved or copied from one location to another.

Next, click on the location you want to paste the text you are copying. Then, click on the Edit menu, and select Paste Special (not Paste, which would be your usual selection). This opens the Paste Special dialog box. It gives you several different options for the format of text you are pasting. The "Unformatted text" option is the one that will clean up your pasted text. Select it, and then click OK to paste the data.

The Unformatted text option will paste bare, unformatted text only. All other formatting information will be stripped out, including bold, underlining, italics, indents, bullets etc. If the text you are pasting had various fonts or complex formatting, you will have to manually change fonts and recreate all this formatting. Although doing this can be time-consuming, it will sometimes be easier than trying to fix a document that has problems due to formats that did not convert properly, in particular when moving text from WordPerfect to Word.

Remember that you can use the Paste Special Unformatted text option to paste text copied from a PDF file. Select the text within the PDF with the Select Text tool, or with a Ctrl+A. Note also that in the text pasted from a PDF file with the Unformatted text option will have a hard return at the end of every line. You will have to manually remove these returns. In later versions of Acrobat you can use the File|Save As command to save a PDF file in another format, including Word. In many cases this will let you avoid having to manually clean up hard returns.

Many Windows programs have a Paste Special command, and some have other format options that will help you. Excel for example, has about a dozen different options for reformatting pasted text. Next time you need to clean up text, remember the Paste Special command.

Enlarging Windows Navigation Elements

Does your cursor dance in a circle every time you try to close a window or move down a page with a scroll bar? With a few simple tweaks, you can make it much easier to click on key navigation elements.

Larger monitors with higher resolutions are a good thing. They let you see more stuff on your screen. But when viewed at a higher resolution, basic Windows navigation elements such as

caption buttons and scroll bars can become quite small or skinny. This can make them harder to click on, which will slow you down in your work.

If you find these navigation elements are too small for you, there is great news. Windows lets you make them as big (or as small) as you want. Of all the tweaks that make Windows more usable, these are among the best.

Middle-aged persons with eyes that are not as strong as they used to be (that would be me) will find these tweaks to be especially helpful. So will novices who are just learning how to point and click with a mouse or touchpad, as well as anyone trying to work on a laptop on a bumpy airplane ride.

Changing Display Properties

In all versions of Windows, you change the size of Windows navigation elements in the Display properties dialog box. To open the dialog box, click on Start, point to Settings, click on Control Panel, and then double-click on Display. Or (the faster way), you can right-click on the image behind the icons on your desktop and select Properties.

Once you are in the Display properties dialog box, you need to click on the Appearance tab. Windows XP users have one extra step: Click on the Advanced button.

Next, look for the Item drop-down box. It lists the different navigation elements in the Windows interface that you can change the size and color of, and also—in appropriate cases for elements that include text—the font and font size and color.

Bigger Caption Buttons

When it comes to increasing the usability of Windows, few things will be more life changing than enlarging the size of your caption buttons. Okay now, I know that at least a few of you are asking, "What the heck are caption buttons?" They are the little square buttons in the top-right corner of every window on your screen. They let you close, restore and minimize or maximize a window.

To resize those little squares, select Caption Buttons in the Item drop-down list. Click on the up or down arrows next to Size, and watch the Preview pane to see the effect of the change. When you have the size you want, click on Okay to apply your change to your desktop. You will find that just going from the default 18 up to 21 makes a big difference. Call me old and blind, but I prefer a really big target and have set them to 23 on my computer.

These numerical values tell Windows how many pixels wide each navigation element should be. Pixels are the tiny individual colored dots that make up everything that is displayed on your screen.

Note that increasing the size of your caption buttons will also make the buttons on your taskbar slightly larger.

Wider Scroll Bars

We all use scroll bars for moving around documents and Web pages, and making the bars just a bit wider will make them much easier to click on. Under the Item drop-down list, select Scrollbar. Next, use the up or down arrows next to Size to find the width you want. The default is 16. I have

mine set to 21. Again, watch your changes in the Preview pane, and when you like what you see, click on Okay to keep the change.

Note that making your scroll bars wider will also make the up and down arrows on your scroll bars larger, which will make them easier to click on as well.

Changing the size of the caption buttons and scroll bars will give you the most bang for your buck. But look through the other things listed in the Item drop-down list. Alternatively, you can click on the various elements in the Preview box, and then make configuration changes to them.

Make your mouse more sensitive:

As most people use their mouse or touchpad as their primary Windows navigation tool, it is worthwhile to spend a few moments learning how to do more with this humble 2 button tool.

Few things annoy me more than sitting down to help someone with a computer problem only to find that I have to move the mouse about three feet across the desk to get the cursor to move just a few inches across the screen. Good exercise perhaps, but how can these people get any work done?

On a laptop, the equivalent is moving your finger across the touchpad three or four or even more times to move the cursor completely across the desktop. Arrgh!

By default Windows seems to require a relatively large mouse or touchpad motion to move a cursor across a desktop. Fortunately it is very easy way to make your mouse more sensitive, that is, make it so that a smaller mouse movement moves the cursor further across the desktop.

Assuming your IS Department hasn't locked you out, you can change your mouse configuration , by clicking on Start; selecting Settings, then Control Panel; and then double-clicking on the Mouse icon. This opens the Mouse Properties dialog box.

Look for the Pointer Options or Motion tab. Within this tab you will see a Motion or Movement slider. By moving the slider from away from slow towards fast, you can make your mouse more sensitive. Try moving it to about three-quarters of the way to fast.

But be warned, don't speed your mouse up too much at once. It will take you some time to adjust to a faster mouse. Initially you will likely find that you can speed it up a fair bit. After getting used to working at that faster setting, you will likely find you can speed it up a bit more.

I like to have a very sensitive mouse and touch pad. On my laptop about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a stroke across the touch pad will move the mouse completely across my desktop. And just an inch or so on my mouse will do the same. Find a speed that works for you.

A faster pointstick can be helpful too, but if you are a heavy pointstick user you will likely find that an acceptable faster mouse or touchpad setting will be too fast.

Within the Mouse Properties dialog box you can also change some other mouse settings, including your double-click speed and cursor size. Look around to see if there are any other mouse tweaks that will help you.

The amazing right-click

If you are right-handed, your right-hand index finger will be a lean mean left-clicking machine. In case it isn't obvious, a left-click is a click on the left mouse button – unless you are left-handed of course. If you're left-handed, just swap right for left, and vice versa, in the following comments.

I want to focus on the right-click (a click on your right mouse button), which few people use to its full potential. You can do amazing things by right-clicking on almost everything on your screen.

A right-click is real powerful because it gives you way to instantly jump to various features, format and configuration settings. And the key: the options presented to you are "context sensitive." In other words, the choices are going to be relevant to the item or text that you are right-clicking on.

For example, In Outlook, right clicking on an e-mail in your Inbox presents you with Open, Print, Reply, Reply all, Forward etc. Right clicking on a blank spot on your calendar will let you create new appointments, and configure the calendar.

In Word, right-clicking on text gives you font and paragraph formatting, bullets and numbering, the dictionary, synonyms from the thesaurus, and more.

One of my all-time most favorites: In Word a right-click on a misspelled Word will give you a list of correctly spelled alternatives, and the correct one is almost always at the top of the list.

Try right-clicking the various things on your screen. Do it now. You will be amazed what you find!

Jumping text shortcuts

Even the most experienced computer users often take the long road when it comes to editing text and moving around a document. They're either clicking away like crazy with the mouse, or using the arrow keys to move the cursor around a document, one character or line at a time. With a few simple shortcuts you can move around a document much more quickly. When editing a document, the following shortcuts help you jump a whole word, or even a whole paragraph, with a single press of an arrow key:

- Ctrl+Right Arrow will jump the cursor forward a whole word at a time;
 - Ctrl+Left Arrow will jump the cursor backwards a whole word at a time;
 - Ctrl+Down Arrow will jump you down a whole paragraph at a time;
 - Ctrl+Up Arrow will jump you up a whole paragraph at a time. If you want to select or block a larger portion of text, add the Shift key to the above combinations:
 - Ctrl+Shift+Right Arrow will jump the cursor forward a whole word and select the text at the same time;
 - Ctrl+Shift+Left Arrow will jump the cursor backwards a whole word and select the text at the same time;
 - Ctrl+Shift+Down Arrow will jump you down a whole paragraph and select the text at the same time;
 - Ctrl+Shift+Up Arrow will jump you up a whole paragraph and select the text at the same time.
- After blocking the words, sentences or paragraphs you wanted to select, you can copy, move, or reformat as you wish.

Text formatting shortcuts

Few things are more finicky than typing case citations. With these three keyboard shortcuts case typing citations will be a breeze:

- Press Ctrl+B to turn Bold on/off
- Press Ctrl+I to turn Italics on/off
- Press Ctrl+U to turn underline on/off

Two things to note, you can use these shortcuts together, and they are all toggles, that is, pressing the noted key combination cycles between on and off. If you want to type a case name in the middle of a sentence with bold and underline do the following: When you get to the point the case name starts, simply press Ctrl+B, then Ctrl+I, then type the case name. To turn bold and underline off, press Ctrl+B and then Ctrl+I again, and continue with the sentence.

The Miraculous Undo

No doubt, from time to time you will find yourself in a place you just don't want to be after a series of edits. To undo changes - including multiple changes - press Ctrl+Z, Alt+Backspace, or click the Undo button. You can do this multiple times.

And there is more – you can redo undone changes (including multiple changes again) by clicking on the Redo button, or by pressing Ctrl+Y, one or more times.

Undo works in all the MS Office applications, and many other programs as well.

Text Selection Made Easy

In certain situations selecting passages of text precisely with the mouse can be difficult. Probably the best examples of these situations are when you are working with information in a tightly packed table, or trying to select a large piece of a very long document or Web page.

Here is a handy trick to help you select text in these situations. First you must place the insertion point where you want the selection to start. Do this with a single left click of your mouse in this exact location.

Next, you need to get to the screen that displays the end of the passage you want. Use your scroll bars or other appropriate keys to move to where you want the selection to end. While moving to the end point be careful not to click anywhere in the document you are working with as this will move the initial insertion point.

When you get to the screen that displays the end point, while holding down your Shift key, do a single left click of your mouse in this exact location. All text in between the two insertion points will be selected. You can cut or copy the selected passage as you desire. This trick should work in most Windows applications.

Formatting Printouts

Getting useful printouts of spreadsheets can be tricky because they can be very large. To address this Excel gives you a couple of ways to change printout formats. To easily change where page breaks occur, click on View, Page Break Preview, and then drag and drop page the dotted page breaks. To make dozens of other changes in format of printed output, click on the Print Preview button; or select File, Print Preview. You will find yourself using these two tips almost every time you want to print something.

Changing Excel Default Options

Software programs don't always do things exactly the way you want them to. Needless to say, this can be downright frustrating. Fortunately, in some cases, your frustrations can be reduced by changing a few default settings.

As is the case for most Microsoft programs, clicking on Tools, then Options gives you access to the majority of the Excel default settings you can play with. In the Options dialog box there are 13 tabs with various settings you can tweak. I will focus on what I think the most practical and useful changes are.

View tab

The settings on the View tab control how things are displayed on the worksheet screen. In the Show section select or clear options under to display or hide the formula bar (useful), status bar (useful) and startup task pane (probably an annoyance for most of you). Clicking Windows in Taskbar will force Excel to display multiple workbooks as separate buttons on the Windows taskbar.

The options under Objects allow you to display or hide graphic objects in the workbook. Show all is the default and displays everything. Show placeholders displays pictures and charts as gray rectangles. Displaying object placeholders can significantly increase the speed of scrolling through a sheet. Hide all hides all graphic objects and is useful when you want to view or print a worksheet without graphical items.

In the Windows options section you set the display options for the active window. I sometimes find it useful to turn off gridlines, and turn on page breaks and formulas.

Edit tab

All sorts of useful things on the Edit tab to control the options for editing worksheet data. Any options checked in this tab affect all worksheets in the workbook.

The most useful one here is Move selection after Enter. This controls which adjacent cell you jump to after you press ENTER in the current active cell. The default is Down. You can also set it to Right, Left and Up.

Edit directly in cell lets you make edits right inside a cell by double-clicking it. This is faster than editing the cell contents only in the formula bar.

Allow cell drag and drop lets you move and copy cells and data by dragging them around the sheet. This is helpful in some situations, but can be dangerous unless you also enable the Alert before overwriting cells option. It displays a message if you drop cells over other cells that contain data.

Now for two "oh that's why that happens" settings. With Enable AutoComplete for cell values enabled, if the first few letters you type match an existing entry in that column, Excel fills in the remaining text for you. When Enable automatic percent entry is enabled all numbers less than 1 will be multiplied by 100 when they are entered in cells formatted in the Percentage format. These are often helpful, but it's nice to be able to turn them off when they aren't.

General tab

In the Settings section you specify display, viewing, and opening settings for your workbook.

Enable Function tooltips to displays brief descriptions of the names of buttons and boxes on toolbars. A ToolTip is displayed when the mouse pointer rests on the button. These are real helpful.

Recently used file list displays a list of recently used files at the bottom of the File menu. This lets you very quickly access your recent work. The default is three, the max is nine. You can also set it to zero to hide your tracks.

Provide feedback with sound plays various sounds that are associated with Microsoft Office program events, such as opening, saving, and printing files, and displaying error messages. Normally I am not a fan of extra sounds and animation (because it often slows your computer down), but I find the extra audible feedback is helpful to confirm things are happening as I want them to and to warn me when they are not. Note that this setting affects all other Microsoft Office programs. Sounds assigned to different events can be changed in the Sounds Properties dialog box in Windows Control Panel.

Sheets in new workbook sets the number of worksheets you want when you create a new workbook. The default is 3.

Standard font controls the default font (and its size) for new sheets and workbooks.

Custom Lists

The Custom Lists tab has gotten me hugs and kisses following some of the Excel presentations I have done. Excel uses custom lists to create a list of entries in sequential cells when you drag and drop the fill handle (a little black square in the lower right corner of a cell) in any cell containing an entry from a custom list. By default Excel has custom lists for the days of the week and months of the year in full words and shortforms.

The real power is that you can add custom lists for anything you want. I find lawyers tend to like this for creating custom ID numbers for documents in a document brief or for a deposition. You can import a custom list from a worksheet. One trick to remember, the first character in a custom list item can't be a number.

Color tab

Under the color tab you find the standard colors Excel uses. More importantly, for those that may want to tweak which colors Excel uses on charts and graph lines, the Chart fills specifies the first eight colors Microsoft Excel uses for chart fills, and Chart lines specifies the first eight colors Excel uses for chart lines. Click on the Modify button to create custom colors, and the Reset button to the color palette to the original colors.

The Copy colors from copies a color palette to the active workbook from another currently open workbook.

International tab

Under the Number handling section you can change the decimal and thousands separators from the default Windows separators.

Save tab

The Save AutoRecover info every automatically makes a workbook recovery file at the interval you enter in the Minutes box (a number from 1 to 120). If your computer crashes, Excel automatically opens the AutoRecover file the next time you start Excel. It may contain edits that would otherwise be lost from your original workbook. AutoRecover does not replace the Save command—you must still save your workbook when you finish working on it. If you just hit Ctrl+S every few minutes you will never have to rely on Autorecover.

Spelling tab

Although you are likely mostly dealing with numbers in a spreadsheet, remember that Excel has the same spell checking functionality that Word has (click on Tools, then Spelling and grammar or hit Shift+F7). On this tab you can control the Dictionary language for the worksheet, and which custom dictionary is used for extra words.

Security tab

The Password to open option allows you to set a password to prevent others from opening a workbook unless they have the specified password. This is handy if you want an extra level of privacy when sending a spreadsheet as an attachment to an e-mail message.

There you have it, a bunch of ways to make Excel work more the way you want it to. I have only reviewed some of the setting changes you can make in the Options dialog box. I encourage you to review the others to see if there is something that would be helpful for you.

Jumping one slide at a time

My favorite key for jumping to the next PowerPoint slide is the Space Bar. Of course, the PageDown, Enter, N key (for Next) and down or right arrows to do the same thing. However, the Space Bar is a much larger target that is so much easier to hit if you are nervous or your hands are shaking.

Have you ever seen a presenter that accidentally jumped ahead a slide and couldn't go backwards? Ouch! To jump back to the previous slide, try the Backspace key. It is bigger than the PageUp, P key (for Previous) and the up or left arrows, which accomplish the same thing.

Jumping multiple slides

One of the most common criticisms about PowerPoint is that it forces you to do linear presentations – a series of slides, one slide after another, in a preset and fixed order. Of course, topics don't always go in the exact order you planned, especially if you get a question from the audience that takes you to a non-adjacent slide in your presentation.

And remember, pressing PageUp twenty-two times to get to the slide you want is just not cool. To easily (and invisibly to your audience) jump to any slide in your presentation, press the Alt key, then the numerical digit(s) that represent the number of a specific slide, and then hit Enter. The desired slide will instantly appear on the screen. Now that's cool!

Memorize the numbers of the key slides in your presentation, or have a list in front of you. This will allow you to jump to any slide to respond to a question or make a point.

Now, what happens if you don't know the number of the slide you want to go to? A simple "right click" on your mouse presents you with a menu with a number of options. The one of interest here is Go to Slide. Move the cursor over this menu item and bingo, up pops a numbered listing of the titles for every slide in your presentation. Click on the desired slide and you will jump directly to it.

A blank screen

Of course, as an audience is sitting there watching your presentation, their attention will largely be on the screen. One really powerful way to pull the attention back to yourself is to press “B” or “W” respectively to turn the screen to black or white. That blanks the screen out and the of course the audience will then focus on you, and at that point you can either emphasize or walk them through something that is particularly important or that you particularly want to give a high emphasis to. Simply pressing the “B” or the “W” again will take you back to the presentation

Essential Microsoft Outlook keyboard shortcuts

These five general tips will help you move around and work with items more quickly within Outlook:

1. Learn keyboard shortcuts for completing the more common tasks. The essential Outlook keyboard shortcuts include:

- Ctrl+Shift+M to create a new message
- Ctrl+Enter to send a message
- Ctrl+Shift+I to jump to the Inbox
- Ctrl+Shift+B to jump to the address book
- Ctrl+Shift+K to create a new task
- Ctrl+Shift+N to create a new note

(If you are not familiar with the syntax for describing keyboard shortcuts, simply remember that a plus sign (+) between two keys means that you press the listed keys, almost simultaneously, moving from left to right. For example, a capital B would be described as Shift+B.)

Use plain English dates

Outlook understands plain English entries in date fields, and will enter the next occurrence of the described date. For example: typing “tomorrow” will enter tomorrow’s date, “nov 4” will enter the next occurrence of this date, “one week” will enter the date one week from today, and “2 days” will enter a date two days from the current date.

Sort items to quickly find the information you want.

In all views you can sort items listed in a column with a click on column title bars. Clicking a column heading a second time will reverse the order. This sort feature works the same on column style information in all Microsoft Office applications.

Julia’s Tips

The Power of Thanks

Say thank-you right away to someone who provides you with a referral. Have dedicated referral cards in your firm logo. Ask all incoming clients how they found you. Before they even arrive, have your assistant address an envelope to the referral source and provide you with a blank card or cards with all new files. This will prompt you to write the thank-you card or cards as soon as the client leaves. Make sure it’s marked “confidential” and ask the new client’s permission. Consider a second card when you’re closing the file and a card to the client as well, thanking them for their business.

Screen, screen screen.

The best way to make your practice better is to define your “perfect” client as well as the clients you DON’T want to represent and develop a screening tool. Train all your staff in the screening procedure and make sure they do not have authority to book a prospective client if one or more of the “alarm bells” have gone off. (Make sure it is your staff and not you handling client inquiries regardless of whether they come by phone, e-mail or letter- if you avoid a conflict, you may find the opposing party is more to your liking.)

Learn to fire.

If you are doing a good job screening, you won’t have to consider firing a client too often-but no lawyer should hang on to a bad client. Letting go of the non-paying client causes less angst but sometimes even paying clients aren’t worth keeping: the client who constantly second-guesses your advice, the hostile client, the absentee client, the client who makes your staff cry. If you think you don’t have any clients who deserve to be fired, ask your staff which of your clients they would fire if they could. And trust your instincts.

As for how to do it, most clients will respond positively to being told that their matter deserves a fresh pair of eyes or that you find yourself in circumstances where you are unable to give their matter the attention it deserves. Once you have made up your mind to part company with a client, don’t let them talk you in to rethinking your decision. You will regret it.

Be alert to marketing opportunities.

Don’t go anywhere without your business card and give it out liberally. By now, everyone has heard of the “elevator speech” (and should have one ready), but where do you go from there with someone you’ve just met who is asking what you do? Be prepared to tell a longer story about your practice, one that both protects privilege and portrays you in a positive light (even if you’re not the central character.) It has to be something sincere (no faking!). I have an adoption story that I love to tell. Not only is the story memorable but it disarms the non-lawyer (and lawyer!) whose image of family lawyers is that of Arnie Becker-style misanthropes.

Read “E-myth Revisited” by Michael Gerber.

Don’t read it with the mindset of identifying all the ways it doesn’t apply to lawyers and law firms. Instead, concentrate on its core messages: small business owners fail if they spend all their time being technicians (ie practicing law) without acknowledging their role as a manager and an entrepreneur. No matter what type of practice you’re in, you have to manage it. And unless you work for government, you have more value to your organization if you concentrate on developing your practice.

Cultivate your relationships with other lawyers

They're your colleagues as well as your best referral sources. Find ways to get past the file irritations and get to know something about the lawyers you deal with in a personal way. If you like them, they will probably like you. And it makes the day-to-day grind more bearable (even downright enjoyable!).

Systemize!

What aspects of your practice are capable of being systemized? Do it! Go beyond precedents for legal documents only and systemize your intake procedure, your initial client meeting procedure and your file closing procedure. In between opening and closing a file, consider where you can have a standard template letter to go to your clients: explaining the basic legal advice in your area of law, explaining the trial process, explaining the discovery process, explaining the appeal process (both from interim and final hearings), explaining the implications of a final order. Create a checklist to ensure the use of these standard letters as appropriate and make sure each one is personalized enough to be useful to the individual client. Not only will your client be happy about being kept well-informed but you will have confirmation of the legal advice given along the way- keeps the Bar Society and the Insurers happy as well!

No giveaways.

Do NOT give away a free consultation. Charge a fixed rate and figure out how to add value. Assemble a package of materials to bring into each initial meeting if you routinely practice in the same area of law, and make sure the client leaves with your initial opinion and written materials to reinforce your discussions. Follow up with a letter, or do what another lawyer does: record your initial advice and present the client with a CD into which the information has been burned so the client has a reference.

Plan to take a month off-then do it.

Some firms-even small firms-have sabbatical programs which require each partner to take three months' off on a rotating basis. Once you've reached a reasonable level of seniority, any lawyer, including sole practitioners, can take a month off. You'll need to organize and delegate. But I guarantee you it can be done.

Please note this does not mean a month during which you are in constant communication with your office. This means a month off.

Make client ID rules work for you.

Make sure your receptionist gets a copy of the picture so she can index it and greet the client by name the next time they arrive (which means she also needs a list of everyone's daily appointments.) Enhance the experience even more with a beverage selection list.

Go Mac!

Are you a lonely Mac user or a PC user considering a change? For everything you need to know, check out the following:

- The Mac Lawyer (www.themaclawyer.com) webpage of Ben Steven, subtitled "Using Macs in the Practice of Law"
- Macsparky (www.macsparky.com) webpage of Irvine, California lawyer David Sparks with practically daily updates of all things Mac
- MacAttorney newsletter (subscribe by sending an e-mail message to "randy@macattorney.com") and MacAttorney site (www.macattorney.com, Randy Singer's "Law Office Software List for the MacIntosh computer")
- Tablet Legal: yes, there is already a site for iPad lawyers! (www.tabletlegal.com)

Better still, join us at the annual ABA Tech show in Chicago, which this year featured a full day of sessions for Mac users and the Mac curious, as well as a number of sessions directed at iPhone users. Looking forward to next year's inevitable iPad sessions!

Want to (or have to) live in both worlds? BootCamp allows you to instruct your Mac to boot up into Mac world or PC world (although you still need Windows software). Parallels lets you load Windows onto your Mac and switch back and forth between the two operating systems instantly. (I use it for our firm's timekeeping software, which is PC only, as well as for support calculation software.)

Keep it fun.

It's going to continue to get harder to keep good staff and good young lawyers. Make sure your office is one where people look forward to coming to work. How? Some firms present weekly awards for demonstrations of desired qualities such as helpfulness-one week's winner gets to choose the winner for the next week and the prize is something simple like a coffee card. Some firms offer larger treats for achieving major goals, like reorganizing a neglected library. Others present a small gift-publicly-to any staff person who receives a compliment from a client; if the whole firm is complimented, everyone is rewarded. My firm closes at 4 on Fridays so that everyone can gather in the boardroom for a drink and a bite to eat. Each week, a different team composed of staff and lawyers are responsible for the organization and given a \$50 budget. A survey confirmed it was everyone's #1 reason why they like working with us (along with our quarterly potlucks).

Bill your paralegal's time.

Anytime a member of your firm is doing something that a lawyer could legitimately bill for, it's billable. Include a paralegal rate in your retainer agreement and explain to clients that they will receive many more hours of legal services for the same amount of money if they agree that not everything needs to be done by you. The more senior you are, the more your file time should be spent on supervision and strategy rather than minute-by-minute file management. One lawyer

has even suggested that lawyers doing work that could appropriately be delegated to someone with a lower hourly rate are ripping off their clients.

Or investigate dropping the billable hour altogether in favour of value-based billing (this sounds so much better than flat-fee or fixed-fee billing. See, for example, *Winning Alternatives to the Billable Hour*, Third Edition: *Strategies that Work* by Mark A. Robertson and James A. Calloway and *Pricing on Purpose: Creating and Capturing Value* by Ronald J. Baker.

Voice recognition.

If you've tried and become discouraged with voice recognition before-or never tried it at all-now may be the time. Voice recognition software has become much more responsive (initial training time of five minutes rather than hours) and cost-effective, particularly when compared with the cost of digital dictation-and the staff that go with them. As a bonus, you get to see your work right away, a benefit otherwise unavailable to all but the fastest typists amongst us. Dragon is the top software provider for both PC and Mac (since acquiring MacSpeak).

Hire a coach.

Maybe a business coach for your firm or you as a lawyer. (How many of us came in to this profession with any kind of business training?) Maybe a coach to help you achieve personal or fitness goals. Some Lawyer Assistance programs offer a number of training sessions with a coach for no charge. There are coaching firms out there that work only with lawyers (check out Atticus at www.atticsonline.com) as well as coaches who used to be practicing lawyers. Whatever "taking it to the next level" means to you, coaching will help you get there.

Richard's Tips

Adobe Acrobat Professional

More than just a way to view pdf files... OCR capability, portfolios to assemble virtual closing books and evidence binders, annotation tools, collaborative tools, security and sharing tools, creating fillable forms are some of its worthy features.... and the single tool to make it all worthwhile... the email consolidation tool which will save selected emails (with attachments in their native format) as a single searchable, storable, securable file.

Scansnap 1500 and 1300

Both by Fujitsu and both worthy of special mention in the desktop scanner and portable scanner category. Whether you are wanting to go paper-less or just need to be able to attach a physical document to an email for client review, these are fast (up to 20 ppm both sides), compact, reliable

and extremely easy to use. The 1500 comes bundled with Adobe Acrobat Standard and ABBYY Finereader OCR software. Versions also available for Macs. Cost \$400-500.

Get on Board with Sections

Become a member of both the Canadian and the American Bar Associations' LPM Sections. The book, seminars, e-zines and publications of both groups are truly worth the price of membership. PracticeLink (<http://www.cba.org/cba/PracticeLink/Home/>) and Law Practice Today (<http://www.abanet.org/lpm/lpt/home.shtml>) are great free resources. Also consider going to Techshow held every spring in Chicago for invaluable information and education on the use of technology in the practice of law. Friday of Techshow is dedicated to solos and small firm technology matters.

Passwords for Dummies

If you hope to maintain security on your data and programs you need to use and regularly change secure passwords (8+ characters long including a combination of upper and lower case letters, numbers and symbols). If remembering them is a challenge... use a passphrase (a sentence within quotation marks using punctuation, mixed cases ... "Gotta like SSFC 2010") or use a program like Roboform.

Chambers or Meeting Concierge

Carry cases/statutes/bylaws/regulations in your smartphone so that when asked by the chambers judge about the Rule, section, or case, when the meeting chair asks what the bylaw provision is which permits them to act... you can find the reference quickly. Save documents as pdf files on your smartphone that can be opened and viewed.

Pictures and Graphics Worth 1000 Words

A Google "Image" search (<http://images.google.ca/>), or a tour through Microsoft's free clip art collection (<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/clipart/default.aspx>) can help you locate graphic content to help explain a particular situation or accentuate a presentation you are making. There are issues of copyright that need to be respected, but note that the Microsoft clip art can be used without permission in nearly all common situations.

NAS (Network Attached Storage) Devices

Even if you don't have a network file server, there are many products in the marketplace that you can attach to your network which will allow common file storage and retrieval both from within your office as well as remote locations. Some come with dual drives that will automatically "mirror" themselves in case one drive has a catastrophic failure. One of these devices may be the remote backup location for your firm's database. (www.buffalotech.com, www.wdc.com).

Digital Dictation and Dragons

The potential for remote transmission and transcription of dictated content make digital recording devices essential practice tools. Compact enough to put in any case; Capable of storing hours of dictation separated on a file by file basis (each of which can be attached to an email and sent anywhere for transcription); Coupled with voice recognition software (and you may find the memo dictated at the courthouse will be waiting in your inbox by the time you walk back to the office). (Philips, Olympus and other sources)

Multiple Monitors .. MMMM

Save the time you might spend "mousing around" by have more than one monitor connected to your computer. Keep documents you are reviewing simultaneously or cutting and pasting from on your expanded desktop in a size format that won't make your eyes tire by 10 am. Keep multiple programs you are running visible at the same time. Flatscreen monitors of a good size are available for <\$300 each and a simple videocard addition (likely <\$100) is all you may need to add 2 monitors to a standard desktop configuration.

Turn Luddites into Gurus

Lynda.com is one of the best online technology training sites you will encounter. For \$25 a month, you can learn to use many of the 1,000,000 features of most programs you already have on your hard drive. This is an ideal way to brush up on techniques, or to provide help to an eager staff member who just wants to learn more.

Copy2Contact (formerly Anagram)

allows you to populate your Outlook Contact list without having to do multiple copies/pastes. Works in Outlook, on iPhones, Blackberries. <http://www.copy2contact.com/>

DocScanner

A handy utility for your iPhone which allows you to take a picture of a document and have text within it recognized for viewing, cutting and pasting into other applications. DocScanner enables users to scan documents on the road. DocScanner vastly improves the quality of camera shot by fixing geometry, removing shadows, fixing white balance and by sharpening the image. DocScanner is great for collecting paper documents, whiteboards and recipes to your iPhone. DocScanner creates standard size (A4, Letter, etc.) PDF-documents as well as image files. Now with the OCR support collected data is also searchable making DocScanner ideal tool for going paperless!

Attachments Alarm for Microsoft® Outlook®

If sending email you tend to forget about attachments, try the **Attachment Alarm for Microsoft Outlook**. This email add-in will never let you forget to add an attachment in email if the body of a message contains key words ("see attachment", etc.). Attachment Alarm works with Microsoft Outlook 2007, Microsoft Outlook 2003, XP (2002), 2000 (\$19 for 3 PCs). (www.ablebits.com)

iPhone J.D.

is a site for lawyers using iPhones published by Jeff Richardson, an attorney in New Orleans, Louisiana. It has every kind of app, tip and trick you might ever want to know, and a few you might want to waste some time on. (www.iPhonejd.com)

Online Document Comparisons

The free beta version of CompareMyDocs allows users to compare, recombine and merge document versions (so long as the versions are in .doc., .docx or .rtf formats). It is unique in that it allows you to simultaneously compare multiple versions, whereas the native Word document compare utility only allows for comparison of 2 versions (www.CompareMyDocs.com) .

Data and File Encryption for Free

Creates a virtual encrypted disk within a file and mounts it as a real disk and can also encrypt an entire partition or storage device such as USB flash drive or hard drive. Data is automatically encrypted or decrypted right before it is loaded or saved, without any user intervention. No data stored on an encrypted volume can be read (decrypted) without using the correct password/keyfile(s) or correct encryption keys. Entire file system is encrypted (e.g., file names, folder names, contents of every file, free space, meta data, etc). (www.TrueCrypt.com)

Smartphone Security

offers a downloadable suite of programs to your smartphone to provide security and anti-virus protection, data backup and the ability to locate the lost smartphone (Pinpoint where your phone is on a map via the web (log-in to Lookout dashboard), Activate a loud alarm to find your phone nearby – even if it's on silent, Remotely wipe your personal data from your phone if it is lost for good). This program works with Blackberries and many other smartphones, but not yet with iPhones. (www.mylookout.com)