

At Your Fingertips –

A Non-exhaustive Review of Free Mobile Apps That Could Benefit Office Staff

One day, as I was standing on a ladder precariously poised on top of a desk, using the back of a stapler to hammer a nail into the wall to hang a picture, a friend of mine walked in. He was not surprised. I am known for my resourcefulness. He found a hammer and brought it over to me. It was right under my nose, but I didn't realize it.

So along those lines, here are some mobile apps that you have at your fingertips that you may not realize are right under your nose. These apps are just a few free resources that can help your RWD or small city office run more smoothly.

Twitter

Yes, one of the original public social media tools is still a viable resource! Many people of all ages have Twitter accounts and can choose to follow your's. They also have



complete control over notifications and can receive alerts on their phone. You can choose to use this resource for emergencies, such as boil advisories or street closures, as well as for news or PR, such as images and briefs from a water storage tank building project or changes in office hours. You can have more than one staff member designated in your account to make posts from anywhere. For example, let's say your city experiences a water leak on a weekend when the office is closed. The responding staff can immediately notify the public via a tweet right from their phone.

Slack

Slack works like an instant messenger, file sharing, screen sharing, mobile and PC utility for teams of people internally. You can communicate with your staff no matter where they are, be it sitting in front of a computer in the office or digging a hole in the field with only a cell phone at their disposal. Each user can control notifications and receive alerts on their desktop or phone, as well as set a status for others to see if they are out of the office or at lunch.



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gTasks Free

If your city or RWD has not yet taken advantage of free Google products, you should! Not only are many Google solutions helpful in their own right, but also there are many other companies that build on and extend their functionality. gTasks Free is one of those. Here's how to use it. Create a Gmail account for each of your staff. Have them sign into their account on their phone and download this app. Then share the main office account with everyone you want to include. Now, you can create lists and tasks inside of those lists that are shared across



devices and users. Whether it be an easy way to track purchasing or a more complex long term project, this app is a shared To Do list on steroids!

Remind

As the name suggests, this app reminds members and creates announcements, shares documents, and serves as a member to member communication stream without users having to share their email address or phone number with others in the group. Normally used by civic groups or classrooms, this app is ideal for smaller groups of people not necessarily inside your organization, for example, board members or certain members of the public you want to connect. Communication is similar to Twitter, as the number of characters sent are limited, but you can receive messages as push notifications on your phone, as text messages, as emails, or by logging in directly to your account.



Scanbot
THE #1 DOCUMENT SCANNER APP & SDK

Scanbot

Have you ever wished you had a scanner right now? You have to send a signed document before the end of the day... But you can't get to the office? Just use your phone! This free app uses your cell phone's camera to create a high quality pdf which you can save or email immediately. Better than just taking a photo of your document, this app can automatically adjust for best document quality as well as combine several scans into a single pdf document. Your camera can't do that!

There are many tech tools available for your staff to use, and these may not be the best or fit your needs exactly. But they might be better than the workaround you are using right now, plus they are free! Bottom line, because there's always a bottom line, if you are using a stapler as a hammer, get a knowledgeable friend to help you find the right tool.

Since 1997, Jen Sharp (JenSharp.com) has served business and government across Kansas and the US and even internationally, specializing in Web development, design & programming including e-Learning, ecommerce, content management systems, and other small business solutions.



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