Productivity Tips

FOR THE Discerning

Cloud Computing
LAWYER

ROCKET MATTER

Disclaimer

We're happy to inject interesting ideas into legal business discourse. We believe those who open their minds to some of the concepts in the book will reap benefits of improved efficiency and profitability. This book contains a mix of facts, analysis, and opinions, and we hope readers find it thought provoking and helpful.

That said, though we believe the information meets that criteria, we assume no responsibility for errors or omissions, and do not warrant or guarantee accuracy, completeness, or appropriateness for any specific set of circumstances. Similarly, we take no responsibility for any websites, links or other content referred to, linked to, or suggested. Nothing in this book should be construed as, or a substitute for, legal or other professional advice.

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Introduction

This compilation of productivity tips is brought to you by the folks who created Rocket Matter, the leading web-based legal practice management software for small to mid-sized law firms. Or, as we prefer to call it, legal productivity software.

We not only write about these cloud based and desktop tools, we use them.

The tools include:

» Evernote

» Dropbox

» iPhone

» iPad

» Rocket Matter

» Google Docs

» Gmail

» Google Calendar

» Twitter

» Blogging

» Home Office

We've included a set of home office productivity tips in recognition of practitioners with virtual practices and telecommuters who probably use these tools more frequently.

5 Tips for a More Productive Evernote Experience
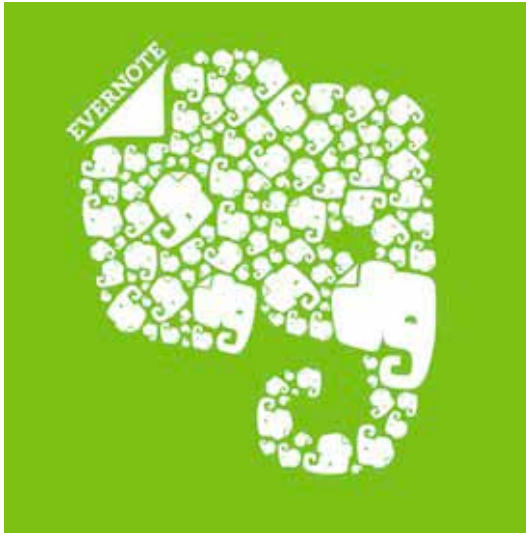
More of us are starting to use Evernote to store and organize the massive amounts of information in our lives. I use the application just about every day. Right now, I'm composing a draft of this post in my "blog post ideas" folder. It saves as I type and syncs across my computer, tablet, smartphone, and browser. No more lost data!

The user interface is intuitive, but here are a few tips I've discovered along the way that make the experience even more pro ductive:

1. Clip only portions of web pages

Firefox and Chrome's extensions are great for clipping content from across the web right into Evernote. But you may be interested in only a portion of the page.

To do so, simply highlight the portion you want and click on the "Clip Selection" option. The URL is preserved so you can find the full page again should you want to refer back to the original.

2. Encrypt sensitive information

I probably won't need to encrypt blog post ideas, but information such as logins or financial data could be accessible to anyone using my computer, so I encrypt it.

To do so, highlight the sensitive text, then right click (*control + click* on a Mac), and choose "Encrypt Selected Text". Choose a password, or passphrase as Evernote calls it and hit enter. An option to select a password recovery hint appears. I'd include a hint, as Evernote does not store your password.

The text you selected is now encrypted and shows up as dots with a down arrow for entering a password to access your information.

3. Streamline the dashboard

I like to keep a minimalist dashboard for quick view and easy use. Among the columns you can view at a glance are: Author, Created, Notebook, Size, Sync Status, Title, and Updated. I've unchecked all but Created, Title, and Updated. It's all I need.
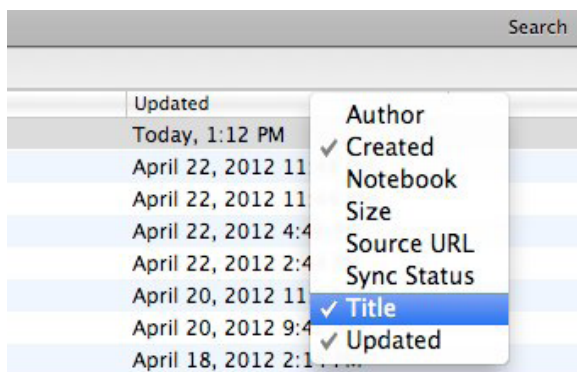
4. Quickly share your notebooks by connecting to Gmail

Evernote allows you to share notes with your friends on Facebook, Twitter, and email. I don't have any use for sharing an entire note or notebook on social media, but I do use the email-to-share feature often.

Now you can connect Evernote to your Gmail account. It makes the process of sharing notes with friends, co-workers and classmates much faster as the connection will quickly autocomplete the address.

5. Record audio notes while away from the office

This feature is handy when you're on the road and need to drop a thought into Evernote but don't have the time to type. I've used my iPhone Evernote app many times for this, even for blog post ideas, and occasionally for dictating an entire post.

Dropbox Productivity Tips

Our lives are becoming increasingly cloud-based. As with Evernote and Google Docs, Dropbox, a file hosting service, provides an online space to store our digital lives, but in its own unique way. Employ Dropbox in your law firm with the following tips and tricks.

Sync files faster

Dropbox automatically limits your file upload speeds to avoid taking up too much bandwidth, but you can control this setting.

On Windows, Click Dropbox in the system tray, then *Preferences > Bandwidth.*

On Mac, click Dropbox in the menu bar, then *Preferences > Network > Bandwidth > Change Settings.*

Change your Upload rate to "Don't limit", or choose an upload limit that you're comfortable with in the Limit to field. (hat tip to LifeHacker)

Share your documents, photos and videos with a link

Dropbox allows you to send a link to files or folders in your account. Anyone with the link gets access to a page where they can view documents, photos and videos – with no download required. They can't edit the content but can download it to their own Dropbox for later viewing.

Get files into your Dropbox

Need large files from non-Dropbox users? Third-party services such as Send to Dropbox and DropItToMe, allow you to securely receive files from anyone to your Dropbox.

For a further discussion on this, check out Tom Mighell's Inter Alia technology blog.

Add another layer of security

Security is often a concern, as it should be. Alleviate your fears with SecretSync that allows you to easily share proprietary, sensitive information.

With SecretSync, your Dropbox files never leave your possession without being encrypted first. SecretSync uses client-side encryption to give you absolute privacy and control over your data. TrueCrypt is another option.

Drag and drop

You can, of course, drag and drop files to the Dropbox folder on your computer. But did you know that the Dropbox user interface also allows you to drag and drop to the web interface? Cool stuff.

Dropbox has become an essential application for me as I store more of my information in the cloud, collaborate with distant colleagues and access documents on the go. If you haven't tried it, give it a test drive. The first two GBs are free!

6 iPhone Productivity Tips

We love our iPhones. We surf the web on it, read entire books, play games, take pictures, watch videos, and text our friends. Occasionally we even use it to make a call.

And we download apps. Lots of apps. And we get notifications. Lots of them. And the battery dies. Here are a few tips to make your iPhone less invasive and more productive.

1. Declutter

Our phones act as a closet to dump free and low-cost apps, deals of the day, and apps of the week. They go on for screen after screen, hogging memory and slowing down the device. Schedule a dumpster day every month and get rid of apps you don't need or use, even the ones you paid for.

Keep in mind the apps you download exist on your computer and in the cloud so you can reinstall an app without paying for it again.

2. Use folders to group apps

For the remaining 178 apps that you just can't do without, group them into folders. You've seen your hyper-organized techie friends

do this compulsively. Drag an app into a related app and a group folder is created with labels like News, Games, Docs, and Social Media for ease of access later.

Each folder can contain up to 12 apps. Now you've gone from over 10 screens to just one. Use the first or second screen for dedicated icons of frequently used apps.

3. Let Siri remind you

The iPhone now comes with its own native To-Do app called Reminders. It lets you organize everything you have to do by deadline, priority, location, or custom-made lists. But lots of cool apps do the same.

Instead, use Siri to set reminders. Just say "Remind me Friday at 4PM to research vacation options", and consider it done. If you add a location, "Remind me Friday when I get into the office", you'll get an alert as soon as you arrive at work.

4. Employ security

According to one study, in a six-month period in Chicago, 20,000 cell phones were left in taxis. So as a lawyer with possible confidential information on your phone, you need to make sure it locks in five minutes and a passcode is required for access.

You can even go beyond four-digits and employ a longer passcode. Go to *Settings > General > Passcode Lock*. Set Simple Passcode to Off. Tap on Turn Passcode On and enter your longer numeric or alphanumeric code.

5. Trim notifications

Interruptions affect productivity and our phones just happen to be interruption devices. Just about every app you download asks for push notification permission.

Why would you ever need an urgent notification from MyFitnessPal or Flixter?

I have five email addresses pouring into my iPhone and one of my biggest productivity boosts came from turning off all email notifications. Go to *Settings > Notifications* and tweak your notifications.

6. Power down when connecting IRL

IRL is "In Real Life" for the acronym-challenged.

A pet peeve of mine is the incessant checking of email, Facebook, Twitter and other applications when meeting up with friends and colleagues In Real Life. Get to your destination, check-in on Foursquare and turn the phone off. Don't put it on vibrate. See that glazed look halfway through a conversation? That's the phone silently buzzing in his pocket diverting his attention.

Turn it off. Rant over.

The iPhone is a very useful tool, a computer in our pocket that needs to be fine-tuned constantly to maximize its productivity.

9 iPad Productivity Tips

I held out for a long time, content with my iPhone and MacBook Pro, but couldn't resist the iPad any longer.

As with any new gadget, it'll take a bit of getting used to. I've been poking around trying to find the most productive way to use the iPad, and what follows are nine tips I discovered:

Shortcuts for regularly used phrases

Go to *Settings -> General -> Keyboard ->* Enter the phrase you want to shorten in the Phrase box, and then type the shortcut in the Shortcut box.

Streamline Spotlight search functionality

By default, Spotlight searches across contacts, apps, music, notes, mail and more. Trimming this list can lead to more useful search results.

Go to *Settings* -> *General* -> *Spotlight Search* -> and select or deselect applications.

Lock in Portrait or Landscape mode

Go to *Settings* -> *General* -> Use Side Switch and choose "Lock Rotation". You can then use the button on the side of the iPad to lock your screen in one mode or the other.

The other option under "Use Side Switch" is "Mute". Choosing this option allows you to use the same switch to turn audio alerts and notifications off. This is especially handy with managing the incessant beeping of Facebook and other social media notifications

Use Side Switch to:

Lock Rotation   ✓

Mute

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Change default search engine from Google to Bing or Yahoo

For those starting to get a little creeped out by Google's encroachment on personal privacy, you don't have to go with the default search engine.

To change search engine in the Safari browser, go to *Settings* -> *Safari* -> *Search Engine*. Choose Bing or Yahoo.

Restrict access to certain content

If you share your iPad with others, you may want to limit access to certain content and apps. Go to *Settings* -> *General* -> *Restrictions* and select Enable Restrictions. Set the access password you wish to use and adjust accessibility settings.

Make sure to turn off the in-app purchases since the kiddies can rack up a huge bill here. You won't be the first parent to see hundreds of dollars spent on roller coaster track for the amusement park game.

Multitasking

Press the Home button twice to bring up a list of apps. From here, you can also close currently running apps by holding down on the app and clicking on the "minus" sign when it starts to wiggle.

You can also swipe the multitasking bar to quickly access audio/video playback controls, a shortcut to the iTunes app, and volume controls.

Take a screenshot

This is an easy one if you own an iPhone since it's the same action. *Press and hold down the Sleep/Wake button and Home button simultaneously.* Your screen flashes to confirm that it has been captured and the screenshot can then be accessed in your native Photos folder.

Adding frequently used apps to the dock

Press and hold down the app that you want to move to the dock and drag it there. You can add up to six apps.

Scroll to the top of page or beginning of document

Some pages and documents go on forever, especially overblown motions from opposing counsel. If you've scrolled all the way down a long page, instead of flicking the screen a number of times to get back to the top, tap the black title bar at the very top of the screen.

Rocket Matter Productivity Tips

Evernote and Dropbox are amazing general purpose apps for the discerning cloud computing attorney. Rocket Matter, however, is a lawyer's online Swiss army knife for running a practice, and keeping all of your case information in one place, (it is Legal Productivity's parent company but that doesn't make it any less cool). Check out these tips, which help even Rocket Matter veterans eek out more productivity:

Create A Button for the iPad Home Screen

One of Rocket Matter's biggest uses is by mobile attorneys running around on iPads. Since you tend to check time, billing, calendaring, and matter management 24-7, save yourself some time by creating a Rocket Matter icon for your home screen.

To the immediate left of the address bar in Safari, click on the arrow icon and select "Add to Home Screen." A little Rocket Matter icon will appear on your iPad, which will launch your User Dashboard when tapped.

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Leverage Tags

Tags are a very convenient way to categorize information in Rocket Matter. You can use them to describe matters, contacts, documents, calendar events, and tasks. For example, you can tag a Matter as a certain type of matter, such as "Family Law", as well as assign a jurisdiction, such as "Palm Beach County."

Once tags are assigned, you're able to search for them using Rocket Matter's ubiquitous Global Intelligent Search. This allows you to find, for example, all documents tagged 'Motions to Dismiss' in certain jurisdictions. Your ability to organize and find your information is completely up to you.

Ditch the Pink Message Pads with Messages

People either tend to completely ignore Rocket Matter's intra-office message feature or use it with near-religious devotion. Try it out: click on the phone icon on any screen to take a message for another member of the firm. Rocket Matter's contact manager is integrated, so contact names pull right up in the contact fields. Once a message is received, you can forward the message to other people, initiate Skype calls, or bill time.

Create "Matters" for Other Projects

Here's Rocket Matter's dirty little secret: the matters in Rocket Matter are merely general purpose vessels for storing information, and can be used to manage projects or track initiatives. Matter permissions can keep stuff secret or isolated to those in a small group.

For example, one of our attorneys creates a matter for each employee to track HR issues. Since he can restrict access on the matters, only he can see it. Others create initiatives for multi-step projects, such as "Christmas Party", and use them to track tasks and keep calendar events organized.

Unify Information with Google, Dropbox, and Evernote

Since ideas and documents are often captured in Evernote and Dropbox respectively, you can unite this with your billing and case management via Rocket Matter's integrations with these products. The idea is to allow you to have all of your firm's information accessible through one place. From the documents screen, you can associate notebooks (for Evernote) or folders (for Dropbox) with a Rocket Matter matter.

Productivity Tips for Google Docs

Between Evernote and Google Docs, I create and store most of my information in the cloud. Dropbox picks up the slack.

Google continues to enhance their amazing products and Google Docs is no exception. Take a look at our favorite productivity tips to maximize your Docs experience:

Export files with Google Takeout

Take your data out of multiple Google products in portable and open formats, including Google Docs in one fell swoop with Google Takeout.

Google Takeout is part of dataliberation.org, a Google project that makes it easy for you to import and export data out of various Google products. Along with Docs, Google Takeout supports Contacts and Circles, Google+ Profile and Stream, Picasa Web Albums and Voice.

Create documents with Google Docs templates
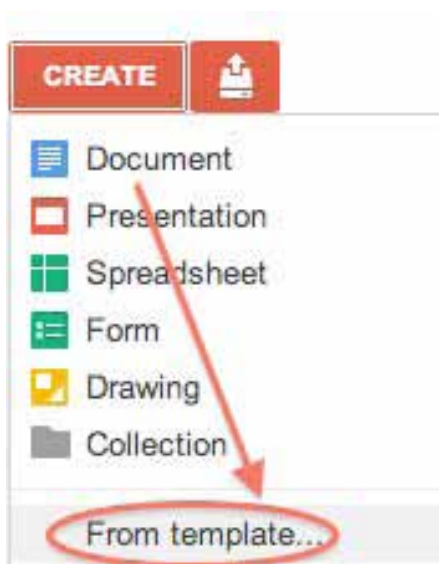
Similar to the useful Microsoft Office document templates, Google Docs – word processor and spreadsheet – allows you to create new documents by choosing from a vibrant library of templates.

You can choose from a ton of public templates, unique templates that you created, or "my templates", a collection of frequently used templates that you work with.

As in Word or Pages, these templates can range from finance and statistics to resumes and cover letters, business forms and letters, and even presentation designs and business cards.

There's a legal template category, but though some may be useful, it's probably good as a reference and information source only.

Navigate documents quickly with keyboard shortcuts

For many of us, avoiding the mouse and using keyboard shortcuts

when possible enhances productivity, speeding up the way we use a product or process – like copy, paste, or undo.

Google Docs offers many of the same shortcuts, following the conventions you're used to, and quite a few more.

Document action	Shortcut
Insert comment	Ctrl+Alt+M
Select all	Ctrl+A
Copy	Ctrl+C
Print	Ctrl+P
Save	Ctrl+S
Paste	Ctrl+V
Cut	Ctrl+X
Undo	Ctrl+Z
Redo	Ctrl+Y
Show your browser's right-click options	Shift+right-click
Compact controls	Ctrl+Shift+F
Increase paragraph indentation	Tab
Decrease paragraph indentation	Shift+Tab
Insert footnote	Ctrl + Alt + E then Ctrl + Alt + F

You can find a comprehensive list of Google Docs keyboard shortcuts here

Gmail Productivity Tips: Shortcuts and Search

The popular Gmail is widely considered one of the best email clients. You can use the ubiquitous *@gmail* extension or set it up to work with your own unique domain, like *name@yourdomain.com*. And it's free!

Google engineers are forever tinkering with the product, providing us with new tools and shortcuts to improve functionality for an optimized user experience. Here are a few:

Speed up email processing with keyboard shortcuts

The user interface in Gmail is pretty streamlined and intuitive, but you can speed up the process with keyboard shortcuts. First, enable "Keyboard Shortcuts" in your Gmail settings.

To give you a sense of what you can do, consider the following very useful commands:

- » **/** – Search across all emails
- » **c** – Compose a new email
- » **p** – Previous message
- » **n** – Next message
- » **r** – Reply to current email
- » **#** – Move message to trash
- » **f** – Forward the email you're viewing
- » **j** – Go to the next email
- » **k** – Go to the previous email

For a full list of shortcuts, go to your Gmail settings and click on "Keyboard Shortcuts". There are over 50. Trying to learn them all is counterproductive, unless you want to consider yourself a Gmail nerd and impress others of your persuasion. So instead, focus a core five to ten that cover the functions you most frequently use.

Note that you can substitute the default shortcut keys with your own.

Leverage intuitive advanced search tools

The robust search functionality is another feature that sets Gmail apart, so much so that I've become rather lazy about deleting or assigning labels to emails.

However, if you're searching for a popular term across thousands of archived emails, some advanced search features will help you hone in on relevant search results:

- » **from: Kelly** – search emails where "Kelly" is the sender.
- » **subject:** "cloud computing" – search emails with the subject heading containing both words "cloud computing"

You can combine the two functions to further narrow your search:

- » **from: kelly subject: "cloud computing"**

And if you have a pretty good idea of what you're looking for and wish to narrow the search even further, add a date restriction:

- » **after:2011/01/12**

Or, if you're looking for a document, add:

- » **has:attachment.**

These are just a few Gmail tools and shortcuts for a more streamlined and productive email experience.

5 Google Calendar Productivity Tips

We use Gmail for our personal email, and for professional accounts hooked up via Google Apps for Business. Google Calendar is just as useful and, like other Google products, updated and enhanced regularly.

Here are a few tips to help you organize your daily Google Calendar for a more streamlined and productive experience.

1. Keyboard shortcuts

Keyboard shortcuts can significantly speed up your navigation. Quickly switch between monthly, weekly, or daily calendar views by hitting the corresponding *M*, *W* or *D* keys. Click *C* to create an event and *S* to manage your settings. Google provides a full list of Calendar keyboard shortcuts.

2. Quickly add an event

Click on the arrow in the "Create" button on the top left corner of the Calendar screen to **Quick Add** an event. You can also use keyboard shortcut, *Q*. Enter the event, participants and time. For instance, if you type in "Conference call with Larry and Mike on 5/8 3pm", it

will be assigned to the correct location in the calendar. Very cool and helpful stuff.

3. Schedule events across time zones

Many of us work with officemates and clients in different time zones. You can view multiple time zones right in Google Calendar.

To enable this feature, go to settings by hitting keyboard shortcut S, and under "Your current time zones", click on "Show an additional time zone". Select the alternate time zone from the drop-down menu.

There's an option in the Label field to assign the additional time zone a name.

4. Get a daily agenda via email

If email is the first thing you check each day, this is a really useful feature. Go to your settings by hitting keyboard shortcut *S*, and under the Calendars tab, click on "Notifications". Next, click on the "Daily agenda" option.

Now, when you stumble around bleary-eyed with your smartphone or laptop in the morning, you'll find a list of scheduled events for the day before hitting the shower.

5. Add national holidays

Avoid scheduling events on holidays or help plan your next long weekend getaway by enabling Google Holiday Calendar.

Go to Settings (by now, you probably know that the keyboard shortcut is *S*), and click on "Browse interesting calendars" under the "Calendars" tab.

Holiday calendars are organized by country in the first column. You can even choose from a list of sports calendars where you can view the schedule of your favorite team in Google Calendar.

6 Blogging Productivity Tips

Blogging is a great way to build your reputation and market your expertise, but consistently putting out useful content can be a chore. To assist you are the following six productivity tips to help you streamline that process.

1. Use Evernote to store ideas and headlines

This practice has been the single biggest blogging productivity boost for me. We come across ideas all the time and can't remember them all.

Write them down!

Evernote is a great tool for this as it sits on your computer and syncs on the web and your mobile app. And it literally saves as you type. And it's free. And your friends will be amazed at your hipster electronic prowess.

No more inaccessible or lost ideas. The next time you sit down to write a blog post, you'll have a ton of ideas and links to work with.

2. Create a writing schedule

Simple fact: Routine aids productivity and is a procrastination killer.

After you've determined the goal or purpose of your blog, it's time to figure out how often you'll publish. Fresh, relevant content rules and your faithful readers expect consistency in the delivery of that content.

Whether you decide to compose five posts a week or once every two weeks, set aside a regular time to write.

3. An image is worth a thousand words

Images resonate. They draw people in. The increasing popularity of Pinterest and Instagram and sharing of pictures on the social networks underscore the point: we love to share and look at images.

But looking for a relevant, royalty-free image can consume almost as much time as writing the post, so knowing your sources is key. See How to Find Free Images For Blog Posts for a few tips.

4. Give old posts new life

Take a few minutes after you're done writing and create hyperlinks to previous posts. Many posts are ideas that you're expanding on from previous writings or compiling from a series of related posts.

See how we referred you to our "How to Find Free Images" post in the point above? Instead of going into detail again, link to your prior post, and give it a fresh pair of legs.

5. Install Google Analytics

You've spent many hours putting out thoughtful content. Is it resonating with your target audience?

Find out with Google Analytics. See who's reading your blog, the source of your traffic, and which posts are being read. It's free, easy to install, though for those not confident with web skills, you may need help from a web consultant/neighborhood high schooler.

6. Use the social channels

The top referral sources for traffic to many blogs are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Pinterest.

You can quickly determine referral traffic with Google Analytics. Include sharing on the channels in your after-the-blog-post-has-been-published routine.

Apps such as Buffer and HootSuite help you schedule your posts to go out at optimal times.

But don't bombard your followers with multiple posting of the same link. Post to Twitter perhaps once a day for three days and once to Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest and other platforms on which you engage. Switch up the title when you post more than once to these channels.

4 Twitter Productivity Tips

Twitter is a great tool to create and nurture relationships, share information and build awareness about yourself and your work. With over 150 million active users, it can also quickly become a less-than-useful echo chamber. Employ these five tips to hone your Twitter into a lean, productive experience:

Dumpster day

We've talked about [Dumpster Day: Make your Law Office a Less Cluttered – And Happier – Place to Work](#). The same applies to your Twitter account.

Different numbers have been bandied about regarding how many people you can follow so that you actually see their tweets — from 200-500. But the more we use Twitter the more our "following" count creeps up. It's time to weed.

Set aside an hour or two every month to go over the folks you're following. If they're no longer active, unfollow. Untweeps is a free tool that will help you identify inactive users and bulk-unfollow them. If they're no longer useful, unfollow. If they tweet at a rate that monopolizes your stream, unfollow. If ... you get the idea.

Organize

So now you've been on Twitter for years and regardless of how ruthlessly you unfollow, you're still following over 1,000, 2,000, or more Twitterers.

It's time to organize with the handy Twitter Lists. Create a "technology" or "lawyer" list, or you can go finer, like "cloud computing" and then assign the people that you follow to these lists. The lists can be public or private, and instead of looking at an overwhelming river of tweets, you can hone in on good information.

So when you have only a few minutes to check in on Twitter, click on one of these lists to view related tweets. For more information on how to set up these lists, check out Twitter's excellent Lists tutorial.

When you do have the time, remember to check out the general Twitter stream for a gem or two that you would otherwise miss.

Search

An often overlooked but very useful tool is Twitter's search functionality. Twitter search is sadly lacking for older tweets, but as an alert feature, it functions well.

Simply perform a search and save it. This is great for tracking hashtags in real-time. You can save up to 25 searches.

Now when you go to your Twitter page, click on a saved search to view related tweets. If you're using a third party application like Tweetdeck, create a separate column for the search and results will be

displayed in real-time.

The great thing about the search feature is that it covers all Twitter users, not just the ones you're following.

Schedule

When I first started out on Twitter, the thought of automating my Twitter account made me cringe. It's supposed to be a live action forum. My sentiments haven't abated, but scheduling tweets helps me maintain a presence when I'm not around, especially with Buffer App.

Buffer App allows you to set up the times you want your tweets to go out and when you come across an article or posts you want to tweet or retweet, just Buffer it and it'll be added to the queue.

This app will greatly reduce your time on Twitter without sacrificing engagement since you can hop in at any time and respond to retweets and mentions.

These are just a just a few best practices that will ramp up your productivity for a more meaningful Twitter experience.

Home Office Productivity Tips

The number of people that work from home is increasing. It's convenient and cost effective but unless you create routines, boundaries, and organize your space, productivity can suffer greatly. Make it work for you by employing the following tools.

Create routine

This is arguably the most important tip, especially for folks without built-in routine generators like kids, pets or significant others.

Try to mirror the work schedule of your colleagues at the office, generally 9-5. At Rocket Matter we employ the Agile Daily Standup meetings and for me, that gets the day off connected and informed.

Take breaks

Getting up in the middle of a busy workplace to do a 5-minute yoga routine or a progressive muscle relaxation de-stresser may seem a bit odd to some, but a home office provides that luxury.

I rarely sit for more than an hour at a time on any given project, including the researching and writing of this blog post.

The [Pomodoro Technique](#) goes well with taking breaks. Work undistracted for 25 minutes, take a five-minute break, and dig back in for another 25 minutes.

Set boundaries

Anyone who's worked from home can relate to the quick call to hang out or do a favor since, well, your time is flexible. Sure, your time is not as rigid as a traditional office setting, but your circle needs to know right away that your availability doesn't extend that far, or else you'll end up scrambling to get work done at midnight.

Establish a workstation

Most productivity gurus will tell you to have a separate work-only room but that's of little help to those who live in New York City studio apartments or shared larger apartments.

Instead, identify a space that will house a desk, chair and a couple of drawer/storage units. Preferably near a window with lots of light. Some people say it distracts, but I've tried different locations and the window onto the light and life out there enhances productivity and makes for a more enjoyable engagement.

Use this space only for working. When I use my MacBook later in the evening for Facebooking or reading, I move it to the couch.

Mix it up

Get out of the house occasionally and work at the local library, coffee shop, the park or pier. No, this does not contradict the first tip of creating routine. Work this into your routine.

If you don't schedule these work forays, they'll never happen. Going out and working from other locations keeps you moving, engaged and not chained to your desk, leaking productivity by the hour. You have the flexibility, so use it!

Oh, and hit the gym at lunchtime instead of later in the evening. It's not as crowded, breaks up the day and re-energizes for the second half of the workday.

About the Author

Tim Baran is the Community Manager at Rocket Matter, the leading web-based legal productivity software.

A writer for a range of legal publications including Lawyerist, The Bottom Line (State Bar of California Law Practice Management and Technology Section), Law Practice Strategy, Shift Digital Media, and others, Tim manages, and is the lead author of Rocket Matter's Legal Productivity blog.

For more information, please visit: http://www.legalproductivity.com.

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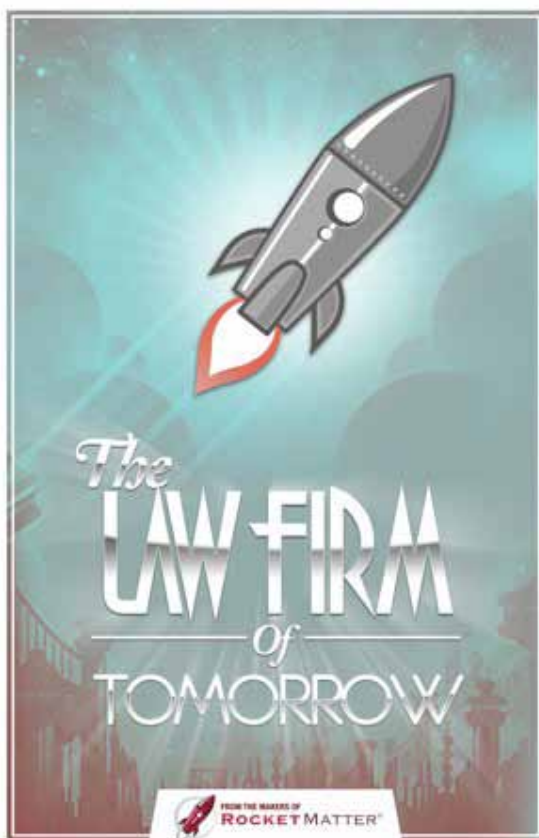
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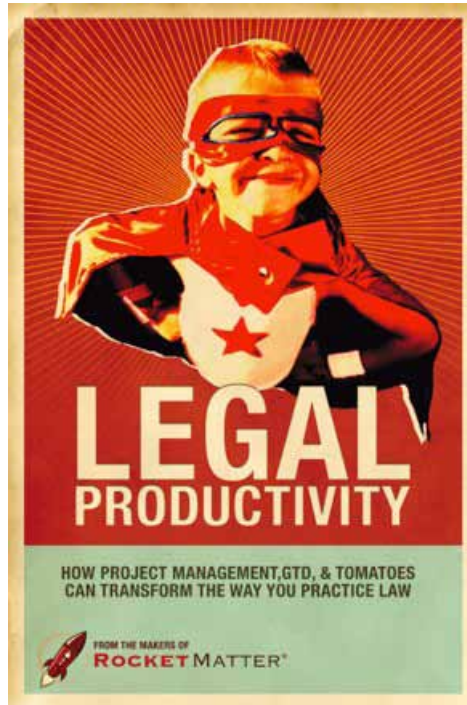
[Legal Productivity: How Project Management, GTD, and Tomatoes Can Transform the Way You Practice Law](#)

Legal Productivity is borne out of three years of servicing law firms across the United States and the world, learning their pain points and seeing firsthand what works and what doesn't. From the solo startup to the midsize, multi-state firm, we've witnessed countless law firm setups.

Along the way we've spoken to thousands of legal practitioners at bar events, CLEs, online webinars or somewhere else we tend to lurk. What follows in this book is a collection of our ruminations on the subject of legal productivity. We've had the good fortune to explore these ideas in a number of esteemed legal publications as well as our own blog. We hope you find our ideas useful.

WHAT IS ROCKET MATTER?

Rocket Matter is the leading web-based practice management and time and billing application for small to mid-size law firms.

When we launched in February of 2008, we were the first legal technology available for running a law firm online. We were surprised at the number of attorneys who immediately joined our service, looking to manage their matters, clients, and invoicing from any computer at anytime.

Since then, amazing mobile devices such as the iPhone , iPad, and Droid have transformed attorney access to information. In addition, the global economy had declined, putting new pressures on the operational efficiencies of law firms, and altering the make up of large, traditional law firms.

In that time, via the Rocket Matter product, our blogging, video, CLE, webinars, and contributions in legal trade publications, we've helped law firms navigate these new waters. We've introduced new ideas for marketing, operations, and technology to help legal professionals adapt to the ever-changing professional environment.