



A GROWING BUSINESS IS A BUSINESS ON THE GO. NO LONGER ARE WE BOUND BY YELLOW-LINED NOTEPADS, NOR DO WE NEED TO FISH AROUND IN OUR POCKETS OR PURSES FOR THE EVER-ELUSIVE

PEN. Business has gone the way of technology, with paper notebooks being replaced by digital tablets and smartphones filling our purses and pockets for when we need to leave ourselves a note. No need to run back to the office or have your work computer in front of you – these days, thanks to these tablets and smartphones, business is being done smarter by allowing you to conduct business wherever you are.

Want to take those first steps into the 21st century business world? Angela Proffitt, a Nashville-based Special Event Planner and Designer shares how to take your business on the go.

OK, so you know everyone's constantly tapping away at their smartphones and tablets, but why should you, as a wedding vendor, start tapping away at yours, too? Angela Proffitt believes that using mobile devices to conduct business can make you more efficient and productive. You know all those extra hours in the day you've been on the hunt for? Turns out they were hiding in your iPhone. Angela shares that by using your mobile device, "You don't have to do the same thing twice. You don't need to type everything up" back at the office later in the day to stay organized and to share the info with your client. If you use your mobile device, you can go ahead and type up all of your notes as you're making them, and then can later access your notes on your computer – typed up and ready to go. Angela adds that, "From a client's perspective, business becomes very reachable, very touchable. Everything is

documented immediately." If you type up your info in a **Google Drive** document or have a **Dropbox** folder, you can instantly share everything you and your client discussed that day or saw with them so that they have that info at their fingertips, too.

Speaking of Dropbox and Google Drive, Angela says that if you're new to the whole running your business from your iPad deal, these are good applications to start with, because not only are they free (yep, free!), but they are the most familiar to clients who use them regularly at work. Dropbox (if you're not in the know) is a file sharing service that makes it easy to share documents and large files like images with your clients, and Google Drive is a part of your Google account that lets you create and share documents and spreadsheets. But, when it comes to doing mobile biz with your clients, Angela notes that you need to "know your market. Are they familiar with Dropbox

and Google Drive and what are they asking for?" If your clients are comfortable with these applications, go for it, and if they aren't familiar with them, Angela suggests that you, as a wedding vendor, implement them into their lives. Show them what these applications can do and how simple they are to use, and many times the clients will be on board. The same goes for anyone else planning the wedding with the couple, such as the mother of the bride. If they have a smartphone or tablet, go ahead and show them how to use these applications. It takes some patience, but you can guide even the mothers to be more tech savvy to help everyone stay organized and on the same Google document page!

Angela also suggests using **PayPal** as a simple way to do mobile commerce. PayPal has been around for quite a while and has an established rep as a secure way to send and receive payments, so you'll find that many clients are comfortable paying this way when using a credit card. Plus, it saves time. You don't have to have the client write a check that you deposit later. If they owe you money for your services, they can hop right on their mobile device, log into their PayPal account and voila, you're paid! Plus, you can send invoices through PayPal to make the process even easier for your clients. **Square**, a card reader that attaches to your smartphone, is another great option for mobile commerce, allowing you to say, get a deposit from a client you meet at a bridal expo. You can swipe the credit card and have the funds in your bank account in 1-2 days, no trip to the bank required.

And, we're not done yet! There are so many applications out there, many of them free, that can help you run your business more efficiently from your mobile device. One of Angela's favorites that she says is a great one to start with if you're new to the whole business on the go scene is **Expensify**, an app that allows you to digitize your receipts and have them go immediately through accounting and check reimbursement. You'll never have to worry about losing a receipt again! Another one she suggests for just getting started with mobile biz is **SignEasy**, an app that lets you legally sign documents on the go – no paper required! (Hey, that makes it eco-friendly, too!). For all the tech newbies out there, Angela's advice is "to help yourself first. Know your process." When you have an established process, you can find apps that will help you do your process more simply and efficiently. Once you've mastered doing the backend of your business from your mobile device, you can then move into using business apps with your clients. If you're organized and confident in your mobile business abilities, your clients will feel more comfortable in conducting business that way, too. ◆

WANT TO RUN YOUR BUSINESS ON YOUR MOBILE DEVICE? HEY, THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!

EXPENSIFY Capture your receipts and keep them organized, all while creating easy expense reports for your business.

SIGNEASY Import documents from emails, Dropbox, Google Drive and more and have your clients sign right on your smartphone with their finger! One document can even have multiple signatures.

EVERHART Free storage that helps you remember and access everything you need for a client in one place. Write notes, snap a pic, make an audio recording or even save a webpage all in the same place, and then find what you're looking for later with keyword searches. Plus, you can share your notes with your clients.

GOOGLE DRIVE Storage through your Google account that allows you to create spreadsheets, documents, drawings, presentations and more that you can share with clients or even download to your computer.

DROPBOX A file-sharing service ideal for large files such as videos or photographs that allows you to share folders with clients. Dropbox folders sync up across all platforms, so documents placed in your folder on your phone can be accessed on your laptop. Folders can also be accessed offline.

TOUCHDRAW A drawing app that offers shape libraries and path tools to help you create things such as floorplans. It also allows you to drop in your own pics and exports your drawings as jpegs or pdfs, among others.