

A Few of My Favorite Things

Your 2020 Tech Recs

My recent columns have seemed a bit ominous, focusing on cybersecurity and other issues that can scare even the most tech-oriented people. So, it's time for a change to one of the topics I am frequently asked about—"What are my favorite tech toys?" So here they are, a few of my favorite tech things.

Cordless Mouse: I love mice, not the ones that crawl, but the ones you use with your office computer, and the ones you use with your laptop. It seems that no matter what I do, my skills using a laptop's touchpad are severely limited. Consequently, I always travel with a



Logitech MX Anywhere Wireless Mouse

cordless mouse. My favorite is the Logitech MX Anywhere model, which I use in my office, and have a spare to use with my laptop. The newest version of the Anywhere Mouse, the 2S model, can be used on multiple devices at once, and even lets you move your mouse cursor across three computers and copy or paste text, images, and files from one computer to another.

But what makes the Anywhere my favorite is its ability to work on any surface, even glass, which usually stops most mice in their tracks. You could even put the mouse on your lap, and it will work. Plus, it has a great ergonomic design and can be used as a Bluetooth device or one that operates with a USB

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Every time I use the Presentation Remote, attendees ask what I'm using because they have never seen anything like it before.

receiver. The MX Anywhere 2S sells for \$79.99 but is often on sale for far less.

Logitech Spotlight Presentation Remote: Logitech makes great products, but the one game-changer is the Presentation Remote, which transforms the traditional "PowerPoint clicker" into a versatile device that elevates presentations to a new level. All for about \$100. I won't do a program without one.

Most presentation remotes do one thing—they advance slide presentations. Most speakers need more, even if they don't realize it. The Presentation is truly wireless, working up to 100 feet from your computer. It also has the obligatory laser pointer. But unlike most remotes, the Presentation enhances presentations by allowing you to (1) highlight portions of the screen, (2) magnify a portion of

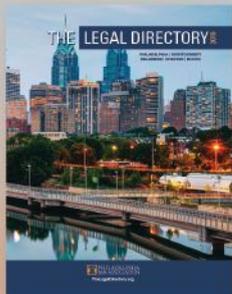


Logitech Spotlight Presentation Remote

the screen, allowing you to zoom on a key part of the program, and (3) play videos and open hyperlinks (to go to the web or a program). The magnify feature alone makes this a must have.

There's more. If you use a special effect, such as the Magnify feature, it will not only display on the computer where the presentation is but also on any other screens on which the presentation is playing. As a result, when I give an online seminar, the special effects appear on every other device viewing the program. No other "clicker" can do that. Every time I use the Presentation Remote, attendees ask what I'm using because they have never seen anything like it before.

Mobile Jetpack/Hotspot: A mobile jetpack is a separate device that lets you connect to your wireless provider in a secure way and provides Wi-Fi access to your phone, your laptop, and other devices, without using the mobile hotspot feature of your smartphone. As a result, you aren't draining the battery



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[T]here are a variety of underwater music players, and my favorite is FINIS' Duo Underwater model, which uses bone conduction (tympanic) to play my MP3s . . .

on your smartphone and are accessing a reliable connection designed to work for hours without battery draining.

My jetpack, the Verizon Jetpack MiFi 7730L, is with me whenever I'm out of the office, and I know that I will need Internet access for my laptop or tablet. I don't have to worry about being hacked because I logged into a free unsecure Wi-Fi network, like the ones you find at Starbucks or other locations. Other carriers, such as AT&T, offer their own jetpacks or hotspots, and most typically cost about \$20 per month, with charges based on how much data your device will use.

Nixon "The Mission" Smartwatch: Everyone knows about the Apple Watch or the many options available using the Android operating system. After trying, and intensely disliking, a few different models, I discovered The Mission, a smartwatch ostensibly designed for skiers and folks who love the outdoors; I don't fit into either category, and I love the watch. And unlike most smartwatches, The Mission pairs with Androids and iPhones.

Although Nixon, which makes The Mission, has discontinued that model, the company offers a variety of similarly featured options for men and women, at a wide range of prices. With The Mission, I reliably see who is calling, all of my text messages, the various notifications from my Samsung smartphone, and much more. Plus, it's rugged, and I can wear it while swimming or doing other activities that many smartwatches tell users to avoid.

As an Android user, I welcome its integration with many Android features, including Google Fit (as a fitness tracker), Google Play Music (using Bluetooth headphones, you can listen to downloaded music on your watch without your phone), Google Maps (you can talk to your watch and get directions to your destination, with the route displaying on your watch), Weather,

and even Google flight reminders. Plus, other apps integrate with The Mission to provide even more options.

FINIS Duo Underwater Music Player: Swimming is how I relax, and I love having music playing while underwater, it just makes everything better. Fortunately, there are a variety of underwater music players, and my favorite is FINIS' Duo Underwater



model, which uses bone conduction (tympanic) to play my MP3s, allowing me to still wear ear plugs, which I have found to be more effective than underwater swim buds at keeping water out of my ears.

The Duo attaches securely to the strap of my swim goggles and is easy-to-use, with large buttons. It plays music, audiobooks, and anything else that can be digitized into either MP3 or WMA audio format. The latest model has 4GB of storage, enough to hold about 1,000 songs, and one charge can last about eight hours, in my experience.

If there is one downside to the FINIS Duo, it's that the product can, at times, be unreliable. As a result, I always purchase an extended warranty so that if it malfunctions, I don't have to shell out another \$139.99 (that's the list price) for a new model. I've tried other

underwater music players, and when it works, the sound and comfort of the Duo can't be beat.

Benchly: As a litigator whose practice includes handling a substantial number of appeals, I need to read every relevant case when preparing for oral argument. For years—really forever—a law clerk, an associate, or I would have to go through the Table of Citations and determine which cases I needed, and then go to Lexis to search for and download the cases. Not anymore. Benchly (www.benchly.com) has saved me.

Using Benchly, I upload my brief and those filed by the other parties, and Benchly reviews the documents, verifies the accuracy of the citations, and then, in just two mouse clicks, compiles every case cited in every brief and downloads them to my computer. This process saves hours of work and puts everything together in an easy-to-use PDF portfolio. I won't handle another appeal without it. As I write this column, I am preparing for oral argument in four cases over the next three days. It literally took a few minutes to download every case cited so that I could read them and, if necessary, print out the ones most relevant to the issues argued. Plus, at \$100 per month (or \$35 per upload), Benchly is a bargain for me and my clients. It saves hours and hours of tedious work, for just pennies. There are so many wonderful technology products that can make our lives easier. The key is exploring. And then, discovering gold. ■

Daniel J. Siegel (dan@danieljsiegel.com), a member of the Board of The Philadelphia Lawyer, is a practicing attorney and the president of Integrated Technology Services LLC, a consulting firm that helps law offices improve their workflow through the use of technology.



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