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Brian Tankersley • Mar. 19, 2012

Project:

TimeDroid ▼

Task:

Development ▼

Hours:

4.2

Notes:

Working on TimeDroid...|

Log Hours

A very challenging demographic for many practitioners is the "micro business." This

accountant's general ledger (possibly in a write-up application), these applications can meet the needs of small to mid-sized businesses.

All of these tools are primarily focused on creating, presenting, and collecting accounts receivable invoices, and can be an outstanding first step for micro-businesses to enhance cash flow and maintain better books and records at the same time. With a large installed base, **Freshbooks** has emerged as a leader in online invoicing services, and offers synchronization with common accounting software such as QuickBooks, Peachtree, and Xero. Even though Freshbooks is supported in larger organizations, it seems to meet the common need of entrepreneurs for an easy to use method of invoicing and receiving payments from customers.

While **FreshBooks** supports browser-based access for mobile devices, native applications are available for iOS (**MiniBooks**) and Android (**TimeDroid Pro, Droidbooks**). Although MiniBooks is more expensive ($14.99 is a lot of money in the world of apps) and only supports devices running Apple's iOS, it is also the only app which goes beyond mobile time tracking to enable mobile invoicing and payment application. Despite the price, we recommend this app to FreshBooks users who have iOS devices.

The two applications for Android (TimeDroid Pro, $4.99; DroidBooks for Freshbooks Beta, Free) support time entry and a few other limited functions. Although the Android will be helpful for some users, their capabilities are very limited, and we're not sure that the current incarnations of these apps will meet mobile business needs other than staff timekeeping. (We also generally advise users to avoid beta software in production environments, especially where it will be used by non-technical users.)

Android tablet users will find that the FreshBooks web portal works well in most browsers, but we are still awaiting a more robust FreshBooks app for the Android

platform. Mike McDerment, the co-founder and CEO of FreshBooks, indicated that

Bill.com (which is partially owned by CPA Practice Advisor contributor Rene Lacerte) supports invoicing and time keeping in addition to its core accounts payable functions. The Bill.com mobile site includes a dashboard snapshot of unpaid invoices, and supports both receivables and payables. Users can view, transmit, and track customer invoices from almost any device in nearly any location.

Bill.com is a subscription-based service, and plans which support both receivables and payables start at $24.99 per month.

Gwabbing Contacts in Outlook with Gwabbit

While the focus of this column is and will continue to be mobile applications, we will cover Windows apps and add-ins from time to time. One of the best Microsoft Office Outlook add-ins we have encountered is **gwabbit** for Microsoft Outlook. This tool is a plug-in which automates the process of extracting, organizing, and updating your Outlook Contacts with the information included in the signature blocks of your e-mail. Although many of you may have read about this product in other media outlets, I have personally used this tool for over five years, and can tell you that it is an essential tool for people who interact with large groups of people and use Microsoft Outlook.

The tool monitors e-mail messages, and offers to add any people who are not in your Outlook Contacts to your address book when you are reading the message. Gwabbit will extract data from signature blocks at the bottom of e-mail messages, and will also ask if it should update existing Outlook Contacts with new contact data. While this is a useful tool for staff and managers, it is an essential tool for partners, sales, and marketing professionals.

Gwabbit for Outlook can be purchased from www.gwabbit.com for $19.95 (a free 14

Figure 3 – Gwabbit is an add-in for Microsoft Outlook (Windows only) which creates and updates Outlook contact information from e-mail signature blocks.

[1] Supported Outlook versions include 2010 (both 64-bit and 32-bit), 2007, 2003, 2002, and 2000.

Technology

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