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Isaac M. O'Bannon • May. 28, 2012

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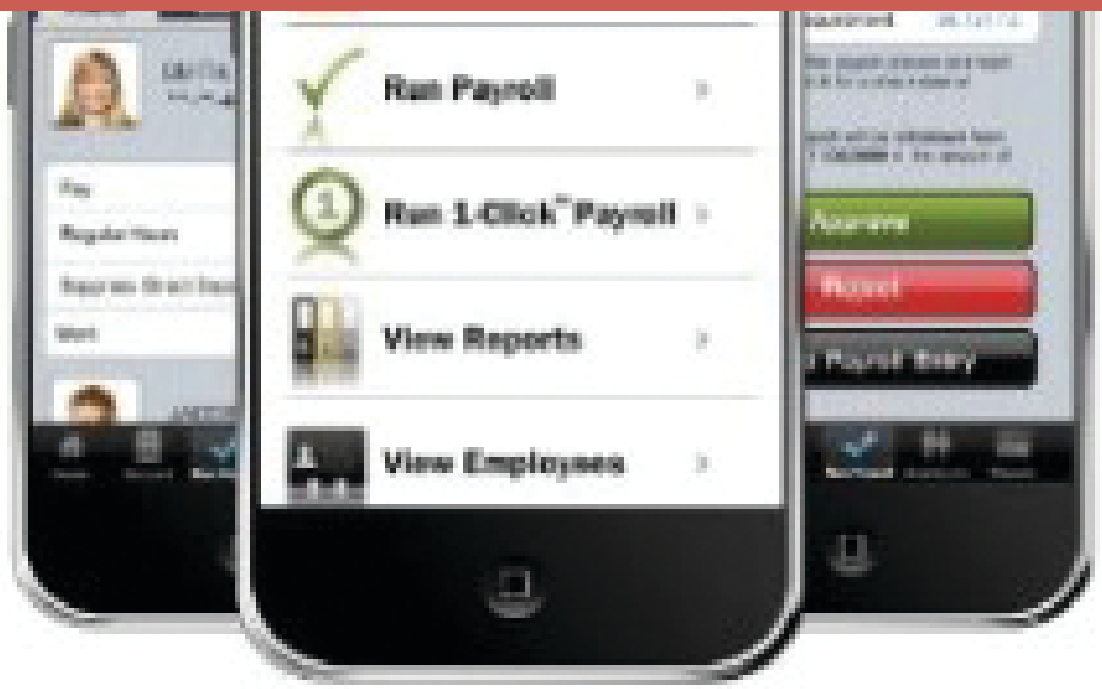

There are now more than a half million apps available for the iPhone and over 400,000 for Android smartphones. Add to this the more than 200,000 apps for the iPad and somewhere around 20,000 for Android tablets, and you quickly come to the conclusion that, yes... there is an app for pretty much everything.

The majority still seem to be for entertainment, social networking and sharing photos, like the Instagram app, which makes photos look old and which, somehow, the developers sold to Facebook for a billion dollars. Yes, as absurd as it sounds, a billion dollars.

It's not just fun and games, however. Great productivity boosting apps for businesses and financial professionals are out there in abundance, and our own Brian

Tankersley, CPA.CITP, frequently highlights particularly noteworthy ones in his

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Thomson Reuters, CCH and Intuit, as well as for construction accounting systems, tax programs, research and other areas of professional practice.

One of the fastest growing areas for professional apps is in the payroll space. As advanced and streamlined online payroll systems have allowed accountants to bring payroll back as a profitable service in their firms, many of the leading providers of those payroll programs have started offering mobile apps for smart phones that allow users to quickly process payrolls, enter or edit detailed employee and withholding information, enter holidays and personal time, view reports and manage accounts.

Some of these apps also have tools for the business client, as well as their employees, allowing those users to enter time and other data, and see information relevant to their roles. With more and more professionals, managers and other workers adapting more mobile lifestyles, the flexibility these apps provide are increasingly essential.

Providers of mobile payroll apps see things the same way. "Within the next two years, we're going to see businesses spending 35% of their IT budgets on mobile," said Gary Butler, ADP President and CEO. "The fact is, the definition of 'the office' is changing. With smarter devices and faster networks on our side, ADP continues to invest heavily in bringing our trusted solutions to clients wherever they choose to work."

Leaders at PayChex, one of the largest payroll providers in the U.S., see the importance of mobility for all three sides: professionals, businesses and employees. "As our world becomes more dependent on the flexibility that technology provides, it's important for businesses to allow their products to fully integrate into mobile platforms," says Michael Gioja, senior vice president of information technology, product management and development for Paychex. "Our clients and their

employees need to interact with our products and services based on the actions they

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– it's about business on the go," Alter added. "Many of today's accounting professionals and their clients do as much of their business from their phones as they do from their office. The same is true for their employees who need to access paycheck, vacation and other benefit information 24/7 from anywhere. Providing resources like our payroll apps make it easy for our customers to work quickly and efficiently. Life and work move at light speed. As service providers we must continue to innovate to keep pace."

Managing payroll for multiple clients used to be a tedious challenge with a lot of manual data entry, but the advent of online programs and now the addition of apps for these payroll systems continues to make payroll services more streamlined and profitable, whether managing dozens or even hundreds of client payrolls.

Here are some of the more notable payroll apps on the market, with insight on the benefits they provide to firms, clients and employees, the devices they are designed for, plus other information.

ADP Mobile Payroll

www.ADP.com/mobilepayroll

Features: ADP launched its first mobile payroll app in October 2010, and has since continued to add numerous features. The key day-to-day functions that the system allows users to manage, include starting new payroll runs, processing regular runs, confirming check dates and enter data such as hours, earnings, deductions, holiday time and other factors.

When a payroll is ready, the system offers a preview feature that calculates totals and offers details, and reports can be generated and viewed before the run is finalized,

including payroll liability and the amount to be debited from the associated bank

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PayChex Online Mobile App

www.PayChex.com

Features: Paychex offers apps specifically designed for tablets, giving users the ability to access and run payrolls from anywhere and in as little as two taps on the screen. After signing into the app, you can enter employee hours and other information, or carry it forward for salaried workers. Management users can also create and change passwords and access rights for other employees who have access to the payroll system.

Additional features include the ability to view the payroll journal prior to submitting, check the payroll cash requirements necessary for the payroll run, add new employees and contractors, and run all standard payroll, quarterly and annual reports.

With the single sign-in function, users can also quickly access and manage related functions, such as retirement and health benefits, flexible spending accounts, COBRA administration and an online time and attendance system.

Devices Supported: iPad and Android tablets.
Price: Free.

SurePayroll Mobile Payroll

www.SurePayroll.com

Features: SurePayroll was the first to develop an app for managing payrolls, and

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SurePayroll's employee-focused app makes it easy for workers to quickly view their current and previous paychecks, including details on vacation or sick time, earnings, taxes, deductions and YTD totals.

Devices Supported: iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch and Android Phones and Tablets.
Price: Free.

Execupay Mobile Payroll

www.ExecupaySoftware.com

Features: ExecuPay, which has offered full payroll processing solutions to service providers with up to several thousand client businesses, has recently re-entered the professional accounting market with a payroll solution designed for firms with dozens to a few hundred clients. The web-based system is based on the enterprise version, but tailored to the more specific needs of accounting practices, and includes full multi-client capabilities with client portals and employee self-service.

Execupay has also developed a mobile interface that is optimized for iPad and Android tablet users, for either clients or firm payroll staff overseeing multiple clients, which offers full payroll management capabilities, including processing runs, entering data, viewing reports, updating client and employee information and updating deductions, withholding and vacation accruals. An iPhone app is also available for employers and employees, allowing them to receive reports, paystubs, W-2s, year-to-date totals, request time off and other features automatically when a payroll run is finalized. Additionally, employers with multiple work groups can have department-specific reporting delivered to appropriate managers.

Devices Supported: iPhone, iPad and Android Tablets.

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services and QuickBooks Online. The primary payroll app, Intuit Online Payroll, is now in version 3.0, and offers several enhancements, including the ability to completely manage payrolls from any location, including contractor payments, integrated support tools for users of Intuit's Full Service Payroll, help functions, other tools, such as making payments by paper check or managing direct deposit accounts.

The app also offers support for the Accounting Professionals version of Intuit Online Payroll, enabling multi-client management, while reporting functions allow users to examine runs prior to final posting. One of the unique tools in the system is that it allows pay stubs to be automatically emailed to workers using a secure delivery system. The app works with Intuit Online Payroll, QuickBooks Online Payroll, QuickBooks Payroll for Mac, Intuit Full Service Payroll, and Intuit Online Payroll for Accounting Professionals.

Devices Supported: iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch and Android Phones and Tablets.
Price: Free.

Thomson Reuters Mobile CS

cs.ThomsonReuters.com/mobilecs

Features: Thomson Reuters has long been among the leaders in the movement toward online tools and utilities, debuting their client portals more than 10 years ago, as well as the various tax and accounting applications in the years since then. The company launched Mobile CS in 2010, offering integration with the Accounting CS Suite. The app is not specifically dedicated to payroll, but does offer professionals the ability to quickly access client and staff data, including client employee payroll

information, as well as real-time data and reports. Client employees can download

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Devices Supported: iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch and Android Phones and Tablets.
Price: Free.

AccountantsWorld Payroll Relief Mobile

www.accountantsworld.com

Features: The mobile functionality offered by AccountantsWorld's Payroll Relief system is not built on an app, but instead through a special web interface that is optimized for mobile devices and can work on any phones or tablets with a web browser. The mobile interface offers full access to the online payroll system's functionality, including managing multiple clients, running payrolls, entering employee hours, earnings and deductions, viewing payroll histories, and running payrolls of different frequencies.

The system can be used to generate direct deposits or paper-based checks for employees and contractors, with the ability to review summaries prior to finalizing a run. At any time, the user can view PDFs of paychecks and stubs, access all historical reports, email reports or PDFs to clients, and even access and archive documents in the AccountantsWorld CyberCabinet document management system. The system also includes client portal access, so that the firm can easily share reports with clients and even send digital versions of checks that the client can print at their own location.

After a payroll run is finalized, the system automatically manages tax payments, direct deposits and electronic filing of forms. AccountantsWorld also has a mobile time tracking function, as well as many other remote access functions built into its suite of accounting and practice management programs.

Devices Supported: All mobile devices with full web browser capabilities.

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