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APPS WE LOVE

Apps We Love – August 2021: New Technology

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Gail Perry, CPA • Aug. 13, 2021



For our Apps We Love column this month, we are taking on the category of new technology. For a long time, apps themselves were the new technology. Now apps are evolving, and we're looking at examples of new types of technology we are seeing in your apps. Some of the members of our *CPA Practice Advisor* community shared their favorite new technologies, and we also explored online for additional examples.

David Almonte, CPA, CGMA, Financial Reporting & Analysis Manager at Amica Mutual Insurance Company, said, "Several months ago I picked up an **Oculus** system from a company Facebook now owns. It was a big step for virtual reality software and platforms in general. I have had so much fun playing World Series of Power with individuals all over the world, having my kids swim with sharks and ride roller-coasters, take educational helicopter tours of various countries, joined virtual workout and boxing classes, sat 'front row' for virtual concerts, among many other to dos. Highly recommend this as both a form of entertainment as well as a great additional tool in the education space for kids and adults alike."

Sandi Leyva, president of Accountant's Accelerator, told us, "I love my **Ouraring**. It's a wearable ring that tracks heart rate stats, body temperature, sleep, and workouts. It gives me 3 daily scores: sleep, readiness, and activity. Not all that exciting or new, but useful."

We are accountants, after all, and **Dan Nicholson**, CPA, CGMA, CEO at NthDegree CPAs, told us about the modern finance app, **CertaintyApp.com** – "A tool that converts your clients goals into a solvable equation that shows how much more cash flow they need to fund all their goals. That then allows the CPA to show directly how their services are contributing toward funding their goals faster."

Chris Frederiksen, CPA, co-founder of Frederiksen-Crawford CPAs, said, "The most important new technology for me is being able to use my phone **hands-free**, by receiving and transmitting voice entirely through my hearing aids via Bluetooth. This same technology allows me to listen to television sound through hearing aids and having total control of the environment."

Brian Tankersley, CPA, CITP, CGMA, director of strategic relationships at K2 Enterprises, shared his shipping experiences. "I've had to ship a number of packages to clients lately, and have been very impressed with a web service called **Shippo**. The product connects to your existing FedEx/UPS/USPS shipping accounts, imports orders/shipments from eCommerce solutions, lets you create shipment templates for common orders, compares prices from different carriers and services, prints shipping labels on your laser printer, and even passes through significant discounts on USPS,

UPS, and DHL shipments. I saved about 25% off of USPS when shipping 14 packages this month, and it was much easier to get the documents out and track the packages in Shippo's web interface. The best part of this service is that it's either free or cheap depending on how you use it. If you use Shippo's freight service discounts, the service is free; if you use your rates, you pay \$0.05/shipping label to use this interface."

Gary Boomer, CPA.CITP, CGMA, MAcc, visionary and strategist at Boomer Consulting, Inc., said, "Data and accountability are the themes in medical devices and home automation. Some of the better medical devices I have utilized are: **Apple Watch** (EKG) and **QardioBase** (Weight) and **QuadioArm** (blood pressure). Home automation continues to grow with all the major players: **Apple Home**, **Google Assist** and **Amazon Alexa**. The integration with smart lights, music and temperature controls is growing in popularity. I utilize a **Brilliant Smart Home** control switch to integrate and manage all of the above. The challenge with smart lights and switches comes with loss of an internet connection. Some devices are better than others about resetting automatically."

Here are some additional examples of apps representing new technology:

- Apps for getting around – beyond ride-sharing apps like **Uber** and **Lyft**, there are car-sharing apps including **Turo** and **Zipcar** and also the scooter and bike apps such as **Limebike** and **Bird**. More and more major forms of transportation (planes, trains, and buses) are providing apps as well.
- **Smartglasses** – you remember Google Glass and how that didn't seem to catch on in the marketplace? The concept is still there, however, and the newer smartglasses will actually look like glasses. Look for miniature video overlays, and features like an augmented Alexa allowing you to control your home, make calls, and listen to music, which only you can hear, navigation tools, and fitness add-ons.
- **Biometrics** apps for security not only include facial recognition and fingerprints, but also voice recognition and signature recognition.
- Look for **beacon technology** to change your retail experiences in the near future. With Bluetooth enabled, you can walk past a beacon in a store and see an ad pushed to your phone alerting you to a special sale or an intriguing purchase option. Beacons also notice that you're spending a lot of time browsing in the shoe department and can send you notices later when a sale is pending.

This is just a sampling of new technology in the apps world. Please feel free to share your favorite new technology apps in the comment section below.

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