

# Gadgets For Interpreters

For those of you who don't know me or haven't figured it out yet, I'm a tech geek. As such, and with the recent gift giving season, I thought I'd share gadgets that I can't do without when I'm freelancing.

Most of us have cell phones. This summer I upgraded to the Palm Treo 680 Smartphone. I had been carrying separate cell phone and PDA, and date book before that, but it wasn't very convenient, especially while freelancing. The various smartphones are great all-in-one devices, combining the cell phone, date book, alarm, digital camera, and some are even capable of running mobile versions of popular desktop software and GPS software.

My Treo gives me the ability to use all the regular cell phone functions (calling, address book, text messaging, internet browsing, etc.) and adds advanced PDA functions. Most smartphones offer a calendar, task list, and note pad as well as the address book that all synchronize with Microsoft Outlook or their proprietary software on your computer. This allows me to be reminded of events or assignments whether I'm at my desk or on the go.

In addition, many smartphones include a mobile interface for viewing and/or editing Microsoft Office documents from Word, Excel, and even PowerPoint. Excel can be used to prepare your invoice while at the assignment. PowerPoint is nice if you have a copy of the presenter's PowerPoint to browse before the assignment or to follow along with during the presentation.

Also included on my smartphone is a mobile copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader with which I can read the VIEWS while in the waiting room (you can download the PDF from your account page at [www.rid.org](http://www.rid.org)), listen to music on Real Player (making it an MP3 player), read ebooks on eReader, or play a variety of games.

Finally, there are hundreds of downloadable programs to add additional alarm features, a database program (I use for my invoice and mileage), and even Garmin has GPS capabilities for many smartphones (I know of no better way to find your way to a new assignment location than a GPS handheld.)

If you haven't looked into the smartphone craze yet, make a list of all the things you carry with you to an assignment and see if a smartphone might replace all those things with its pocket size.