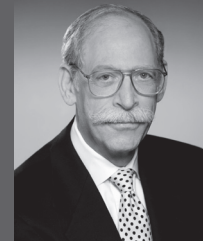


# Tips on Technology

A service of the Computer Law Section  
of the Delaware State Bar Association



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## Cell Phone Tips You Should Know About

In the past, we have discussed tips and efficiencies in Blackberry use. But, not all of us have Blackberries, and even those who do tend to carry a cell phone for more flexibility or personal use. However, few people spend the time to focus on proper cell phone use or efficiencies.

### Driving and Cell Phone Use

The press has made it clear that a number of states have new laws preventing the use of hand-held cell phone use while driving. These include California, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, New Jersey, New York, and Washington. In those slower to move states, many cities and townships have joined the ban. And, according to the American Automobile Association (AAA), 18 states, including Delaware, have a teen driver ban on cell phone use.

The recent hand-held cell phone bans carry with it an implication that handsfree cell phone use is safer. Not so—a recent AAA Foundation traffic study indicates no published study has found handsfree cell phone use safer than when holding the device. It is the distraction which creates the risk and causes the danger, not holding the device. According to the AAA, “Banning hand-held phones, but allowing handsfree phones, is likely to have little or no effect on safety.”

So, the AAA does not condone the use of any cell phone device while driving. However, realizing that cell phones are being used, it offers these safety tips:

- Familiarize yourself with the features of your cell phone before you get behind the wheel.
- Use the cell phone only when absolutely necessary. Limit casual conversa-

tions to times when you're not trying to safely operate a motor vehicle.

- Plan your conversation in advance, and keep it short—especially in hazardous conditions such as bad weather or heavy traffic.
- Let the person you're speaking with know you are in a vehicle.
- Do not engage in emotional conversations while trying to drive. Pull off the road to a safe spot before continuing this type of conversation.
- Do not combine distracting activities such as talking on your cell phone while driving, eating, and tending to a child.
- Use message-taking functions and return calls when you are stopped at a safe location.
- Ask a passenger in the car to place the call for you and, if possible, speak in your place.
- Secure your phone in the car so that it doesn't become a projectile in a crash.

### Here are Some Practical Tips You Should Know About

#### *Getting Directions*

Most of us have used MapQuest or Google Maps for assistance in getting around. Google has extended this capability for compatible cell phones. Once you let Google Mobile know where you are, you can get directions and check on traffic ahead. Take a look at [www.google.com/gmm](http://www.google.com/gmm).

#### *Locked Your Keys in Your Car?*

If your keys are locked in your car, try calling home from your cell and have someone push the “unlock” button on the spare remote key in the speaker of their cell phone (I understand it must

be a cell to cell connection). If you hold your phone within a foot of your car door, the signal may unlock it. This does not work with all cars and may not work with yours. However, it is an interesting challenge and worth a test before the emergency arises.

#### *Money and PayPal in your Hand*

If you find yourself short of cash while traveling or need to send money to someone quickly, and if you happen to have a PayPal account, you have more access to mobile cash than you may think. See [www.mobile.paypal.com](http://www.mobile.paypal.com).

#### *The Time in Your Pocket*

I have stopped wearing a watch. Between my cell phone, Blackberry, and computer, I am all too aware of the time. (However, this is a problem in the District Court since these devices are not permitted). I have gotten into the habit of using the alarm on the cell phone as a reminder of meetings, teleconferences and places to be. It only takes a couple of seconds to set and becomes a very effective tool.

#### *Don't Forget the Camera*

Few people realize the incredible value in having a camera with you at all times. I personally do not believe losing my car in the garage has anything to do with age. I am not ashamed to say, over the years, I have temporarily forgotten its location on a number of occasions. It may be due to preoccupation, narrow focus on pending issues, or an inability to multi-task. The fact is, it happens. Get in the habit of taking a picture of the car's location in the lot or parking building. This is particularly helpful if you are traveling and plan on leaving it in an airport lot for a few days.

And, of course, if you are house hunting or car shopping, using your cell phone camera is a very effective way of keeping score on your short list of likely purchases.

Finally, from a pure photography viewpoint, you have a camera with a 2 or 3 megapixel capability. While the quality of the lens will not come close to your digital camera, for family photos or traveling, it is a convenient backup.

#### *Reminders and Notes*

I generally prefer to use the “to do” list on my Blackberry or Outlook for notes to myself. However, for important reminders, I have found it very effective to simply leave myself a voicemail message at the office or on my cell. Some cell phones have recorders for those who can remember to use them.

#### *Google Search on the Go*

This is amazing. I generally do not use text messaging. But, you can text message a query to GOOGL (46645) and get an immediate text message response. For example, if you type “weather 19806”, you will get the weather report immediately by

return message. Or try defining a word—text “define courtroom” and you will get a response. You can even get a list of businesses and address in your location.

#### *Emergency Calling Anywhere: “112”*

It doesn’t matter where you are in the world or if your phone is locked. This is a universal number.

#### *Need a Battery Boost?*

When you get the signal that your battery is low, try keying \*3370# on your cell phone. This will restart your phone and give you extra battery time. To remember the number, create a contact called “Battery.”

#### *Free Directory Assistance*

Instead of receiving a \$1.75 charge from your carrier for directory assistance, try Google’s free service 800-GOOG-411. It is completely automated and works surprisingly well.

Of course there are many other tips people have gathered over the years. In the event you have one you wish to share, send me an email at rhermann@morrisjames.com. 📧

## PROFESSIONAL GUIDANCE COMMITTEE

This committee provides peer counseling and support to lawyers overburdened by personal or practice-related problems. It offers help to lawyers who, during difficult times, may need assistance in meeting law practice demands. The members of this committee, individually or as a team, will help with the time and energy needed to keep a law practice operating smoothly and to protect clients. Call a member if you or someone you know needs assistance.

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