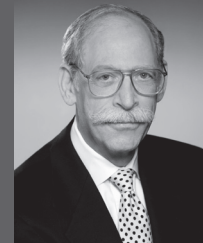


# Tips on Technology

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



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## Just Ask Richard

**L**awyers and judges frequently make inquiries regarding technology issues affecting court business and the productivity of the practice generally. Some forward suggestions and solutions they have discovered in day-to-day practice. Since we are all exposed to technology frustrations daily, it makes sense to share these with fellow members of the Bench and Bar. With this in mind, I invite you to forward to me your queries, frustrations, and solutions for comment, resolution, and possible publication in future columns.

In my attempt to stay ahead of the curve, I have anticipated a number of problems which will occur in the next few years. In the spirit of the DSBA's new Help Desk offering, I would like to share with you a few LTBAQs (Likely To Be Asked Questions):

### A Matter of Translation

**Question:** I have recently discovered a glitch with the voice to text conversion on my voicemail system. I am involved in a good deal of international transactions. Due to the many different time zones with lawyers with whom I am negotiating, I receive a number of voicemail messages each month. I prefer to use our law firm voice to text conversion option on our voicemail system. As you know, this generally takes a voicemail message and changes it to a text message on the firm's e-mail system. It is much more efficient to read the messages than to listen to them. The converter works fine for calls throughout the USA. However, on my international calls, I find that accents are a problem. In fact, if the accent is too heavy, the system actually converts the message to the foreign language of the caller. For example, I received a five minute message yesterday from a French lawyer with a heavy accent. The conversion was

not just from voice to text, but from English to French, which doesn't work for me at all. How can I resolve this dilemma?

**Solution:** Vous n'avez qu'à choisir "Convertir de Voix en Texte" dans le menu "Option" et désélectionner "Traduire" dans le même menu.

### Automated Jury Instruction Reader

**Question:** During the last several months, I have been using the Court's new AJIR (Automated Jury Instruction Reader) system. As you know, the system reads the jury instructions to the jury, permitting me to attend to other matters on the bench. I find the technology very efficient and have averaged a time savings of about 30 to 45 minutes per trial. Recently, one of the attorneys objected to the use of the AJIR on the grounds that the automated voice is male and that certain jurors would comprehend the instructions differently if they were read in a female voice. Do you happen to know of any research on this issue?

**Solution:** There has been a fair amount of research on the impact of the AJIR system around the country. At first, there was a concern that jurors would simply tune out during the jury instruction part of the trial. A number of surveys were conducted on this issue. The results indicated that 50% of the jurors could not understand the instructions whether read by a judge or the AJIR system and 25% lost interest in listening to both after the first 15 minutes. The remaining 25% believed there would be no difference in their understanding of the instructions whether by judge or by AJIR. There has been no research to my knowledge regarding system gender. Until a gender neutral system is developed, I believe the safest approach is to have the AJIR read the instructions in the same gender as the sitting judge.

### Court Desktop Video Teleconferencing

**Question:** As a judge, I am still learning to adapt to having all of my teleconferences by desktop video rather than the "old fashioned" audio system which has served me so well all of these years. There is a debate among my fellow jurists as to the proper attire for these hearings. Can you tell me whether most of the judges using this technology are wearing robes or street clothes during these video conferences?

**Solution:** Judge, the conventional wisdom is that the location of the teleconference determines dress. If the call is made from chambers, street clothes are fine. On the other hand, if the Court is holding the video teleconference from the bench, a robe is more appropriate. You might want to take a look at a new offering by [www.videothecourt.com](http://www.videothecourt.com) which gives the judge the choice of a chambers background or a backdrop of the bench. It works like TV weather report. The judge is recorded on a blue screen and can select from a multitude of backgrounds. You can now have the virtual chambers of your dreams.

### Voicemail Bypass Option

**Question:** It is hard to believe a time before voicemail. I have become so used to leaving messages, I now prefer it over actually talking with most lawyers (whom I find to be generally boring people). I would love to be able to bypass a lawyer's direct dial and go straight to voicemail. Can I do this?

**Solution:** I have shared your query with a number of your fellow members at the Bar. It is only fair to tell you the general feeling is mutual; they find you equally as boring. Stick with e-mail.

Please forward your questions and frustrations to be shared with other members of the Bar. [rherrmann@morrisjames.com](mailto:rherrmann@morrisjames.com). :-)