



Technology Brief

FOR IT PROFESSIONALS



MS Office for iPad and iPhone Gets Even Better

By Scott Bassett - Affinity Consulting Group

I am decidedly in the Windows (and Chrome) camp. But I have nothing against Apple and Mac OS X or iOS. I have my daughter's old MacBook. But more importantly, I have a 4th generation iPad with a Verizon data plan that is very useful for traveling light, particularly when combined with the matching Logitech Ultra-Thin keyboard cover. Once Microsoft loosened its iron-fist grip on its products and made Office available on other platforms such as iOS, it made my iPad more useful for actual legal work. Now Office for iPad is even better. Collaboration is the name of the game with the new Office for iOS update. Here is a [great summary from Blair Hanley Frank on the Macworld web site](#).

Word, Excel and PowerPoint for iPhone and iPad are now better integrated with Outlook for iOS. Users can now easily attach a document they're working on inside one of those apps to an email message in Outlook, and directly edit documents attached to or linked from a message in Microsoft's email app. The deeper integration is a good sign for the future of the company's mobile email program, which came to Microsoft with its acquisition of Acompli last year.

In addition, users of the three updated apps will also be able to invite other people to view or edit a document and grant them permissions to do so within the app. That comes as Microsoft is placing an increased focus on document-sharing and collaboration in its next major update to the desktop version of Office, which includes support for real-time editing by multiple users.

The update also adds support for bi-directional text editing and complex scripts for Arabic, Hebrew and Thai. It's a feature that will appeal to Microsoft's users who have to write in those languages, and also meshes well with language changes that Apple is rolling out with the next version of iOS that cause text and interface elements to reflow if someone is using a right-to-left language.

With both Office and Outlook on iOS, Microsoft is making its most useful products for lawyers available on a platform used by a large number of lawyers.

About Scott Bassett:

Scott Bassett is the Senior Editor for Affinity Publications, which is a fancy title for editor of their monthly email newsletter. He also contributes regularly to the Affinity blog.

Scott came to technology via the law and he still maintains a full-time virtual law practice handling Michigan family law appeals. He received his J.D. degree from the University of Michigan Law School in 1981 and his B.A. from Wayne State University in 1978. His interests are technology ("duh"), law (double-"duh"), music, and bicycling.