iOrion® Brings Mobile Practice Management to Midsized Firms
BY ROBERT J. AMBROGI OF LAWSITES BLOG
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When it comes to law practice management technology, recent years have seen the launch of a bevy of cloud-based platforms. Clio was the first of these, followed by a number of products that include Rocket Matter, My-Case, LexisNexis Firm Manager, and the most recent addition to the lot, Thomson Reuters Firm Central. Cloud platforms offer many advantages, not the least of which is mobility — the ability to access your case and client information from any device.

But cloud platforms are not necessarily right for every lawyer or every firm. Orion has been a long-time provider of installed financial management, firm management and practice management systems for mid-sized law firms. Just last year, Sean Doherty looked at Orion and other installed practice management platforms for Law Technology News. He found that they offered good reasons for firms to stick with locally installed systems, most notably their deep integration with a firm's back-office infrastructure and front-office tools.

Although most locally installed systems offer some form of mobile access, it is rarely on par with the full-featured mobile access some cloud systems provide. Aiming to remedy that with a full-featured mobile app, Orion introduced iOrion at the recent LegalTech show in New York.

Designed for the iPad, iPad Mini and iPhone, iOrion enables mobile access to key Orion financial management tools as well as to information about clients, cases and contacts. iOrion fully synchronizes with the desktop Orion, including the ability to start a timer in one and then manage it in the other.

Included within iOrion are:
- Full access to all contacts. If you initiate a phone call or email from within iOrion, it automatically prompts you to make a time entry.
- Access to key information about matters (or cases), including the ability to initiate and bill for time.
- Customizable "Smart Timers" that make it easy to track time for multiple matters while away from your desktop.
- Access to key client and matter financial information, including receivables, work-in-progress billing, accounts receiveable ledgers, retainer ledgers and trust ledgers.

As of this writing, iOrion is not yet available in the Apple iTunes Store. Orion is awaiting Apple's final approval. I was provided with a pre-release version linked to a demonstration database containing mock client, matter and financial information.

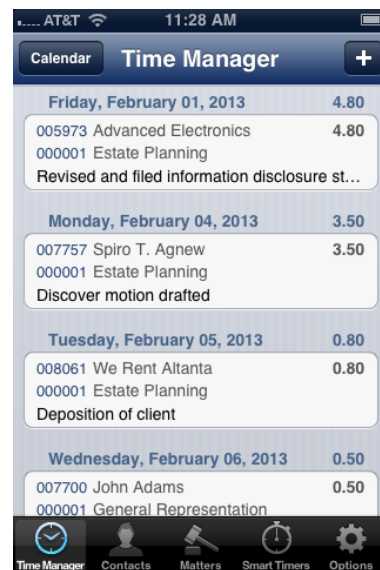Although I have never used the Orion desktop version, I found the app to be extremely easy to use and under-

stand. I was particularly impressed by the depth of the financial data accessible through the app and by the capabilities it offers to track billable time and expenses.

I was also impressed by the ease of timekeeping on the app. To enter time manually, simply select the client or matter, select the activity code, and select the time, and you are done. If you wish to add notes to a time entry, you can. Alternatively, Smart Timers make it easy to simply turn on a timer for any client or matter and then automatically bill it when you are done.

In the range of features and access to data it offers, iOrion surpasses other mobile practice-management apps I've tried. Of course, iOrion can be used only by lawyers at firms where Orion is installed. For more information about the app, read Orion's brochure.

Robert J. Ambrogi is a Massachusetts lawyer, writer and media consultant. He is author of the book, The Essential Guide to the Best (and Worst) Legal Sites on the Web. He also writes the blog Media Law and cohosts the legal affairs podcast Lawyer2Lawyer.