

Quest

e-newsletter

Information and ideas for your quest

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On the Quest ...

Greetings Q Reader,

Four years ago I joined the electronic organizer revolution. Initially I had my reservations about putting my life in the "Palm" of an electronic device. I imagined appointments doing a disappearing act, batteries dying at the most inopportune time, and the ultimate nightmare – a complete electronic meltdown. In addition, I would have to come to terms with my long and highly satisfying relationship with paper. It was difficult picturing life without an avalanche of sticky notes, planner sheets, address books, Rolodex cards and memo pads.

Fortunately, my resolve to increase my productivity won out and I made the transition from a traditional organizer to an electronic handheld device. When I purchased my first handheld, the technology was relatively new and most of my colleagues weren't even entertaining the idea of an electronic organizer. So I had to learn a few things the hard way. Over the years, I've kept up on this growing industry, experimented with various software and accessories, and upgraded to a more advanced handheld. In this issue of *Quest*, you'll benefit from the lessons I've learned. I'll share proven techniques, including how to tailor your handheld for your lifestyle, how to protect your investment and how to avoid unfortunate mishaps ("[Using Handheld Technology](#)").

There has never been a better time to be a handheld user. Companies like Hewlett-Packard, Sony, Compaq and Handspring have entered the market that was once dominated by Palm. This has created a competitive environment resulting in more features, styles and lower prices for consumers. The industry as a whole has had time to assess the needs of handheld users and is responding with a slew of new accessories and improved software. The number of users has grown dramatically as companies integrate handheld use into their operations and the global workforce becomes increasingly more mobile.

So where will the next technological revolution take us? It's difficult to predict, but you can bet it will be somewhere outside our comfort zones.

Many successful quests,

Jennifer

Using Handheld Technology

"Beam me up" has a new meaning in today's technology-driven society. With the emergence of handheld organizers, you can literally beam information from one handheld device to another via infrared light. This new electronic way of living has some of us scratching our heads and wondering if this futuristic technology can really make our lives easier and more productive.

I've been a faithful handheld user for several years and I'm sold on the benefits. For starters, there's the ease of updating contact information, rescheduling appointments, retrieving data and taking notes – which I can then drop into a word processing software, edit, save and e-mail if needed. What a timesaver. It's wonderful having one contact database for everything (e.g. letters, e-mails, sales calls) and having that same information in the palm of my hand. Handhelds offer productivity, flexibility, mobility and connectivity - all in one compact package.

If you're looking to reap the benefits of handheld technology, here are some proven techniques to help you get the most from your electronic device. You will also find a list of web resources on [page 3](#).

Customize for Your Lifestyle – Transferring appointments to your calendar is obviously one of the first steps you will take. However, remember to enter noteworthy dates (e.g. national and religious holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, etc.). (This is a good place to use the “repeat/recurrence” feature.) In your address book, enter important and emergency telephone numbers, and information about your handheld (manufacturer, model, specs, technical support). Don't forget to add your own contact information to the address book; with some handhelds you can flag this as your business card and beam it to other handheld users. Your address book is also the perfect place to keep driving directions for specific contacts, a list of favorite restaurants (my list of best restaurants for business meetings is listed separately under “Restaurants”), and gift ideas for colleagues and family – don't forget to include sizes and favorite colors. If you and your handheld ever get separated, a “Reward if Found” or “Contact me if Found” message in your address book or under owner information could speed up the reunion. In addition to the basic handheld software, there are various programs available including, productivity tools, games, e-books, sports and travel information, and multimedia.

Practice – Sounds simple, but the best way to become comfortable with your handheld is by using it. Carry it with you so you can schedule appointments, add contact names, take notes and enter tasks. Avoid the temptation of reverting back to pen and paper. It's easiest if you can make a clean break from your old organizer. During the transitional period, you can print a hard copy of your calendar, address book and task list from your desktop. As your confidence grows, you're likely to print less. Try to make the switch to a handheld during a slowdown in your schedule or over a weekend. You'll need time to become familiar with the various screens, methods of entering data, and how to retrieve, view and print information. Experiment with your handheld; push all the buttons and tap all the screens. Read the user's manual or at the very least, look at the table of contents to see what information is available for reference.

Synchronize (Sync) – Make it a habit to synchronize often. When you “sync,” information is transferred between your handheld and desktop. This process of “matching up information” eliminates duplication and double-booked appointments. I sync when I *arrive* at the office, *before* I leave the office for an appointment, immediately upon *returning* to the office and at the *end* of the business day. Find a routine that works for you. It will save you a lot of headaches.

Have a Back-up Plan – Although handheld technology offers a built-in system when you sync, it's still good to have a back-up plan. This is especially true if you have large data files or if you're away from the office. Some manufacturers offer back-up cards/modules that you can plug into your handheld for convenient back up anywhere. You can also back up the handheld data files on your desktop. (I store mine on a separate disk.) And if you're on the road and have e-mail access, you can e-mail yourself the data from your handheld (notes, new contacts, etc.). To keep your handheld running, it's always a good idea to carry extra batteries. Travel-sized chargers are available for those who use rechargeable batteries. Play it safe by keeping an extra stylus or two handy. Handspring has a great all-in-one stylus that includes a reset tool and a mini screwdriver for unexpected emergencies. Another popular type of stylus is the writing instrument (ballpoint or pencil) and stylus combination.

Protect Your Investment – Because your handheld is an electronic device, you'll want to take extra precautions to keep it functioning properly. One inexpensive way is to protect the screen with a product called WriteRight. It's a clear plastic film that covers the screen. In addition to extending the life of your

screen, WriteRight also improves handwriting recognition and reduces screen glare. Another way to protect your investment is to carry your handheld in a case. Cases are available in everything from leather to titanium. Styles vary from slim to fully integrated with compartments for a mobile phone, portable keyboard, spare batteries, business cards and more. You can also extend the life of your handheld by using the proper stylus.

Handheld Resources on the Web

Handspring – The makers of Visor handhelds. For information on the various Visor models and accessories, check out <http://www.handspring.com>.

LandWare – Best known for their GoType! keyboard. You'll find a complete product catalog at <http://www.landware.com/catalog/PALMOS/index.asp>.

Palm – The makers of the popular Palm handheld computers. For product information and the latest Palm news, go to <http://www.palm.com>.

PalmGear.com – It's a one-stop source for handheld users. You'll find hardware, software, accessories and custom development services. Visit <http://www.palmgear.com/>.

PDAmart – You'll find handhelds, accessories, software, wireless gear and clearance items at <http://www.pdamart.com/>.

Samsung – Check out the Samsung 1300 Color Palm Powered phone. It's a fully integrated Palm handheld computer and wireless phone together in one compact device. Visit <http://samsungusa.com/wireless>.



Jennifer is a professional speaker, author and president of CommuniQuest, Inc. Through her seminars and keynotes, she delivers fresh insight and proven techniques on how to work smarter and live a more satisfying life. For more information on her workplace strategies and inspirational programs, visit www.communiquest.com or call 1-888-866-0821.

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