

Lawyer Mobility: How Attorneys Can Get in Trouble with Butt Calls (and Ghost Calls)

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I just turned in a feature story to the Association of Legal Administrator's *Legal Management* on my little pet-project: being **responsibly connected**. I discussed cell phone-using truck drivers, who are 23% more likely to get into accidents, how people's brains are changing because of Internet usage, the erosion of family time, etc., etc.

However, let's be honest. Arguably a more mundane danger lurks. **It's known as the "butt call"**, or a call accidentally triggered by someone sitting on their cell phone or otherwise activating the speed dial with one's anatomy that is, shall we say, **not one's finger**.

We've all frozen in fear at one point or another (except the smug bastards still using flip phones – how 2004 of them), realizing that our phone is live and broadcasting the private conversation we've just had about one's medical condition, our annoyance with a certain individual, or our belted-out vocals accompanying Bonnie Tyler's 1982 eternal power ballad "Total Eclipse of the Heart".

For attorneys, this can endanger client confidentiality, or possibly even client confidence in their counsel's singing ability.

When writing my ALA article, I received the following quote from a law office administrator who related a story about a Ghost Call, which plagued the initial version of the iPhone. Says Wade Peterson, Director of Practice Support at [Bowman and Brooke LLP](#):



I owned one of the first generation Apple iPhones. There was a phenomenon known as "ghost calls" with them, whereby it would make random, uninitiated calls to people in your contact list. An embarrassing moment came while driving home alone – I had a private conversation with myself about a disagreement with my then girlfriend.



Unbeknownst to me, my iPhone decided to make a "ghost call" to her which recorded the conversation on her answering machine. I got a nasty return call asking "Who did you have the conversation with about our disagreement"! The relationship broke down shortly thereafter... and the iPhone was returned to the store the following day. I didn't want future conversations monitored by random people in my contact list.


So to paraphrase Mel Brooks, unbeknownst to Wade but knownst to his iPhone, an unintentional, destiny changing call was being made. The safest thing to do? My advice: never talk unless you know your phone is on.



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